

# A Non-Violence Approach to Politics and Economics

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**Abstract - Mahatma Gandhi is widely considered one of the most significant people in the history of nonviolence. Practicing and practicing nonviolence in his daily life helped to make nonviolence a household term. The most important finding in Gandhi's theory of action was "Satyagraha," or "Truth force," which could be used by vast numbers of people in social and political protest. Satyagraha allowed him to participate in collective action, which was both personal and social and political. Satyagraha was not driven by fear of retribution or pressure to fulfill one's obligations, including the right to reject collaboration with and support for a system that aims to improve the lives of individuals and society. Love is the foundation of Satyagraha, not hatred. In comparison to other modern pluralists, his worldview provides a more nuanced and realistic understanding of political philosophy and political practice. Truth be told, nonviolence did not start with Gandhi. To the contrary, Mark Shepard has called him the "father of nonviolence" in reference to his nonviolent activity. "Gandhi was the first in human history to expand the principle of nonviolence from the individual to the social and political level." During the debate over an unidentified movement, Gandhi developed the word "Satyagraha," which included many comparable concepts.**

**Keywords - non-violence, politics, Gandhi, satyagraha and economics, etc.**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Truth and nonviolence were two of Gandhi's most cherished ideals. Truth and non-violence were of enormous significance to him. Gandhi's philosophy is based on Satya, or Truth, and Ahimsa, or Nonviolence. Nonviolence is a translation of Sanskrit word 'Ahimsa'. 'Ahimsa', he said, means 'The greatest love, the greatest compassion' in its positive form. In Gandhi's view, the root of the word "Satya" is the verb "to exist." In other words, by "Satya," Gandhi meant both the existence of something and the truth of something. A smooth, unstamped metallic disc, Gandhi observed, symbolizes Truth and Non-Violence on opposite sides of the same coin. We do not know for sure which of these is the obverse, which is the reverse [1]. Ahimsa is a method to the purpose of discovering Truth. In Gandhi's view, God is the source of all truth. Many thinkers believe that God is the pinnacle of reality. Similarly, Gandhi asserts that Truth is the only reality. In other words, Truth and God represent the ultimate reality. It is therefore possible to identify the two. He asserted that no one on the planet could ever dispute the existence of Truth. Because atheists do not believe in God, it is possible for God to be rejected. Atheists, on the other hand, cannot deny truth. As a result, God is seen as the source of all truth.

## Ahinsa or Non-Violence

Gandhi's philosophy revolves around the principle of Ahimsa, or nonviolence. Ahimsa or Non-Violence, according to Gandhi, has a positive aspect as well. If you look at it positively, non-violence is love. It entails a feeling of compassion for all living things. Love for all sentient beings in the planet is a form of nonviolence, not only for humans. That is to say, one should have compassion for all creatures, not just humans. A non-violent individual is supposed to remain calm in the face of a person who has inflicted harm on him. He has nothing but good intentions for him. Because he does not want to damage him, he will not swear at him or injure him. He'll put up with anything the wrongdoer throws at him. This means that Non-Violence entails no wrongdoing whatsoever. It is the lack of hatred for all living things that constitutes perfect nonviolence. Sub-human life is included, including unpleasant insects and beats. Because non-violence is goodwill toward all life, it is non-violent. It's the purest kind of adoration [2].

When Gandhi's concept of non-violence is examined, certain elements become apparent. J. Bandyopadhyaya, in his book "Social and Political

Thought," described Gandhian Non-Violence in the following terms [3].

- There is a difference between non-violence and non-killing.
- If you do not want to fight, do not. Nonviolence is not weakness.
- Non-violence carries with it a slew of beneficial connotations. All of these values are based on the principles of love, action, opposition to injustice and courage in the face of violence.
- Bread-labour, which Gandhi acquired from Ruskin and Tolstoy and eventually from the Bible, means non-violence. According to Gandhi, it is "Divine Law" that a person must earn his or her living by doing manual labour.
- The worth of nonviolence surpasses that of life. There are three reasons why Gandhi believed non-violence to be the highest virtue.

