

## **Truth and Non-Violence: The Foundations of Gandhian Philosophy**

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**Abstract:** *Gandhiji the father of nation is properly known as “Bapu” was a great supporter of truth and non-violence. “Truth” or “Satya” and “Ahimsa” or “Non-Violence” are the foundations of Gandhian philosophy. They were two socio-political weapons he used in achieving his goals. Gandhi says that truth and non-violence are the two sides of the same coin and considers ahimsa as the means; and truth as an end. He was a great supporter of peace and believed that the truth and non-violence are the only means through which peace can be gained and problems solved. The modern world is full of challenges and we face challenges at each and every aspect of life. Terrorism, war, gender violence, corruption, casteism, regionalism are the grave challenges to the global peace. Many reformers advocated the peacekeeping strategies, but Gandhi widely accepted it. His teachings considerably played a vital role all over the world for spreading the peace and harmony. According to Gandhi peace and harmony can achieved by love, non-violence, truthfulness, friendliness, compromise and cooperation. He was of the opinion that truth and non-violence binds us to one another and also to God. For him all men are essentially equal and there is an element of goodness present in every man, therefore disturbances, hatred, violence, and immorality can be removed from life by means of love and sacrifice.*

**Keywords:** *Gandhi, Truth, Non-violence, Peace, Philosophy, Challenges.*

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### **I. Introduction**

Truth and non-violence occupy an important place in the life of Mahatma Gandhi. These are the two main tools he used in his practical life as well. According to him truth and non-violence leads a person as pious, sympathetic and co-operative. He made several experiments with them with great zeal and applied them in original way practically in every aspect of human life especially in political and social fields. According to Gandhi in violence there is nothing invisible, but non-violence on the other hand is three-fourths invisible and hence the effect in the inverse ratio to its invisibility. he says that social order should be established on truth and non-violence, Gandhi's non-violent society would be a perfect democracy were each unit of a village even was to be self sufficient, independent and free. If there is necessity of the state at all, it should be non-violent in its nature. Conflicts are inherent in social, economic or political situations the non-violent technique claims creative and constructive results after creating a “crisis-packed” situation. Negotiations become imperative; the forces of understandings and cordiality are released.

Truth is employed not only to solve the national problems but it also leads to solve the international problems. In South Africa this weapon the same was employed by Gandhi against the cruel and injustice policies of the government. Indians in South Africa were harassed, debarred from all rights. According to him war is the product of misunderstanding between nations. Gandhi believed that war can be abolished and peace and harmony can be established between nations through the principle of non-violence. [1]

### **Objectives**

- This paper focuses to introduce socio-political significance of Gandhian concept of truth and non-violence.
- It would enable us to know how to apply these principles in solving social and political problems
- It also signifies how man is related to God
- It also tries to focus on global peace

### **Full paper**

Truth and Non-Violence constitute the heart of Gandhi's philosophy. Gandhi believes that the truth stands for ‘reality’. By Truth, we do not mean the character of proposition which is either true or false. Gandhi considered Truth as existence, consciousness and bliss. According to Gandhi Truth is God and vice-versa.

Gandhi maintains his belief that all the evils like violence, tyranny and injustice arise on account of a neglect of the ‘Truth’ that is all-pervasive and all-comprehending. Therefore truth can be used as a force against all these evils. Gandhi says that we cannot conquer evil with evil, violence with violence, anger with anger, by doing this we are only adding fuel to fire. The most effective force against these evils can be the one which

would force them to evaporate, and that can be done only by truth and non-violence. The aim of truth is to bring about, what Gandhi calls, a 'change of heart' not to embarrass the wrong-doer. In fact, Gandhian philosophy of truth and non-violence is based on the pre-supposition that there are no 'enemies' or 'opponent', but that there are only wrong-doers. According to Gandhi 'Non-Violence' is the means; Truth is the end. These cannot be separated from each other. They are the two sides of a same coin. According to Gandhi The conditions like anger, pride, hatred, selfish consideration, bad intention and similar other consideration are the core conditions responsible for the 'Killing or Injury to life. Any injury to life done under these motives is 'violence'. Thus, the non-violent act is free from hatred, anger, malice etc. There are certain exceptions according to Gandhi to the law of violence For example, a woman for safeguarding her dignity can become violently against criminals or when an animal which is going to die is suffering from intense pain in that case we may kill him to end his suffering and so many similar cases.[2]

Distrust, hatred, violence, immorality etc should be removed from politics as, all men are essentially one and there is an element of essential goodness present in every man. Gandhi is of the view that even in politics, hate and violence could be conquered by love and suffering.[3]. For peaceful society violence must be removed and non-violence must be. This violence can be eliminated through the decentralization. As Gandhi remarked " I look upon an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear, because although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.[4]

Gandhi's distinctive mind and face are stamped on the people globally because the greatest and the most unique contribution of Gandhi to the contemporary world is the message of Global peace, through nonviolence and truth. . Gandhi's thought was an outcome of his political struggle first in South Africa as a revolt against apartheid, and later in India battle against British imperialism both fought non-violently. He regards that realization of God could only be possible through service to humanity. The practice of non-violence requires immense moral courage. It has no room for cowardice or weakness. It is the supreme virtue of the brave. He justified the use of violence by those who does not know how to defend themselves, or the honor of their families in a non-violent way. Thus, Gandhi's concept of non-violence accommodates some element of violence than helpless submission to evil.[5]

Gandhi believes that man is a part of God, all men share common origin and common destiny so they are fundamentally same so Gandhi holds that what one man is capable of achieving is possible for all men to attain it. Therefore, instead of using the violent means to convert the opponent it is better to destroy him by non-violent means. The most fundamental principal of his ideology to maintain peace is non- violence which is opposed to violence, the cause of hatred, death and destruction and in harmony with law of love, life and creation. Gandhi's only weapons against all social evils were truth and non-voilence.and he strongly believed that, If one has to reach real peace in this world or has to carry on a real war against war, one has to begin with children; and if they will grow up in their natural innocence, one won't have to struggle, but one shall go from love to love and peace to peace, without passing fruitless, idle resolutions [6]

## **II. Conclusion**

So we can conclude and say that Gandhi was a great philosopher, lover of truth and non-violence and says that self realization cannot be attained without truth and non-violence. So if one wants to attain salvation one must be the lover of truth and non-violence. Gandhi uses truth and non-violence as social and political weapons in fighting against evils and injustice. Gandhi employed the moral weapons of truth and non-violence to end domestic , social , political , economical ,religious and cultural problems and conflicts removal of untouchabilily, communal harmony, solution to unemployment, illiteracy economic and religious equality were the social economic and political targets to be achieved through this great weapon. His philosophy of truth and non-violence transcends all regional, religious and cultural barriers. It is global and it comprehends not only humanity but the whole living world.

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