

A Brief View of Gandhiji's Life and Philosophy

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Abstract- Mahatma Gandhi was one of the greatest human being of India. His life journey inspires us to lead our life in the way of truth. His mother's religious approach highly influenced his life and inspired him to be truthful and an honest person. Mahatma Gandhi was a person who dedicated his life for freedom movement. During that period he launched Civil Disobedience Movement, Non Cooperation Movement and Quit India Movement.

Mahatma Gandhi followed the principle of idealism. He always believed in absolute and immortal existence of God which we all have as our souls. He always focuses on development of moral and spiritual character of human being. He mainly stresses on better social integration, endless love for human beings which all have a positive impact on mental health. His concept of truth, satyagraha, honesty, non violence gives us psychological strength. The purpose of the paper is to throw some light on Gandhiji's life and to study his philosophy his of life. Another objective of the paper is to study the present relevance of this thoughts.

Index Terms- MAHATMA GANDHI, PHILOSOPHY, TRUTH, NON VIOLENCE, SATYAGRAHA etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

The great human being Mahatma Gandhi was born in 1869 in Porabandor, Gujrat on 2nd October. From the beginning of his life he was influenced by his mother's religious approach and thought and this thought inspires him to be truthful and honest person. Gandhiji went to England for studying law and returned India in 1891. In 1915 he started non violence Civil Disobedience movement against British government. Assuming leadership of Indian National Congress in 1921, Gandhi led nationwide campaign for easing poverty, expanding women's right, building religious and ethnic amity, ending untouchability and above all achieving Swaraj or self rule. Along with this, Gandhiji believed in simple living and high thinking. He lived in self sufficient residential community and had simple vegetarian foods. He also observed fast for self purification. Gandhiji protested against British imposed salt tax and organize Dandi March in 1930. He was arrested in 1942 for Satyagraha Andolan and after release from jail he started Quit India movement. At last struggles of our freedom fighters brought independence in 1947 15 August. He was imprisoned number of time both in India and south Africa.

The contribution of Gandhiji towards Indian education was remarkable. He developed Basic Education System to make student self reliant. According to him the main aim of education should be to develop all aspects of human – body, mind and spirit.

Gandhiji deeply realized the need of economic independency of every individual. Thus he wanted to introduce a craft based education system to reduce the problem of educated unemployment. He wanted the pupils to learn their native professions- agriculture and cottage industry. This would bring economic prosperity and enable them to choose independent career, be self sufficient. He further added, "the field of education which holds that the seeds of the future children to the soil, requires absolute sincerity, fearlessness in the pursuit of truth and boldest experiment, provided always that they are sound and based upon deep thought, matured and sanctified by a life of consecration."

GANDHIJI'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE- Gandhiji strongly followed the principles of idealism. He always believed in spirituality of human beings. He stated that the ultimate goal of human life is the self realization that is realization of God within ourselves. Therefore, the goal of religion should be to make a Hindu better Hindu, make a Muslim better Muslim, make a Christian better Christian and so on. He always mentioned that if we want to achieve something we must work hard but if we want to reach at the highest level we must do the right thing and if necessary we should follow a new path. The main element of Gandhiji's philosophy are- believe in God, truth, nonviolence, satyagraha, Sarvodaya.

Believe in God- As a strong believer of Almighty Gandhiji always fell supremacy of God. He realizes God within himself. His deep faith on God gives him power for doing anything and everything in life.

Truth- According to Gandhiji truth is nothing but the reflection of God. Therefore, in his autobiography "My Experiment with Truth" he had mentioned that truth can be achieved truth in wider sense, where truth does not only means being truthful in speech but truth should be applied in all fields of life. According to him, we can feel the existence of God when we follow the three principle that is truth, beauty and goodness and apply truth in our speech deeds and actions. Thus, for Gandhiji truth and God is one. God is the ultimate immortal super power who created the universe and we can realize God within ourselves only by following the path of truth. Gandhiji also stated that, truth and ahimsa are inseparable. They are like two sides of same coin. Ahimsa is the means and truth is the end.