Gandhi was of the opinion that nonviolence cannot be practiced in its purest form. However, relative Nonviolence is practicable. A perfect straight line, as defined by Euclid, can never be drawn, Gandhi said. It's impossible to achieve complete Non-Violence, either. However, a certain level of Non-Violence can be achieved. To paraphrase Gandhi, we must continually strive to keep the Divine Spark alive, which he said exists inside each of us. Consequently, Gandhi believed that Non-Violence was a universal law. Despite this, Gandhi acknowledged that ultimate nonviolence in our daily lives is impossible. "Man cannot for a second exist without deliberately or unconsciously inflicting external violence," Gandhi wrote. This act of violence is premeditated murder.

Key concepts in Gandhian thinking are Satyagraha and Sarvodaya. These two concepts are inter twined on an extremely deep level. They also reveal ahinsa's significance in the social and political realms. Savvy people should seek to attain the aim of attaining sarvodaya rather than using Satyagraha to achieve it. Sarvodaya, Gandhi's moral ideal, is founded on the nonviolent principle of sarvodaya. Morality is inherent in the nature of humans. A moral person is concerned not only with his or her own well-being, but also with the welfare of others. According to a common moral philosophy, the goal of morality is to ensure the greatest possible happiness for the largest possible number of people. The term for this philosophy is utilitarianism.. The following are some of Gandhi's arguments for disapproving of this definition of morality: In the classic utilitarian view, "happy" refers solely to a person's level of material well-being. Secondly, the position allows for the sacrifice of the interests of the minority in the service of the greater good [4].

In Gandhi's view, it is inconsistent with the dual values of truth and non-violence to seek only the material and physical well-being of the majority. John

Ruskin's ethical and economic ideas had a profound impact on Gandhi's thinking. To successfully rebut the utilitarian arguments, John Ruskin wrote *Unto the Last*. He makes the case that living up to one's moral obligations is essential to one's overall well-being.

## 2. SATYAGRAHA AND SARVODAYA

Gandhi drew a fundamental contrast between the state and society in his writings. He held the state in the deepest disdain because of its violent nature, which he considered as a threat to moral freedom and individualism. On the other hand, he saw society as something that is inherent in human nature and that provides limitless opportunities for human cooperation in exchange for which people are willing to submit to social restriction. Society, like the family in Gandhi's view, is an organic and necessary part of life, and individuals and society are intimately linked. MacIver's words come to mind [5]:

- Society and the state are not coeval and coextensive structures; rather, the state was constructed inside society as a predetermined order to achieve specified goals.
- Prof. Barrier points out that whereas the state serves a single, overarching aim, society serves a variety of deeper and broader ones, both large and small. The state, in Gandhi's view, is simply one among many ways of facilitating the improvement of one's own circumstances. According to Gandhi, spirituality is a state of mind.
- External freedom from any imposed limitations is a necessary component of complete freedom. When a man is free of the shackles of social and economic oppression, he is no longer a passive bystander, but an active participant in the process of achieving inner freedom.
- By acquiring the ability to fight power when it is misused rather than by gaining authority, real Swaraj will be achieved.
- He advocated for a world free of states, one in which individual freedom of thought and action would be fiercely protected, and he criticized the doctrine of absolute state sovereignty advanced by Hobbes, Austin, Hegel, and others.
- Swaraj will not be realized by the amassing of power by just one or a few people "Swaraj can only be achieved by teaching the people in the power of self-regulation and self-control."

As a result, his ideal state of Swaraj is a "sovereignty of the people founded on pure moral authority." In his view, a person ceases to be a human being when he or she continues to follow governmental prescriptions that run counter to his or her moral sense.

### 3. NON-VIOLENCE IN ECONOMICS

Spiritualism underpins Gandhi's insistence on a nonviolent economic system. In Gandhi's view, spirituality is not something that's out of this world, but rather something that manifests itself in everyday life. Therefore, it's amazing to see Gandhi use nonviolence as a weapon in the international economic arena as well. Introducing moral standards into international trade is nothing less than extending the law of non-violence into the realm of business [6]."

In Gandhi's view, a community should not be motivated by worldly wealth, but rather by a set of values. True economics supports the well-being of everyone and is essential for a decent living. Modern economics rejects Gandhi's normative approach to economics and technology, which rejects the positivism of modern economics. Gandhi was a supporter of an ethical approach to business. As he points out:

True ethics, like all true ethics, must be good for business in order to be worth its name. In fact, true economics is based on social justice, promoting the well-being of everyone, even the poorest members of society.

