

Gandhian Approach for Modern India: An Analysis

Dr Gajraj Singh Rathore

Asst Prof (Comm. Skills)

Shri Guru Sandipani Institute of Technology and Science

Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India

gajrajinghrathore@gmail.com

Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi the leader, social reformer, thinker, philosopher and above all the seeker after truth shaped our nation with the help of his experiments and experiences and propounded the various theories of morality and ethics. The ethics and values elaborated by him are, in fact, the outcomes of his personal experiments blended with the contemporary situations, surroundings and phenomena. Almost every aspect of life, nation and society is included in his philosophy. In his philosophical views democracy and its essential factors find proper place. His global vision of universality prevails upon the foreign policy of our country. Gandhi was in favour of equality especially in matter of laws; he is of the opinion that there must be equality among the different groups of society. Discrimination on the basis of class, colour, creed, sect and category ought not to be existed. He was an ardent believer of the concept that service to human beings is a service to God. According to him democracy is not only a rule by the people for people but it is also a blend of unity, ahimsa, national integration, solidarity, responsibility, rights, morality especially in Indian context.

Keywords: Democracy, Truth, Ahimsa(Non-Violence), National Integration, Nationalism.

Since the time immemorial, India has been bearing a number of changes, the changes that occur after a particular period of decades and centuries yet they become instruments to take place positive and negative consequences. It would be useless to say that life without

change is possible because change is a natural phenomenon which is closely associated with human beings. And changes may occur sometimes automatically or naturally but sometimes changes take place due to person, a person having wide degree of intellectual senses. World's best personalities like Rabindra Nath Tagore, M.K. Gandhi, J.L. Nehru, Sri Aurobindo, Abraham Lincoln and many others have given ideologies for better life, dimensional development, growth, success, etc Almost all these great persons directly indirectly paved the path for development and reformation in society.

Mahatma Gandhi a saint who imparted the lessons on various fields of life enunciated many principles to be followed by an ordinary person for successful implementation of life. In fact Gandhi's teachings are not limited to any particular field. The ethics and values elaborated by him are the outcomes of his personal experiments and experiences blended with the contemporary situations, surroundings and phenomena. Almost every aspect of life, nation and society is included in his philosophy. Our limited reading leads us to his basic principles of politics, non-violence, religion, ethics and truth but if we make a wide perusal of his works, speeches, expressions in journals we'll come across a large amount of his teachings and lessons. Gandhi always emphasized the essentials of discipline and laws in life of individual. A well disciplined life is a solid ground for success and prosperity i.e. the ideals of discipline prove to be key to successful life through which inner contentment, enthusiasm and inner self may be attained. Disciplines are not only for students and youths but it is necessarily to be followed by the people of every age group. In his early life Gandhi knew the importance of well disciplined life and the spiritual deeds, fasting observed by his mother, religiosity etc also inculcated in him the real importance of disciplined life.

Likewise he gave the equal importance to laws. Without laws the existence of life cannot be imagined. Life without law is useless. But Gandhi was in favour of equality especially in matter of laws he was of the opinion that there must be equality among the

different groups of society, there must not be any discrimination on the basis of class, colour, creed, sect and category. Following the principle of scripture 'Vasudhev Kutumbkam' he adopted the concept of considering the whole universe as a family. He was dedicated to spiritual laws and closely confined to laws of nature. In social perspectives Gandhi never moulded any particular basis but he always pleaded that 'there should be one single law for both family and nation'.(SQMG) All citizens in a country are like members of one single family. This basic line throws a light on the truth that all classes of society can be set up firmly if there is an existence of equal laws. Variations in the observation of laws based on creed, class, category etc. can create irregularities and disharmony among people of society. Because in a multi-lingual society like India we are bounded with our social and cultural codes and customs we all may be united if we have uniformity in laws.

Gandhi was the sole person in realm of philosophy who explained the non-violence (ahimsa) in a well formal manner. Gandhi was of opinion that himsa(violence) begets himsa, there is no existence of non-violence on the edge of violence. He says that 'for the non-violent person, the whole world is one family. He will thus fear none, nor will others fear him.'(SQMG) He was totally against violence and violent activities in any forms. Unlike Nehru he was against the inclusion of violence in administrative process. Today's circumstances there is also an adequate place has assigned for punishment in our constitution under the provision of laws and orders. But Gandhi always condemned the concept of punishment in the democracy he was always in favour of the inclusion of moral values ethics to reform the evils in the society. Once he told 'Democracy and violence can ill go together'(SQMG). The basis for the democracy in a sovereign state must be peaceful implementation of administrative policies adhering to and securing the vested interest of people. In the modern perspectives, we cannot set aside the necessity of punishment, fine and other violent means to establish peace, laws and orders but Gandhi denies to apply these

means of controlling people pointing out other means to establish good governance must be considered based on proper participation and mutual co-operation of people in a peaceful environment with contentment. The fundamentalism for a democratic nation is that it must be run with the mutual co-operation of its subjects, citizens. Laws must be framed, acted and implemented keeping in views the smallest units of society. Gandhi was of strongly opinion that ‘the spirit of democracy cannot established in the midst of terrorism, whether governmental or popular’(SQMG). Here he refers to terror as unnecessary enforcement and imposition of laws without assessing their merits and demerits. He himself was the firm believer in the fact that ‘in true democracy every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself.’ (SQMG) Since no work can be accomplished without co-operation of people, the active participation of citizens of the nation is must be on priority. A citizen must be considered at the front line in a democratic state which he always considered the essential element of democracy without which the sovereignty of state lies on no firm ground. He bore the argument that ‘evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side.’ (SQMG) Being a system a nation is responsible to provide security and rights along with the duties and responsibilities to its citizens. It is a proven fact ‘non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as co-operation with good’.(SQMG). He was an ardent believer of the concept that service to human beings is a service to God. The social responsibility of good citizen is to turn hundred percent of efforts to establish favourable environment with proper amalgamation of varied means and ways available in the society. His political thoughts include national integration, faith in service to society, social equality, essential freedom with responsibilities, duties and rights of citizens.

