

**LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK- A REFORMER OF
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doi: 10.48047/ecb/2023.12.si4.1216**ABSTRACT:**

Here in the present study, the researcher has observed that Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was not against the objects, but he was against the person. Further, we found that Lokmanya Tilak supported reformation done for woman education. Also, Tilak supported the campaigns done to eliminate untouchability issues, child marriage, and many more. Lokmanya Tilak and his collaborators understood and noticed the usefulness of the various reformations they established. The researcher has observed that the Britishers and social reformers tried to create hurdles in the activities pioneered by Lokmanya Tilak, but Tilak successfully resolved issues.

KEYWORDS:

Lokmanya Tilak, untouchability, social reformation, education groups and system, residential school

INTRODUCTION:

Lokmanya Tilak started the process of woman education from his home; he educated his daughters. The researcher has obtained one of the references where it was stated that Tilak's elder daughter Krushna completed her schooling. Further, the researcher has found that Lokmanya Tilak was against infant marriage. Hence, he postponed his daughter's marriage until the utmost limit sanctioned by the Shastras. Although we found that Lokmanya Tilak advocated relaxation in caste restrictions. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 141.

Through all the study, we obtained knowledge that Tilak's family background, understanding of Vedas, and other cultural studies helped him to stay strong during the social reformation. Further, the researcher has observed that with the great foresight and vision, Lokmanya Tilak made a significant contribution to the cause of the nation. He used a powerful medium and propaganda to bring social reforms. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 67.

OBJECTIVES:

- i. To understand the various social reformation activities
- ii. To understand the fundamental concept of social reformation

- iii. To understand educational system in 19th century
- iv. To find out Lokmanya Tilak's thoughts on social reform

BACKGROUND OF LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK AS A REFORMER OF MODERN INDIA:

Lokmanya Tilak was a man of action and dedicated his life to resolving political issues. Also, we observed that there were ideological and political differences between Lokmanya Tilak and Agarkar. Due to this, Lokmanya Tilak was often regarded as an opponent of social reform. We observed that Lokmanya Tilak was an admirer of Vedic tradition and knowledge. Not only Lokmanya Tilak but Swami Vivekanand also against social reforms. We found one of the statements made by Swami Vivekanand, where he said, "I do not believe in reforms, I believe in growth." Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune 137.

While performing this study, the researcher has gone through references and where we observed thoughts of Ranade and Chiplunkar on social reforms. They followed a stagnation in the country's social system as led to the accumulation of various social evils. Further, it caused injustice to multiple segments of society. Both of them found that it divided society and became the main hurdle in the nation's development and growth. So, to improve the nation's condition, Justice M.G. Ranade and his team wanted to hold a social reform conference. They shared the proposal with Lokmanya Tilak, but he resisted it. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune 137. Through this incidence, it was clear that Tilak was against social reform. Tilak wanted to manage social reforms laterally with religious and patriotic sentiments of the people.

METHOD USED IN THE PRESENT RESEARCH:

To understand the various reformation activities done by different social groups and Lokmanya Tilak, the researcher has studied diverse literature. Through the present study, the researcher has attempted to understand Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's contribution to social reformation. Also, the study was made to understand the activities performed during the 19th century. Further, the researcher has collected information by using various books, research papers, and other forms of literature. Also, the researcher has conducted several interactive sessions with selective members. For the interview process, we have chosen Lokmanya Tilak's family members.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH:

The researcher has performed this study to understand the various facts about Lokmanya Tilak and his collaborators for the cause of the nation. To obtain detailed knowledge and to accomplish the research objectives, the researcher has used information from books, research papers, and reports, etc. Through this study, we aimed to obtain information on the following points.