Non violence- Another important feature of Gandhiji's philosophy is non violence (ahimsa). Ahimsa is a strong weapon to conquer the world. He had a strong faith on ahimsa and said that this love and non violence are very essential to have triumph over hate and violence. According to him violence can bring imbalance to society and threatened the inner peace of the society. Thus, non

violence is the weapon for strong minded people which can develop different qualities like tolerance, self suffering, patience, self sacrifice, love and sympathy. He explained ahimsa in the following manner ‘ ahimsa is complete absence of ill will against all that live. In its dynamic condition it means conscious suffering. Non violence in its active form, is good will towards all life. It is pure love.’ Therefore, non violence is complete self restraint against all evils.

II. SATYAGRAHA

Satyagraha is the application of ahimsa in practical life or action. Here the opponent party does not get any type of physical or mental pain. On the contrary, it is the process of self suffering. It means that satyagrahi bears the pain. Gandhiji mentioned that satyagraha needs a great deal of sacrifice. It is very difficult to make the country ready for satyagraha as it requires plenty of pressure. Satyagraha purifies the soul of practitioner. As the literal meaning of satyagraha is holding on to the truth, the satyagrahi encounters the truth. Satyagraha is used in wider sense which include civil disobedience to construction of other political party. The essence of satyagraha had been developed from the concept of ahimsa. While developing the concept of satyagraha Gandhiji was influenced by the thoughts of Leo Tolstoy and Henry David Thoreau, from the Bible and Bhagavad Gita.

So, satyagraha can be applied in today's life also. If a political party support dishonesty, terrorism, corruption we can fight against them by disobeying. But the satyagrahis must be fearless to bear all kinds of pain and self suffering. Gandhiji always laid emphasis on moral discipline of satyagrahis, they must have faith on God. They must follow the rules of their satyagraha and command of their leader. But satyagraha can be used for personal gain. It is a process of eternal love and a fearless protest against violence.

III. SARVODAYA

The term Sarvodaya is a Sanskrit word which means universal upliftment or progress of all. This term was first coined by Gandhiji in 1908 as the title of his translation of John Ruskin's tract on political economy, unto this last. Sarvodaya basically stands for decentralization of power it may be political, economic and social. As oppose to Marxism Gandhiji believed in non violent means to remove capitalism. Gandhiji wanted a society which is free from violence and built on moral principles, humanitarianism and equality. He mentioned that “ I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have and effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class or low class of people, an India in which communities shall live in perfect harmony.”

He emphasized on the decentralization of power to decrease the concentration of power on the hands of few, rather it should be distributed to many. Therefore, he stresses on Panchayat Raj Institution which demands participation of everyone. Sarvodaya society is based on equality and liberty where love, fraternity, tolerance will developed. The society should be exploitation free and there must be recognition of dignity of labour. Gandhiji also stressed on minimization of unnecessary and unhealthy competition. Sarvodaya attempts to create a society which brings

welfare of every individual. It also gives importance on self dependency.

IV. CONCLUSION

It is very difficult to describe the life of great human being Mahatma Gandhi in some few words. As a idealist he always gave importance on all round development of individual. But his main focus is on character formation. He said, when character is lost everything is lost. So according to him the main of education should be character and personality development. Cultural aspect of education is more important than literary aspect, because through cultural aspect children can learn conduct and ideals of life. Although his concept of Sarvodaya and basic education is not fully applicable in today's world but we can not deny his significant contribution to our country. His idea of decentralization of power, secularism, prohibition of untouchability, elimination of caste system are very essential for the success of democracy. Another key concept of his philosophy is socialism. His view of socialism is to create a classless society with no poverty, no hunger, no unemployment. Today's plan like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Ayushman Bharat, Skill India program derives their core values from Gandhian Philosophy. He is a Mahatma in true sense who always aimed to develop human resource.

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