Democracy is not only a rule by the people for people but it is also a blend of unity, ahimsa, national integration, solidarity, responsibility, rights, morality especially in Indian context. To him democracy is not only a term but a widespread concept, a model to shape a

national structure with the proper employment of the philosophies imparted by the scholars in the welfare of human beings. Gandhi was aware of the fact in a democratic state citizens must be free to perform various deeds. The freedom to act among them will enhance the spirit in the development of nation. People's development is the only criterion to assess the development of any nation. Therefore he analyses the line 'democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep' (SQMG) because people must be provided proper facilitation and rights to secure their vested interests as well as the interests of nation keeping in view the growth and development of every unit in the society. He also opines that 'performance of duties should be independent of public opinion' (SQMG)

Unlike other philosophers and political leaders, Gandhi's aim at inclusion of morality, ethics and values into politics is quite evident through his philosophy when he says that without ethics and moral values there is no existence of politics. Political principles must be associated with moral values. Without morality politics is a permanent evil. He stresses the fact that 'moral results can only be produced by moral restraint' (Gandhi, 124) A good governance can only be possible if a proper place has been reserved for values evading the interests of political leaders. His idea of inclusion of ethics into politics to some extent may be fruitful to minimize corruption in various administrative policies and government units.

To him truth is of immense importance in the life of individual. He never differentiated between truth and non-violence; both are complement to each other. Gandhi regarded truth as the Absolute Truth, a Sovereign Principle that is manifested in the form of God. Gandhi always believed that truth is the Eternal Principle in life and he worships God in the form of truth saying that 'there are innumerable definitions of God, because His manifestations are innumerable. They overwhelm me with wonder and awe and for a moment stun me. But I worship God as Truth only.' (Gandhi, 11) Gandhi, by nature and deeds, was a spiritualist it is his spiritual inclination that he takes every aspect of life and society with

spiritual point of view. Even his philosophy of life is also coloured by his spiritualism when he elaborates of the importance of religion, ethics, and sermons of Bhagwad Gita. He emphasizes the necessity and essentiality of truth which he regarded as the supreme entity of human life. For him truth means not only truthfulness in words, it is truthfulness in thoughts and deeds as well. It's not simple concept but a widespread element of his philosophy. Similarly he takes non-violence as another aspect of truth and correlates it with truth saying that 'truth and non-violence demand that no human being may debar himself from serving any other human being, no matter how sinful he may be.' (SQMG)

Gandhi knew the importance of non-violence along with truth; he also throws light on necessity of non-violent means. In his life he raised his voice against tyranny of British Rule with ahimsa starting civil disobedience, non-cooperation and many other movements. He never advocated for violence. According to him retaliation is counter-poison and poison breeds more poison and the nectar of love alone can destroy the poison of hate. Even he was never in favour of undertaking harmful or assaulting means against opponent, the only weapon to overcome opponent, he suggests, is love. 'Whenever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love'(SQMG) He also discarded hatred from nationalism indicating that the spirit of nationalism lies in love and respect, not in hatred; hatred is not essential for nationalism. He always said that race hatred will kill the real national spirit. It is quite evident that in order to establish unity in the nation, feeling of love and respect must be included among people of all classes and communities without being biased and it can only be possible when we leave out our narrow mindedness and shallow thinking.

The present paper is an attempt to show how Gandhi was influenced by vedic concept of truth and non-violence. He wanted to inculcate values and ethics in politics. Politics, to him, cannot be a successful platform to serve human beings in the society without morality i.e. an ideology which is a blend of truth, ahimsa, perseverance, mutual understanding, compassion,

and respect to others. In fact, Gandhi projected his global vision in reaction to the irregular system of society to uplift the backward classes. His ideas and thoughts became fruitful to lay foundation of free India. Though he was in favour of changes yet he never considered radical changes to be occurred in the democracy. His democratic concept of free India provides a firm ground to our nation. The present manuscript also analyzes the thoughts and ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi's ideology in the realm of social development and reformation proves to be helpful; his experiences and experiments in different life situations provide a basis for a common person to handle with different adverse circumstances. He has provided the new dimensions to the world politics in which his global idea of universal solidarity finds a proper place.

Works Cited

Gandhi, M.K., *My Experiments with Truth*. New Delhi: Vishva Books, 2004.

Gandhi, M.K., *Hind Swaraj*. Ahmedabad: Navjivan Publishing House, 1984.

Selected Quotes of Mahatma Gandhi (SQMG), Institute for Energy and Environmental
Research, MD

<https://ieer.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2001/09/Gandhi-quotes.pdf>