- i. To understand the various social reformation activities
- ii. To understand the fundamental concept of social reformation
- iii. To understand educational system in 19th century
- iv. To find out Lokmanya Tilak's thoughts on social reform

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

In the present study, the researcher has used primary and secondary data available on Lokmanya Tilak. We obtained information from the literature and other online and offline resources. Besides this, the researcher has taken guidance from the research guide. To get the clear understanding of Tilak's life and various social reforms, we have preferred multiple data collection systems. We have used secondary data from the published and unpublished format. Also, we have used the data from the primary sources. For further study, the researcher has followed the survey method of data collection and kept the scope of the study limited. By using the survey method, we have cross-checked the obtained information.

OUR FINDINGS:

We have collected profound information about Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and reformations. Further, we have processed the data through various stages, like it was edited, organized, and interpreted to attain the aim of the study. Also, we have performed pre-testing and verification of the obtained information by using various procedures. By going through collected knowledge, we came to know the following things about Lokmanya Tilak and social reforms.

Base of Social Reformation

India was ruled around 300 years, and it caused various impacts over India. During the British rule, India went through poverty and faced disputes and separation between different religions and castes. While under Muslim rulers created an unsafe atmosphere. British government formed "divide and rule" policy and ruled India. With the help of their strategy, they destroyed industry, skills and knowledge earning process. Under the British government, Indian people lost their self-confidence and heritage.

Education System of 19th century

Apart from this, the British established an educational system in the 19th century. The system supported the formation of only administrative manpower. The education system produced the feeling of hate in the mind of youth about their own civilization and attracted by western materialism. Also, they understood the development of European or western countries.

Formation of 3 groups

The education system of the time developed 3 streams of new graduates.

Group 1

The new graduates formed a group, and they thought that British rule was heavenly gifted. They were attracted to British culture and loved westernization. They adopted the English habits, diet, and dress, in fact serving in the British bureaucracy was the proud feeling for them. We observed that the Anglo-Indian Press and missionaries had their agenda. By taking their support, new graduates criticized Indian civilization.

Group 2

Education system caused the formation of the second stream of new graduates. They were working at various posts in the administration. Although they were nationalists and had a feeling of nationalism. This second group wanted to develop a new civilization system to bring new social reforms. Justice Ranade was the prime member of this group.

Justice Ranade and his contemporary contributed to the formation of the Brahmo and PrarthanaSamaj. It was a group of very fewer people among the crores of Indians. They had a strong belief that by changing constitutional law, one can attain the social reforms or model civilization.

Group 3

The education system caused the formation of the 3rd group and was of a nationalist. The entire group wanted to reform the civilization system. Along with this, they had a belief in the rich Hindu culture. VishnushastriChiplunkar was a person who opposed their concept of a religion-less society. Lokmanya Tilak was agreed onto thoughts of VishnushastriChiplunkar. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune 138.

Tilak's Thoughts on Social Reform

While performing this study, the researcher has observed several facts about Lokmanya Tilak's personality and thoughts on social reform. According to Tilak, "every nation must have political liberty for social well-being and the growth of his mother land." Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune 138. Tilak challenged the right of the British to pass legislative judgement on Indian society. Further, he opposed the Age of Consent Bill as legislation. But by considering the reformers, he believed and suggested or proposed several amendments.

In November 1890, there was a meeting held under the Presidentship of Rao Bahadur Nulkar also Bhandarakar and Ranade was present to this meeting. The meeting was held to consider Tilak's proposal. Here, Lokmanya Tilak delivered a speech. To obtain more information about Lokmanya Tilak, the researcher has studied his speech and clearly observed Tilak's views on social reforms. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune 138.

In that speech, Lokmanya Tilak said, "There has been much tall talk but little action regarding social reforms with the result that even those reforms, the vital need of which has been generally admitted have not been carried out into practice." Apart from this, he said, "We must not only see what reforms are required, but also whether and how far they are practicable and how they can be made popular, for reforming society." Here, the researcher has described Tilak's opinion and was stated as, "Care ought to be taken to avoid the creation of any gap between the people on the one hand and reformers on the other. We must always carry public opinion with us, and this can be done internally. I am in favour of social reforms." Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune 138.

