

GANDHIAN APPROACH TO RURAL ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

Gandhi's ideas on the rural economy are a shining example of Gandhism, which is fundamentally centred on the creation of a rural lifestyle that is independent and based on solid and sustainable development. In Gandhiji's view, this idea of a rural swaraj would be a democracy in which both independence and cooperation would be present. Gandhiji thought that a cottage industry centred on the village would give it economic power, prevent output from becoming uneven, and liberate rural life from the aspects of exploitation.

Gandhiji's vision for rural industries was built around the manufacturing of khadi. Gandhiji incorporated the spinning wheel in his creative work for this reason. Gandhiji equated the leather trade with labour pride rather than disdain, which supports the rural economy. Gandhiji counsels the general populace to make use of commodities produced in rural areas to boost the rural economy and increase demand for the products of village industries. Gandhiji believed that the government's responsibility in this situation should include both financial assistance and the growth of the cooperative institution.

Gandhiji saw the farmer as the cornerstone of the rural economy, which is why it served as the foundation for his major campaign. Gandhiji had a vision of the perfect village, where the residents would be healthy, intellectual, and sociable. Gandhiji's beliefs are still relevant today. Some examples are the promotion of Khadi, the idea of the PURA (Rural-Urban) Mission, the Start-up campaign, Mudra Banking, Skill India, the Swachh Bharat Mission, etc. Looks creative. Gandhiji's well-known adage, "Nature can meet all our wants but not our greed," is a direct criticism of global warming and biodiversity loss. Day of Nonviolence, Green GNP, and Sustainable Development Gandhian thinking itself appear to be the source of inspiration for the global movement toward the idea of philosophy. In actuality, Gandhi's philosophy is founded on the idea of Sarvodaya and is built on life, truth, and morality, which are everlasting truths.

Keywords— Gandhism, Jajmani, Khadi, Gramdan, Bhoodan

INTRODUCTION

Nearly all facets of Indian life are covered by the multifaceted ideas of “Mahatma Gandhi,” the founder of the Indian country and first among all-time great men. Gandhiji considered all issues carefully and offered workable answers, from democracy to rural swaraj, from celibacy to women's empowerment, from drug prohibition to education, and from untouchability to world peace. Gandhiji's philosophy, also known as Gandhism, encompasses some of the concepts, techniques, practices, and ideas that came from Mahatma Gandhi's protracted life of struggle and serve as a vision to govern not only Indian life but all human conduct.

His opinions on the rural economy are a significant and pertinent component of Gandhiji's multifaceted way of thought. Gandhiji frequently remarked that there are seven lakh villages in India, not just a few cities. They thought India could not advance without improving these villages' conditions. Gandhiji truly supported a decentralized, indigenous economy with self-sufficient communities at its core. Going back a bit, Mahatma Gandhi's concept looks comparable to the Jajmani (Grovervar,1981p.441) and other similar structures of ancient India, when villages were frequently self-sufficient entities.

This arrangement essentially persisted till the British arrived in India. As a result, the Indian village operated as a little universe with minimal connection to the outside world. It didn't need to take anything from the outside world, besides salt and iron. A symbiotic collaboration between agriculture and handicrafts existed here. The farmer's home was where the cotton was spun, and the village weaver utilized it to create his wonderful fabric. Carpenters, goldsmiths, potters, tellers, and other professionals served other financial requirements while also receiving a portion of the harvest. Because there were several enterprises, there was less demand on the land in this arrangement. Each farming family owned a portion of the village's agricultural land, which belonged to the farming community. There was not much land bought or sold. This shared ownership of land was viewed by Karl Marx as a form of Indian communism. Village conflicts, justice issues, and other issues were handled by the panchayat. This system crumbled after the British arrived. The concept of rural economics reflects Gandhiji's vision for restoring and reconstructing the formerly self-sufficient and self-supporting village community.

