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## RELEVANCE OF GANDHIYAN PHILOSOPHY IN PRESENT CONTEXT



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## “GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY AND PATH OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT”

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### **Introduction :**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (2, October 1869 -30 January 1948) was the preeminent leader of Indian independence movement in British-Ruled India. Employing non-violent, civil disobedience, Gandhi led India to independence and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world.

Gandhiji's life was dedicated to the ideals of Truth, Non-violence and love. The Bhagavad Geeta is my mother, he once said, and the name of shri Ram was his shield. He was the architect of India's freedom and one of the greatest man of this century. After his return to India in 1915, he set about organising peasants, farmers, and urban labourers to protest against excessive land-tax and discrimination. Assuming leadership of the Indian National Congress in 1921, Gandhi led nationwide campaigns for easing poverty, expanding women's rights, building religious and ethnic amity, ending untouchability, but above all for achieving Swaraj or self-rule.

Gandhi famously led Indians in challenging the British-imposed salt tax with the 400 km (250 mi) Dandi Salt March in 1930, and later in calling for the British to Quit India in 1942. He was imprisoned for many years, upon many occasions, in both South Africa and India. Gandhi attempted to practise nonviolence and truth in all situations, and advocated that others do the same. He lived modestly in a self-sufficient residential community and wore the traditional Indian dhoti and shawl, woven with yarn hand spun on a charkha. He ate simple vegetarian food, and also undertook long fasts as the means to both self-purification and social protest. Short introduce about Mahatma Gandhi.

### **Significance of the study :**

Gandhian Philosophy must need to Indian development. Especially Gandhi said that, come back to village and developed our rural agriculture development. Because of, in 21th Century people accepted the science and Technology policy and they neglect to rural philosophy and Gandhi's thoughts. Therefore we need to Gandhi's thoughts and uplift to our India.

### **Objectives of the study :**

- To study Gandhi's philosophy.
- To study concept of rural development.
- To study meaning of rural development.
- To study Gandhian principles for rural development.
- To importance of decentralization in present era.
- To study need of decentralization for rural development.



### Methodology :

For any research purpose there are two options for data collection, first is primary data collection method and another is secondary data collection method. The method of data collection is depending on various factors like as Time, Money, and Nature of the study etc.

In this article views are collected from books, journals, magazines, and Internet media etc. For this paper it is possible to do study only by secondary data collection method.

### Meaning and concept of rural development :

The development of rural areas has been a continuing process. In the pre-independence period, a number of experiments were attempted by eminent people in selected areas. Although they were successful in their experiments, they could not succeed in adopting their findings to the needs of the villages in India. Their dreams were never fulfilled, yet the minds of the planners, economists and visionaries still concentrate on this subject. It has awakened the interest, not only of the world countries but also of underdeveloped areas. In fact, rural development has assumed considerable significance, particularly in the seventies. It has, therefore, been accorded top priority in recent plans. The emphasis is on the development of agriculture, allied activities, rural industries and arts and crafts. It is a tragedy for India that we have never given chance to 'Gandhian Philosophy'. However, Gandhiji's views on Khadi and Village Industries were being followed by appointing the Khadi and Village Industries Board since 1946. This article is an attempt to characterize the rural industrialization approach evolved in Gandhian Philosophy. It also briefly reviews and analysis our approach to implement this ideology based approach in practice. Some specific policy suggestions are also attempted in light of the most dominant issues experienced by us in the last fifty years.

Mr. Smith in the British parliamentary debate had depicted the picture of a pre-independence India prior to the colonial period saying that "East India offered a market for the manufacturers of Europe greater and more extensive than both Europe and America put together". This India was destroyed by British industrialization and its backward disintegrating self-assured villages through progressive impoverishment of the peasants and destruction of the artisans.

Gandhi had grasped the history of India very well which he well reflected in his Harijanraj where he provided the main constituents of his strategy of India's reconstruction. Gandhi made it clear that 'modern civilization', nourished by British rule, was the real cause of 'economic distress'. Against that, Gandhi envisaged that the salvation of India was in the revival of its ancient civilization. Under the shadow of ancient civilization, Gandhi wanted to develop a New Social Order which was based on the foundation of non-violence and truth, where economic progress and moral progress go together and the focus is on the development of man. Life and human relations in a society, village and nation in the new social order were envisaged not like

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pyramids with an apex sustained at the bottom but, as an oceanic circle. To achieve this New Social Order Gandhi's development model was evolved around "Village Development" and it is so much emphasized that it is truly coined "VILLAGISM".

