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Gandhism-An Answer to Contemporary Socio-Political Issues

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Introduction:

Mahatma Gandhi himself states that there is no 'ism' in his name like Gandhism. Whatever he preached are the spiritual values existed in the Indian tradition. He wrote in his forward to Acharya Kripalani's 'The Gandhian Way' that, nothing like 'Gandhism' can be said to exist. This is true in one perspective and false in other perspective. In this connection it must be remembered that, Gandhiji described his life as an unending experiment with 'truth'. *Ahimsa* is another principle associated with Gandhiji. Thus, in simple words, Gandhism is equal to 'Satya' and 'Ahimsa' along with other principles. On the other hand, there are no set formula or principles such as Gandhism. Therefore we can say there is no such thing as Gandhism.

In this paper attempt has been made to analyze the relevance of certain Gandhian principles in the contemporary era of cut throat competition. The concepts in this paper are divided into two parts, former part deals with concept of Gandhism and later part deals with the relevance of Gandhian principles, which are advocated about eight to nine decades ago. Perhaps, some of the Gandhian principles are more relevant today. Many socio-political issues of present day can find solution in Gandhian philosophy. Corruption, inequality, exploitation, intolerance, terrorism, unemployment and number of such issues can be resolved with the philosophy of Gandhism. We are taking legal measures to tackle these issues. For instance to control corruption in administration number of institutional framework has been designed, but in vain. Therefore it is an attempt to analyze and explain the correlation between certain ideas of Gandhiji with contemporary issues. Descriptive and analytical method has been adopted in this paper.

Gandhism:

Gandhiji was not a philosopher or academic thinker in the ordinary sense of term. According to J. P. Sudha, 'All his social and political ideas took shape and were developed in the course of civil resistance campaign conducted by him in South Africa and India. These campaigns were not launched with any preformed theory; action came first and principles were developed afterwards'. Therefore Gandhism is sum total of different principles. He advocated his views on economic, social, religious, political, issues during his lifetime. Some of his views are utopian. But these utopias help us to know how far we are far away from ideals expected by Gandhiji.

Let us examine Gandhian concept of stateless society, *Aparigraha*, trusteeship, industrial civilization vs. old civilization, in present context. These Gandhian ideas are criticized on the ground of 'non practical ideals' or 'utopias'. But, if we deeply look these Gandhian ideas from the philosophical point of view we shall come to know the significance of these ideas in present day. Let us examine these Gandhian ideas one by one.

Stateless Society:

Gandhiji was philosophically anarchist like Leo Tolstoi. He rejected existence of state on three grounds. Firstly, he repudiated the state because it is rooted in violence. Modern states are centralized and based on force. Secondly, he says state is responsible for destruction of individual freedom and personality. Thirdly, in his ideal state people are self regulated therefore they need not require external control.



In contemporary society we are facing environmental issues at global and local level. We are living in the society divided into two types viz. society living in hazardous environment and affluent society. The first one is struggling for survival in minimum resources and later society is indulged in wasting resource of the nation. Large population of the nation has no work for their hand. As a result of this, young population is involved in number of anti social activities. Market is full of commodities but very few people are possessing the purchasing capacity. In recent past we have adopted policy of comprehensive and massive use of ICT, which is going to kill the human being envisaged by Gandhiji.

The fundamental question arises what kind of society and civilization we are going to transfer to our next generation? Though we cannot reverse the wheel of progress and development, at least we should change its direction and speed. Thus, Gandhism is the solution over number of contemporary issues.

Conclusion:

Gandhism or what we can say, the principles advocated by the Gandhiji in public and private life are not just utopia. These principles need to be considered in society on different platform including educational platforms. These values help us to realize us our backwardness in the society from ethical point of view. We are doing lot of efforts to find solution over corruption, inequality, exploitation, intolerance, unemployment, terrorism etc. Legal and institutional frameworks have been designed to resolve these issues. In spite of number of measures no result is found on the ground. The basic reason is unless we concentrate on human being working in the system we can not solve the problem. Without ethical man we can not create ethical society. And society without ethical base can not find lasting solution to the above mentioned problems. Therefore Gandhi and Gandhism is more relevant to resolve number of contemporary socio-political issues.

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