It was Gandhi's vision to create a social and economic system in which no one is exploited by anybody else. The basic essentials of existence must be available to everyone. However, no one has any claim to a society's economic resources if they do not contribute anything to it [7].

Gandhi argued for swadeshi from the perspective of a moral-social scientist. Individual, social and political self-reliance are the hallmarks of Gandhi's philosophy of Swadeshi, which does not entail just refusing to purchase foreign goods. The goal of the Swadeshi movement is to revitalise rural areas. The swadeshi component was aimed to counter the encroachment of urbanisation on rural areas. Gandhi was well-aware of the widening distance between rural and urban areas, which he saw as a barrier to the growth of agriculture and industry alike.

The focus of Gandhian economics is on describing how the proper distribution of money should be achieved, rather than delving into the nitty-gritty of how wages are set. Gandhi thinks that economic equality is the path to non-violent independence:

In order to achieve economic equality, it is necessary to remove the eternal fight between capitals and

labour... As long as there is a widening gap between the wealthy and the millions of starving people, a peaceful form of government is out of the question [8].

Inequality, according to Gandhi, leads to a culture of violence and ruthless rivalry. Co-operation leads to equality. Similar ideas can be found in Ruskin's distinction between political economy, which "consists simply in the production, preservation and distribution at the fittest time and place of useful or pleasurable things"; and mercantile economy, which "means the accumulation in the hands of individuals, of legal or moral power, upon or over the labour of others," in the economy of "mercenary" or of pay.

Ruskin Gandhi had a major influence on Gandhi's belief in perfect equality. There is no such thing as a better or worse job for him, and so all labour must be compensated on an equal basis, regardless of whether that work is done for the betterment of society or not. Gandhi, on the other hand, emphasized the notion of "to each according to his needs" as a new meaning of total equality. Gandhi advocated for what he called "the living wage or the minimum wage for labourers.

The irreducible pay is best described, in my opinion, as a living wage. They threaten the fundamental survival of work. Its effectiveness is entirely dependent on how you live your life. The more efficient a company is, the more likely it is to make more money.

But this does not excuse the stark disparities in wealth and status that exist in our society today. Sarvodaya argues for a level playing field for all. It's up to the individual to choose what he or she needs. However, they should only differ by a little margin, just as a person's social rank. Therefore, little discrepancies do not matter, but major discrepancies must be eliminated [9].

#### The Doctrine of Trusteeship

Through nonviolence, Gandhi came to embrace the idea of trusteeship as a core element of his nonviolent philosophy. Gandhi's non-violence is the only idea that fits with Gandhi's philosophy. The absence of violence necessitates the absence of greed in a community. It is impossible for a non-violent person to gain an advantage over others without taking advantage of other people's efforts.

Violence is a type of exploitation. The more someone has, the more likely he is to deny someone else of the things they need, which leads to conflict and violence. When there is no violence, there is no exploitation-taking place. Only by assuming economic equality can it be nonviolent. The aim is to have equal distribution.

The whole social system must be reformed in order

to achieve this aim. There can be no room for any other ideal in a non-violent society [10].

### Swadeshi

In Gandhian ideology, swadeshi is a key principle. Sarvodaya's stated objective is aligned with this. According to Gandhi's definition of swadeshi, a mindset focuses solely on serving those in one's own surroundings, rather than expanding outside. Think that one can serve his country while neglecting his family? That's ludicrous, according to Gandhi. We can only help our country and the human race if we first serve our own families. The Swadeshi ideology is based on the idea of a code of love and humility. It is, however, contrary to swadeshi ideology to use one's riches from harming others to pay for one's family's illegal demands.

Gandhi was aware that the Indian people's poverty was a direct result of their abandonment of the swadeshi ideal in the economy. Serving others who live far away from one's home does not constitute swadeshi. If it does not harm the growth of millions of Indians, he is not opposed to purchasing anything from any country in the globe. It's wrong for everyone, regardless of nationality, to not purchase fabric made by Indian weavers [11].