### **Decentralization need for rural development :**

Gandhi's greatest contribution to the social thought of this century is perhaps his insistence on decentralization of the means of production (i.e. say economic power). There are many who are ready to give thoughtful consideration to his theory because it is the only way out of the problem of unemployment in this country. They argue that it is desirable to go in for decentralization because huge capital accumulation is needed to industrialize the country through large-scale industries.

This is what Bertrand Russell has to say as regards Gandhi's concept of decentralization: "In those parts of the world in which industrialism is still young, the possibility of avoiding the horrors we have experienced still exists. India, for example is traditionally a land of village communities. It would be a tragedy if this traditional way of life with all its evils were to be suddenly and violently exchanged for the greater evils of industrialism and they would apply to people whose standard of living is already pitifully low..... "

Therefore, one has only to understand the magnitude of those "horrors" of which Russell speaks, before one can truly appreciate Gandhi's idea of decentralization.

We see therefore, that Gandhi was not against machinery as such. His whole approach to machinery and the use of science was radically different, deeply revolutionary and humanly conscious. A technique which tends to make man a robot, robs him of his perennial urge to freedom and makes an all-out invasion on his political, economic and social liberties is not acceptable to Gandhi.

"Science is so far as it consists of knowledge, must be regarded as having value, but in so far as it consists of technique, the question whether it is to be praised or blamed depends upon the use that is made of the technique. In itself it is neutral, neither good nor bad and any ultimate view that we may have about what gives value to this or that must come from some other source than science." This is what Bertrand Russell has to say about the use of scientific technique.

According to Gandhi, the scientific technique, therefore, must be informed by a deep awareness of values which it is out to create. In other words, the advancement of technique and perfection must accord with the general aims. Large-Scale technique strikes at the very root of the general aims. Gandhi, therefore, does not show any quarter to it.

Gandhi's ideal social order or Sarvodaya was a significant step towards the realization of the decentralized socio-economic and political order. Gandhiji has devised an elaborate scheme of things based on his 'Experiment s with Truth' in the religio-moral, socio-economic and political sphere with the individual as the centre and at the same time without loosing sight of Truth and Non-violence. The concept of



decentralization occupies paramount importance in Gandhian scheme of rebuilding India from below upwards. Gandhi's concept of decentralization can be properly appreciated and understood within the framework of his general philosophy which was built on the solid foundation of Truth and Non-violence. Non-violence was understood to be the basic tenets of Gandhiji's concept of decentralization. Centralization is a system is inconsistent with the non-violent structure of society. Centralization, as opposed to decentralization, means concentration of power and authority either in the hands of a few people or in an institution like the state.

Gandhiji's concept of decentralization was not an isolated concept but the outcome of his religio-ethical, socio-political and economic concepts and ideas. But he was of the view that life is a unity and hence cannot be compartmentalized into social, religious, political and so on. On the other hand all the different departments of life act and react upon one another.

Gandhi used rural society and agriculture society. Because of it is related to our needs today the needs are increasing so it is impossible. Therefore he focused on Khadi and village industry. Gandhi introduced khadi because of country don't important anything.

Gandhiji condemned the 'Modern civilization on his book he say, these machinaries has impowerished to india, he criticized on modern civilization because of According to him, "modern civilization is nothing but a material civilization, it reduces to materialist. It made people materialist –people are became commodity". Gandhi suggested, "man should be centre in any development, these development reducing man as an object, therefore Gandhi accepted". Factory should be Nationalized basically Gandhi was not against machinaries. He accepted simple machine.

