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**HOWARD GARDNER**  
India Tour 2012

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# Intelligence, morality have no correlation: US expert

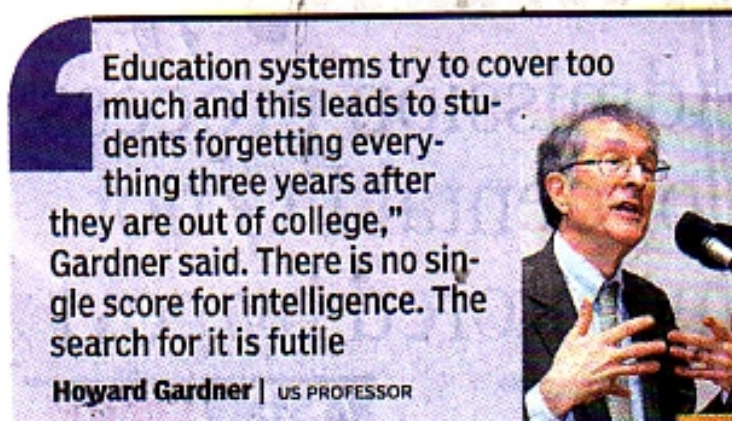
Ishan Srivastava | TNN

**Chennai:** How did Mahatma Gandhi and Osama Bin Laden, who were both from fairly affluent families, end up following such different paths? The subject was the morality and intelligence and the connection, or lack thereof, between the two. Howard Gardner had a packed audience at IIT-Madras spell-bound.

"There is no evidence of any interdependence between morality and intelligence," the American psychologist said. "We can argue that both were 'intelligent' and 'creative' in their own ways. But while Gandhi was the most important human being in the last 1,000 years, Osama ended up doing dastardly things," he said.

Gardner, a professor of cognitive psychology at Harvard Graduate School of Education and author of the theory of multiple intelligences, continued by giving examples from the Wall Street crisis and Iraq war to show that it is more important how intelligence is used than the possession of intelligence itself.

He said public move-



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**Howard Gardner** | US PROFESSOR

ments, like the one led by Anna Hazare in India and the Occupy Wall Street protest in the US, are quite Gandhian in nature. "That is why I say, in a positive way, that Gandhi belongs to the world and not India," he said.

On multiple intelligence, Gardner said the mind should be seen as a set of relatively independent computers rather than a big single computer. "Most people have a fairly jagged profile. Good in some skills, bad in others," he said.

"Education systems try to cover too much and this leads to students forgetting everything three years after they are out of college," Gardner said. "There is no single score for intelligence. The search for it is futile," he

said.

He cautioned parents against both positive narcissism, or telling a child to achieve one thing that he or she is best at, and negative narcissism, which involves a parent telling a child to achieve the one thing that the parent could not.

Gardner said the best educators should ideally teach the most needy children. "But that's not what happens in India and the US. The best teachers just for the rich make the gap even wider," he said, while dismissing any notion of gender differences in intelligence. "You can have dramatic differences in short term due to societal conditions but, in the long run, the scores fall in line."