Here, the researcher has already described that one group was dependent and influenced by British culture. Also, they welcomed state interference, whereas we observed that Tilak and his followers refused any state interference strategy. They wanted to combine the old culture with new social requirements. Also, they believed in reforms that to be accepted by the society within itself.

Lokmanya Tilak and Various Reformation Activities

Here through the present study, the researcher has referred a lot of literature available on Lokmanya Tilak and came to know that Tilak was a supporter of social reforms. To prove this fact about Lokmanya Tilak, the researcher has studied various acts of Tilak.

Pandita Ramabai and Formation of a Residential School

Here the researcher has provided information about an episode in the past, Pandita Ramabai started a residential school for Indian girls, especially widows. Several reformers helped the school formation and declared it to be a secular education.

On December 12, 1889, one news was illustrated in Christian Weekly of New York, and it was based on the learning about Christianity. Lokmanya Tilak came to know that there were students in the school, and they were learning about Christianity. So Tilak wrote against this event. As effect of this, it was considered as Tilak was against the woman education. Although, during 1891 to 1893 Mr. Ranade and his followers disagreed with Tilak.

Lokmanya Tilak raised an issue, not against female education but their conversion to Christianity. At last, Mr. Ranade and Bhandarkar realized and accepted Tilak's point. On August 13, 1893, they resigned from the institution. An event of supporting Pandita Ramabai diminished the popularity of women's education or reform in school.

To explain the differences between Tilak and reformers, the researcher has provided another reference. The researcher has found information that Tilak was against sharing of the Congress pandal with the Reformers. He didn't want to mix political swaraj with social reforms. According to Lokmanya Tilak, around 80 per cent of the population was orthodox and uneducated. The inclusion of social reforms with political freedom means the process of keeping the common man away from the National Congress and the Swaraj movement.

Tea Party at PanchHaud Mission

On October 4, 1890, at the residence of a missionary of the PanchHaud Mission, reformers had had a tea, and it was the only their crime. According to orthodox Hindus, reformers had broken caste taboos. So, they demanded to drop such reformers from the Hindu religion. They charged on around 42 persons including Ranade, Tilak and Gokhale. Tilak was a scholar of Sanskrit, had a profound knowledge of Vaidik dharma and based on that information; he helped reformers to get off with this little punishment.

While performing the study of Lokmanya Tilak and social reforms, we obtained various information. Based on that information, the researcher came to know that there were several differences between Telang's and Tilak's proposal.

Telang's Proposal

Here the researcher has given various points that were there in Telang's proposal.

1. According to Telang, there should be a penalty charged for co-habitation of husband and wife, under twelve years of age.
2. He made his second point for infant marriages, where he stated that on attaining the age of majority, the wife has rights to cancel the marriage, if she wishes.

3. Further, Telang says that suits by husbands for the restitution of conjugal rights should not be allowed.

4. According to Telang's proposal, a widow should continue to hold her first husband's property even after remarriage.

Tilak's Proposal

1. In the first point, Tilak describes that girls should not be married until they reach the age of 1 year.

2. Tilak writes about the boys, and he states that boys should not be married until they reach the age of 20.

3&4. Unless they are ready to marry widows, men should not marry after the age of 40 years.

5. An absolute prohibition of liquor.

6. A strict ban on acceptance of dowry in marriages.

7. The disfigurement of the widow should be forthwith stopped.

The proposal of Tilak proves that he was with the reformers. On February 25, 1891, there was one incidence happened in Krida Bhavan. Times of India wrongly reported that Tilak and Namjoshi were at the bottom of the mischief. But on March 2, 1891, a notice was served to Times of India, and the Times published a retraction.

Consent Bill and Public Reaction

While performing this study, we have gone through literature and studied various acts done by social groups. We observed that reformers aimed to prove society's support to the "Consent Bill". While a majority of the people were against the intervention of the British in religious matters by legal force. Despite all conflicts, the Consent Bill was successfully passed but was not accepted.