### Basic Principles of Satyagraha in Gandhian Perspective

Satyagrahi does not have to wait interminably. Whenever he reaches his breaking point, he takes calculated risks and formulates active Satyagraha strategies. Because I can never be certain that I am correct, a satyagrahi never misses or must miss an opportunity to compromise on honourable terms. When it comes to applying what we have learned in theory, Gandhi opined, "Human existence is a series of compromises. Satyagraha conflict resolution is founded on the following principles and assumptions:

- There are usually commonalities amongst the disputants.
- An appeal to the heart and mind may be acceptable to disputants.
- Satyagrahis can see Satyagraha through to its conclusion.

### Concepts of Satyagraha in Gandhian Perspective

"Truth is God," Gandhiji famously asserted. God is the only true source of knowledge. However, he said, I haven't learned ultimate truth yet, so I must cling to my conception of relative reality for the time being.

A conflict resolution strategy based on Gandhiji's ideas includes the following elements:

**Patience:** If one's beliefs and assumptions are clear, one may be patient. At this point in a dispute, a grievance has to be addressed by a Satyagraha movement. Contrary to popular belief, fighting is associated with violence. That whatever you do to others, you also do to yourself, is the guiding principle of Gandhiji ethics. According to Gandhiji, a single person's moral strength may change the environment in which he or she lives [12].

**Faith:** Based on faith in God To achieve Satyagraha, one must first believe in two things: that the opponent is receptive to reason and has a conscience, and that human nature is obligated or at least likely to respond to any virtuous and kind conduct. Believing in the goodness of human nature and rationality is a faith act for the optimist. Nonviolence is a means to the aim of truth. One of Gandhiji's key beliefs is that if we take care of the means, we will eventually arrive at our destination. Nonviolence is not a means of compulsion, but rather a means of transformation.

**Fearlessness:** Possession of a weapon was viewed by Gandhi as a sign of timidity and fear. The morality of cowards is a myth. There is no such thing as nonviolence and cowardice at the same time. Satyagraha's fearlessness "is a matter of heart" rather than physical power, according to the author.

**Self-suffering:** suffering oneself "only the person who uses it suffers when it is put to use in an unfair manner. No one else has to suffer because of his faults." It also helps to maintain a nonviolent kind of resistance [13].

### Non-violence in Current Scenario

Most confrontations these days are the result of a failure to recognize the interdependence of persons. When there is a problem in a relationship, it worries us, unsettles us, and causes tension. Relationships may be fulfilled in a variety of ways. It is evident in our daily encounters with family members and others outside of our own circle. Even at the level of social relationships, there is evidence to be found. There are times when things go smoothly and others when they don't. War, violence, assaults, and fighting are severe manifestations of human conflict that affect relationships across the world. Because of interpersonal issues, an individual's mental condition might be severely disrupted. Until the matter is handled, your connection with your father will be a constant source of stress in your life. You will never be able to escape your own inconsistencies. Conflicts in relationships arise mostly because we lack a fundamental understanding of interpersonal interactions and because we make incorrect assumptions about them. Because we do not challenge our preconceptions, we end ourselves in conflict.

Conflicts emerging at many levels of human life, such as the family, society, and nature/existence, are caused by contradictions inside an individual's own self [14].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Application of the principle of non-violence for the purpose of resolving conflicts in political, social, economic, religious and environmental spheres, Gandhi presented a series of programmes and ideals of Satyagraha, Sarvodaya, Swaraj, Swadeshi, basic education, decentralization of power and wealth, Trusteeship, social harmony, economic welfare, Sarva Dharma Samabhava, grass root democracy etc. Nonviolence, in its broadest sense, is what we mean by Satyagraha. Specifically, it refers to the practice of nonviolent action [15]. A nonviolent approach is the most potent force in the world according to Gandhi. He makes the argument that if violence were more effective than nonviolence; humanity would have ended up annihilating itself long ago. Intellectually, Gandhi had a huge impact. Some people are drawn to him because of his emphasis on political and economic decentralization; others are drawn to him because of his insistence on individual freedom, moral integrity, unity of means and ends, and social service; still others are drawn to him because of his Satyagraha and activism.

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