Gandhi's idea to develop the Indian society was based on his understanding of the society and hence based on the village system. Talking about the importance of village, he wrote in 1936, "I would say if the village perishes, India will perish too. It will be no more India. His one mission in the world will get lost." Gandhi's concept of rural reconstruction is a comprehensive one, emphasizing on the economic, political, social, educational, ecological and spiritual dimensions. He ceaselessly insisted on a pattern of village life, which will be man-cantered and non-exploiting. The decentralized village economy should provide full employment to all on the basis of voluntary cooperation and work for achieving self-sufficiency in its basic requirement of food, clothing and shelter. In short, it can be said that rural reconstruction, according to Gandhi should not be merely concerned with raising the standard of living of village folk, though that was important. Talking specifically about an ideal village, where in he outlined the objectives of rural reconstruction. Non-violence with its techniques of Satyagraha and non-cooperation will have the sanction of village community. The government of the village will be conducted by the panchayat of five persons annually elected by the villagers. (Harijan 26.07.42). Such an ideal society, he stated is "necessarily highly cultured because every man and women in that society knows what he or she wants and also no one should want anything that others could not have. Such a

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society will be an "Oceanic Circle" where the centre will be the individual who will always be ready to perish for the village, later ready to perish for the circle of villagers, till at last the whole becomes a life comprised of individuals".

### **The Panchayat Raj :**

Gandhi's ideas on democratic decentralization and Panchayat Raj have their roots in his understanding about the role the state and government in the lives of people. On one hand, he says that state had no place in an ideal society, it is superfluous and inimical to human progress.

The vehicle that was most ideal to initiate both political and economic democracy at the grassroots level was the Panchayati Raj system. Mahatma Gandhi's tours all across the country reinforced his convictions that India would benefit if the villages were governed by Village Panchayats based on the principal of "simple living and high thinking". These were village republics which were self-contained and self-reliant and having all that people want. These were the institutions where minimum standard of living could be accorded to all human beings. An individual had maximum freedom and opportunity to develop his personality to the greatest extent. In these republics there would be a diminution of the state and the roots of democracy deepened. According to him centralization cannot be sustained as a system without adequate force. He aimed for economic decentralization by setting up of Khadi Movement and village industries.

Gandhi's ideas on democratic decentralization and Panchayati Raj system were not without their critics. As Fesler put it, "the Gandhian approach is an inspiration...to turn the clock back ... to restore traditional values and face-to-face dealing between men . This approach is an attractive picture, a romantic work of art or that of terrifying ideological conflicts". Gunnar Myrdal opined that the village as a basic unit of polity should not be preserved as it is the stronghold of stagnation. The forces of change can be mobilized only by integrating the village into a bigger unit right from the start. Only then can we see some level of socio-economic transformation.

### **Gandhian Path of Development :**

- Mostly focused on khadi and villege industry.
- Maximum members work in any sector as servant or job.
- Against industrialization (mass product) that doesn't provide jobs.
- Against of less industry.
- Economic progress and rural development.
- Promote to education.
- Replacing labour by technology.
- He encouraged the local level industry and Swadeshi.
- No employment means lift of technology.
- He criticized on modernization.
- Foundation of Swaraj Gandhiji analysed 3 aspects are importants.
- Self Respect 2. Self realization 3. Self reliance.



## Conclusion :

Mahatma Gandhi said, to build a life and a nation village and development of village plays a very important role. Where Pandit Nehru focused on industrialization at the same time Mahatma Gandhi focused on village. Today it shows the importance of Gandhi's thought. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched NITI (National Institute of Transformation India) with the help of Gandhi's thought. Gandhiji's approach to rural industrialization was evolved over a period of time.

Our success in its implementation was less than desirable. However, it should not lead us to believe that we must get rid of this as a burden of 'Gandhian Legacy'. We should keep in mind the following words of Pandit Nehru in his famous Gandhi gram Speech, "I begin to think more and more of Mahatma Gandhi's approach. It is odd that I am mentioning his name in this connection: that is to say, I am entirely an admirer of the modern machine and want the best machinery and the best technique. But taking things as they are in India, however rapidly we advance in the machine age—and we will do so—the fact remains that large numbers of our people are not touched and will not be touched by it for a considerable time. Some other methods will have to be evolved by us for a considerable time. Some of the methods have to be evolved so that they become partners in production even though the production apparatus of theirs may not be efficient as compared to modern techniques, but we must use that; otherwise, it is wasted". This statement is self-explanatory and in favour of more sincere and sustained efforts to develop rural industries on Gandhian lines.

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