Woman Education and Lokmanya Tilak

We had gone through various literature and observed that pre-independent was a time when 10 to 12 years was the age of a girl's marriage and used to go to husband's house. So, they were depended on the husband's family for further education. Tilak's wrote an article on female education and was titled "Nineteenth Century". After studying this article, we found one of the statements made by Lokmanya Tilak, where he wrote, "I equally support female education as the writer of the above articles. After marriage, girls have some duties towards the family. Curriculum for male and female education should be different until the age of marriage is increased by social engineering." Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 140.

Untouchability and Lokmanya Tilak

Vitthal Ramji Shinde organized a meeting against untouchability. Lokmanya Tilak was against the removal of untouchability and criticized Vitthal Ramji Shinde. Here the researcher has preferred a few references where we found that the meeting was organized on the advice to Tilak and he was present to that meeting. He used certain words that were enough to explain his views about untouchability.

According to Lokmanya Tilak "If God believes in untouchability, I do not believe in God." S. M. Mate, an activist, clarified Tilak's action along with proof and he made the

statement as, "Actually, Tilak's words are enough to clarify his action, but social reformers wanted Tilak to take an active part in the social reform movement. Similarly, workers against untouchability, too, wanted Tilak to take an active part in the movement. But Lokmanya Tilak has fixed his aim for political independence 'Swarajya'. He did not wish to make any divided opinion, which can become an obstacle to the Swarajya movement. He wanted all the people of India to unite for Home Rule. His fight was against British or foreign rule and not within society." Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 140.

Lokmanya Tilak's Idea Behind Ganesh Festival

It was a time when untouchables were banned from entering temples. Lokmanya Tilak founded the Ganesh festival to bring people of various caste, creed together, and eradicate untouchability. He assembled Hindus but Muslims together during the Utsav and its processions. Tilak brought Ganesh idol outside the temples so that anyone could visit and pray. One untouchable Mandal wanted to carry Ganesh idol with Tilak's, and he granted permission to them. Further, the researcher has observed that Tilak supported the construction of a temple with the thought that people from all castes could visit.

Based on the information noted by S.V. Bapat, in 1907, during the Ganesh festival, Tilak visited the Mandal in the red-light area of Shukrawar Peth. He delivered speech their and said, "As per PurushSukta, if the nation is one body of a human being, how can one part be different from any other part of the body?" Also, the researcher has obtained one reference that clarifies Tilak was not against untouchability. During 1908, Tilak's visit to Akola and in 1919 to Sangli, Tilak, was invited to an untouchables area. Tilak visited those places. Bapat S.V., "Lokmanya Tilak's Athavani", 2nd volume, 72. Also, Lokmanya Tilak made one proposal on March 24, 1918, where he proposed the Congress to elect one representative from the untouchable caste. Through these events, the researcher has observed that Tilak was not against untouchability.

CONCLUSION:

Through the above study made by the researcher, it was clear that Tilak supported the woman's education, and for that, they wrote many articles in 'Kesari'. By studying various articles, the researcher found that Tilak wanted to give some of the practical bases to female education. Also, we observed that Lokmanya Tilak was a political reformer. Through the entire study, the researcher has found that Tilak criticized the person and not the object. Also, we came to know that Tilak attacked the social reform party for allowing the governmental intervention in various religious matters.

1. Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak supported various social reformation movements
2. Lokmanya Tilak pioneered concept of Ganesh Festival to eliminate untouchability

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Further the research to be performed to understand the contributions of other revolutionaries for the cause of reformation of female education.
2. Impact of Indian social reformations on the western countries can be the topic of further research.

3. Further researcher has left the scope to understand the role of PrarthanaSamaj and BramhoSamaj on national freedom movement.
4. Understanding the less known facts of population social reformers of that age be the topic of next research.

REFERENCES:

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