He took the initiative to achieve Swaraj to raise the living standards of crores of villagers. He stated, “I am striving for the realisation of Swaraj, for the crores of unemployed and working people who do not even have food for 1 June and whom They are living by eating bread with a little salt,” in a Young India article dated March 26, 1939. Gandhiji believed that the villages would be structured so that everyone would work together to produce their own needs, including food, clothing, housing, and other essentials like education. They are made using a non-centralized control system. The Gandhian ideal would be further subverted the more control there is. These lines, which Gandhi penned in Harijan's 26th July 1942, reveal his conception of the village. “In my vision of village swaraj, it will be a perfect democracy that will not rely on its neighbours for its most basic requirements, but it will be mutually exclusive for many other needs that require others' assistance. will collaborate; as a result, obtaining all the food and food grains each town requires will be their first responsibility. Your cotton may be grown for the paddies. Gandhiji opposed the use of machinery and supported economic initiatives like Khadi to ameliorate a lot of artisanal workers, farm labourers, and underprivileged villager labourers. He sent the same message through his actions as well. He lived every day while he was in South Africa. He once worked in horticulture and agriculture. Gandhiji used to cultivate a variety of crops and utilise a spinning wheel at his ashrams as well. His coworker Vinoba Bhave was motivated by him to start the Gramdan and Bhoodan movements, which allow landless and impoverished peasants the chance to engage in farming. (Kumarappa, 2010, p.58)

Gandhiji placed a high value on local manufacturing and thought that large-scale mass production was to blame for the current global problem. According to him, distribution control happens spontaneously if things are created and supplied in the places where they are required. Fraud is less likely to occur. There is no desire to raise production indefinitely and at any cost when both production and consumption occur in a small region. Many of the challenges and issues brought on by our current economy will also no longer exist in that situation. Gandhiji thought that as soon as issues with competition and the market develop, there will either be direct or indirect exploitation of villages as a natural result of large-scale industry. As a result, we should focus all of our efforts on helping the community generate goods for its own needs and become self-sufficient. Gandhiji believed that village industry was crucial to the growth of villages. In Harijan Sevak, Gandhiji writes, “My idea behind the plan of village industries is that

we should fulfil our daily needs only from the things made from the villages; And where it is known that such things are not available in the villages, then we should see whether the villagers can make a profit from them by making them with some hard work and organisation.” (Gandhi, 2013, p.102) Among the rural industries, Gandhiji gave the Khadi sector a high priority. According to Gandhiji, “Khadi is, in my opinion, a symbol of the equality, economic freedom, and togetherness of all Indians. In the lyrical words of Jawaharlal Nehru, it is “the clothing of India's liberation.” distribution and manufacture of necessities are decentralised. Thus far, the premise is that each hamlet should generate enough to suit its requirements and a little more to meet those of the cities. Gandhiji included the following duties in the process of creating khadi: planting cotton, harvesting cotton, cleaning it by sweeping and ginning, pulverising cotton, making a pun, spinning yarn, weaving yarn, dyeing the yarn, and preparing the warp. preparing the weft and filler, weaving the yarn, and cleaning the fabric All of these tasks, except for painting, could be completed in villages, according to Gandhiji. (Gandhi,2011, p.34)

In the 1920s, when handmade khadi fabrics arrived in India, they started to develop as an ideology. Mahatma Gandhi turned cotton into a representation of India's independence. Many arguments have been given behind this, out of which the following are the main ones- (1) People who have leisure and who also need a little money, get employment easily from this. (2) Thousands know of this. (3) It is easily learned. (4) It requires almost no capital investment. (5) Charkha can be made easily and cheaply. (6) People are not interested in it. (7) It provides immediate relief in times of famine. (8) It can stop the money that is going out of India by buying foreign cloth. (9) The savings of crores of rupees due to this are automatically distributed among the deserving poor. (10) Even the smallest success of this gives a lot of immediate benefits to the people. (11) It is a very powerful means of creating cooperation among the people. In addition to being a means of subsistence, it arose as a substitute as the fabric most suited to the Indian environment. (Gandhi,2011, p.20)people found it to be pleasant throughout the summer. Both perspiration and heat began to feel better after wearing them. In 1917, my Gujarati friends led me to the Bharuch Education Council, where I met Gangabai, a brave widowed sister, according to Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography. She was less educated than her other sisters, yet despite this, she possessed more courage and brains. This makes it evident that Mahatma Gandhi intended to use the Khadi movement to connect women with work. Gandhiji

believed that Khadi's inability to be marketed right away presents a significant challenge. She said that I had to accept the fact that she couldn't now compete with Mill's wardrobe. The guy whose only capital is labour is unable to provide his items for free to corner the market as capitalists can. Gandhiji considered the Khadi business as well as other village enterprises that would have helped to make villages self-sufficient and able to maintain themselves. These comprised activities like hand-grinding, hand-grinding and wiping, manufacturing soap, and paper, tanning leather, pressing oil, and other activities crucial to communal life. Gandhiji advised each member of Congress to support the growth of the local industry. Whenever and wherever he is found, he should always use items created in the villages. He wanted every man, every Indian, to consider it his religion. Gandhiji claimed that the majority of human requirements could be satisfied in the countryside if there was a demand for such items. We will build a national interest that is free from poverty, hunger, laziness, and unemployment when we begin to think compassionately about the villages and appreciate the goods manufactured in the villages. At that point, machine-made goods won't be seen as an imitation of the West by us. would fit with the vision of a liberated new India. Gandhiji used to spin yarn every day to emphasise the value of work and independence. People were pushed to stop wearing foreign clothing and switch to khadi throughout different Gandhian movements, which used hand-spun yarn and weavers. Gandhiji expresses his disgust at the period when the leather-making industry was seen as a shameful activity, even though he believes the leather trade in the countryside to be as old as India. Thousands of individuals allegedly became ancestral untouchables and had their work despised.⁶ India suffered a terrible loss as a result, both monetarily and morally. Gandhiji thought of India as a nation with abundant natural resources. He thought that as long as India made the most of its natural riches, neither poverty nor sickness should exist in this prosperous nation. According to Gandhiji, our nation has fallen in every way, making us the world's smallest, most helpless, and most defeated people because we lost the connection between intellect and physical work. Gandhiji provides proof of the state of the leather industry at the time. In 1934, Gandhiji stated in Harijan Sevak that it has been calculated that each year, nine crore rupees worth of raw leather leaves India and is entirely brought back in the shape of finished goods. This involves intellectual as well as economic exploitation of the nation. (Chandra,1990, p199)

Gandhiji's views on the rural economy also provide a clear explanation of how the average person might contribute to the growth or development of the village industry. Gandhiji asserts that a great start to village industry work would be if everyone of us began utilising items created by villagers instead of items manufactured by villagers for food, drink, clothing, and everyday usage. Will occur. Gandhiji uses an illustration to clarify this. He claims that using the acacia or neem teeth from the village to clean the teeth is more beneficial than using the toothbrush created in the factory yesterday. Whose teeth are weak or not, he can take the work of the tongue by breaking off the other end and smashing one end of the tooth with a hammer. Tomorrow, it will also be more affordable and cleaner than factory brushes. Gandhiji asserts once more that a man may make a good paste at home by finely grinding charcoal and mixing it with a little fresh salt. Progress in the work of the village industry is also demonstrated by the use of unpolished rice instead of milled rice, community-made jaggery in place of white sugar, and village-woven khadi material instead of milled cloth.

In his conception of the rural economy, Gandhiji sought government assistance in the advancement of village industries and villages, just like ordinary people. In his opinion, the All-India Charkha Sangh and the All-India Village Industries Association might make particular efforts for growth if the government created a separate minister and department (ministry) for this activity. Every provincial government had to inform the villagers that they would have to make their khadi for their use, per Gandhiji's request. Local production and distribution will take place automatically in this way. Gandhiji thought that to make it simpler for the villagers to establish businesses, the government should provide cotton or cotton (as needed) at a cost to the villagers and the necessary manufacturing gear in readily repayable instalments. In addition, the government should assign a teacher to the villages and assume responsibility for purchasing any extra khadi if the villagers' production is insufficient to meet their requirements. The lack of clothing will be eliminated in this way with minimal hassle and expense. A list of items that can be produced locally either entirely on one's own or with very little assistance should be created by the government. Examples include rice oil, rice cakes, hand-crushed rice, toddy jaggery, honey, toys, sweets, meats, handmade paper, village soap, etc. Gandhiji thought that these villages, most of which had been abandoned or were in ruins, might be brought back to life if the government made such an effort. (Gandhi, 1947, p.115)

Gandhiji saw village fairs as crucial to the development of the rural economy. In contrast to shows nowadays, he thought that these exhibitions shouldn't involve sales. Khadi and other products created in local industries shouldn't be sold there; instead, the display should serve as a teaching tool, be eye-catching, and motivate the locals to learn about or manage a local industry. He should point out the drawbacks and weaknesses of the current village lifestyle and provide solutions. Additionally, he has to learn how to make village life lovely and creative. Books, maps, and images ought to illustrate which industries and how they do so more profitably. He must explain how to manage different village businesses and where and how to make the essential tools. Each industry's operations should be openly displayed. (Chaudhri,2000, p.44)

The peasantry was a crucial tenet of Gandhiji's views on the rural economy. The greatest socioeconomic class in the nation was responsible for shaping Gandhiji's notion of Swadeshi as well as having to play a significant part in the national struggle. With the aid of this class, the nation was able to not only address the food grain deficit but also to make the villagers more independent and self-sufficient. Gandhiji was highly aware of the many facets of what farmers do. This is the rationale for Gandhiji's consistent display of support for farmers throughout the national struggle. Be it the Bardoli Peasant Movement, Mopila Rebellion, Champaran Satyagraha, or Kheda Rebellion. In actuality, Gandhiji did not view the issues facing farmers in isolation from the fight for national independence. This is the reason Gandhiji's description of the connections between the peasant fight and the national independence movement is arguably the most beautiful. Whatever the Bardoli battle may be, it is not a struggle to achieve Swaraj, in his own words. However, in this type of battle, every attempt is to bring us closer to Swaraj, and in getting us there, these struggles may prove to be more beneficial than the direct struggle for Swaraj. Gandhiji had an ideal Indian village in mind when he considered rural economies. He asserted that the perfect Indian hamlet would be constructed with an extensive sanitation infrastructure. The materials utilised in the building of his huts would be those that could be found in the area lying within a radius of five miles surrounding the hamlet, and they would be well-lit and ventilated. These huts would feature courtyards or other outside areas where the occupants might raise livestock and cultivate their crops for their consumption. Village pastures for grazing cattle, a government dairy, elementary and secondary schools with a focus on industrial education, and a panchayat to resolve conflicts would all be present. "The hamlet of

my imagination will not be as it looks now,” Gandhiji writes in a letter to Nehru. The wise men will live in the town of my dreams. They won't live like animals in the dark and dirt. All men and women will be able to stand boldly in front of anyone in the world and be independent. No one will be idle or living in luxury, there won't be a plague or a smallpox outbreak. Each person will be required to perform a fair amount of physical effort. Knowledge changes over time, traditions indeed vary depending on the time of the nation, thoughts change, and the standards and development scales based on them continue to change, but perhaps this is not true of Gandhian thought given that we are now in the twenty-first century. It is clear from the way the contemporary, globalised world is gravitating toward and embracing Gandhian concepts that they may endure throughout time because of their concreteness, originality, multidimensionality, and usefulness. In truth, Gandhiji's principles, which serve as a beacon for all of mankind, are still relevant today, but the challenge is more about how to put them into practice. If we examine the time from the liberation fight to the present, much of India's developments and accomplishments may be traced back to Gandhian ideology. There is a certain Gandhian impression in them, whether it is concerning the creation of different boards like Khadi Boards, Silk Boards, etc. to encourage cottage industries or the provisions of Panchayati Raj incorporated in Article 40 of the Constitution. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Bill, which was passed in December 1992 and granted Panchayati Raj Institutions constitutional status, was a significant step in the direction of Gandhiji's goal. The father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, used the spinning wheel and yarn to win both the independence and the self-reliance wars. Mahatma Gandhi's message is still with us today in the shape of Khadi. There is great potential for the growth and usage of businesses like Khadi in a nation like India, where there is a vast stock of traditional skills and industries. Only the small, medium-sized, and cottage industries constitute a significant source of employment in the villages after the agricultural sector. Khadi units make up the majority of cottage industry units. Given the significance of Khadi, the government is taking some steps to specifically promote this industry. In his radio speech “Mann Ki Baat,” the current prime minister also advised people to use Khadi more and more so that its use rises and more and more job possibilities become accessible to jobless women and youth in rural parts of the nation. The people were so moved by this speech that the sale of Khadi increased by more than 120 percent in less than a year. The charkha is always being developed as part of the continuing activities. The idea of solar charkha has become more prominent as an outcome. The

khadi and handloom industries have received some government announcements. The primary one is the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program. This has a provision for financial subsidies to help establish rural enterprises. Additionally, a large number of clusters are being established to support the Khadi and village industries, which will benefit thousands of weavers. This will see the replacement of production machinery, the construction of facility centres, and the development of products to aid in quality enhancement, training, and capacity building. Gee. To support micro and small rural enterprises financially, the government has established Mudra Bank. Gandhiji's ideal village was well-kept and brimming with talent, according to his conception of the rural economy. Gandhiji's "Nai Talim" contains the idea of vocational competence. In the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (Skill India) and other skill development initiatives, Gandhiji's vision is today recognised to be beneficial. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, whose logo was inspired by Gandhiji's spectacles, is being operated for the same cleanliness. To celebrate Gandhiji's birth centennial and the 150th anniversary of his birth, this programme aims to rid India of all dirt by 2019. (Kurukshetra,2015, p.11) While the MGNREGA plan (Mahatma Gandhi Work Guarantee Scheme) is effectively operating, former President Kalam has announced the Pura (Providing Urban Amenities to Rural India) initiative to give employment to people in rural India. The idea of rural areas was advanced and first put into practice in 2009. (Jolly,2007, p. 89) By altering this system, a new programme called the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban (Rural-Urban) Mission is now being launched, which will implement a variety of services and programmes in rural regions. Additionally, initiatives have been started and stood up to encourage business and skill development. The "Make in India"¹² campaign, which aims to boost manufacturing in the nation, also reflects Gandhiji's concept of Swadeshi. Gandhiji supported cottage and small businesses. A man should not be a slave to machines, he used to remark. He was against machines because, for every worker that they replace with employment, many more employees are rendered worthless. In addition, manufacturing in huge industries often takes into account the competition rather than the real need. According to Gandhiji, the demands of the consumer are not taken into account during mass production. Given the rate at which consumerism and the culture of collectivism are developing right now, as well as the global economic recession and rising unemployment, Gandhiji's warning appears to be accurate. "I can state with complete certainty that it is responsible for the problem in the world." Gandhiji's material ideals, which grant everlasting

truth, self-sacrifice, and self-determination in return for technical knowledge and self-determination, become even more important in today's materialistic society as people want power and luxuries. emphasises the truth's utmost purity. It is true that in the modern period, industrialization is necessary for development and progress, but Gandhiji's teachings suggest that if we focus more on the growth of small, cottage, and rural industries, issues like consumerism, economic inequality, and unemployment won't be as problematic. Gandhiji thought that only items created by home enterprises, which were utilised and consumed locally, could guarantee economic swaraj. (Mann Ki Baat, October 3, 2014) Industrialization is indeed necessary for development and progress in the modern day, but Gandhiji's teachings suggest that if we focus more on the growth of small, cottage, and rural industries, the issues of consumerism, unemployment, and economic inequality won't be as significant. Gandhiji was unable to materialise his belief that only domestically made items, utilised and consumed locally, could guarantee economic swaraj. Gandhi's philosophy of coexistence with nature can help us escape today's human existence dilemma and promote resource conservation. The Gandhian principles are still relevant today, and the world's international organizations see them as essential to the well-being of all people.

CONCLUSION

This is the rationale for the declaration of October 2, Gandhiji's birthday, as the International Day of Nonviolence and the prominence of the Gross Green National Product (Green GNP) idea in global development issues. In reality, the entire research demonstrates that Gandhiji, his ideas, and his deeds serve as a light not only for India but for all of mankind, allowing us to give our lives purpose. Gandhism's importance is therefore clear. Gandhi's grandson Tushar Gandhi may have provided the finest response about the applicability of Gandhism. Is life relevant? is one of the concerns raised about Gandhiji's relevance, in Tushar Gandhi's opinion. Does the truth matter? Is morality important? Because life, truth, and morality are the pillars of Gandhian philosophy.

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