



## Reliability of Gandhian views on industrialization and globalisation of India

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**Abstract:** One of the greatest challenges for Gandhi was to rope in every strata of the Indian society into his ideals of economic self-sufficiency. Gandhi understood that the very backbone of India was its villages. Unless the village economy could be reformed, nothing could be achieved on the economic front. In his bid to resurrect the rural economy of India, Gandhi started to advocate the use of handmade tools to plough lands. He turned his life into a living example of his ideals and led every resident of his Sabarmati ashram to do the same.

**Key words:** Industrialization, globalisation, Rural Economy

### Introduction

Globalisation offers the potential to raise economic growth rates significantly. But at the same time, it also exposes firms and economies to intense competitive pressures. Declining terms of trade can result, and in some circumstances this may lead to immiserising growth, that is, an increase in economic activity which delivers lower standards of living. The result is growing inequalisation, both between and within countries. This belief that industrialisation leads to per capita income growth follows from the existence of a correlation between these two sets of development indicators. So it is not surprising that attempts have been made to offer a causal explanation of why industrialisation may provide the basis for higher living standards. Both of these two aspects were thought differently by Gandhi. Industrialisation placed by rural industries and globalisation with spiritual manner. Both are now, can found as false evidence. The following headings cover these issues.

### Rural Economy, Khadi and Handlooms

Gandhi came back to India after his successful South African initiative to find the Indian economy in a state of absolute disarray. He was pained by the way the rural economy was broken down and debased beyond redemption by the British authorities. He took up a twofold action. First, he had to instill in India the moral courage to be economically self-sufficient, producing and fulfilling its own primary needs in home-grown, indigenous ways. This would not only revive the rural economy of India, it would also break down the British economic motives that led them to stay in India. This was indeed an uphill task. He knew it would be difficult for him to make the Indian elite, groomed to a system of caste-based economy for centuries to truly accept the dignity of labor and work. Gandhi had only one way out and he immediately embarked on that. He turned his life into a living example of his ideals and led every resident of his Sabarmati ashram to do the same. Soon, the ideals of economic self-sufficiency were accepted throughout India. The death knell of the British economic interests in India was sounded and the British authorities soon realized



that by attacking their economic interests, Gandhi had successfully isolated their rationale behind their rule of India.

One of the greatest challenges for Gandhi was to rope in every strata of the Indian society into his ideals of economic self-sufficiency. Gandhi understood that the very backbone of India was its villages. Unless the village economy could be reformed, nothing could be achieved on the economic front. In his bid to resurrect the rural economy of India, Gandhi started to advocate the use of handmade tools to plough lands. He did not endorse huge farm holdings with modern agricultural machines. Such holdings, he thought, would naturally bring in discrimination where one would reap the benefits of the toil put in by someone else. Gandhi's more revolutionary concept that gathered great popularity throughout the nation was his defense for the cause of handicrafts and handlooms. It was a pointed attack against the mill-made textiles introduced by the British authorities and was an important part of their economic interests in India. Gandhi gave the call to all Indians to desist from the use of all foreign products and for everyone to spin his or her own clothes. The 'charakha' or the spinning wheel and the khadi, or the homespun coarse cloth became the very symbol of nationalism and a sign for the support for national economy. Gandhi made it compulsory for all satyagrahis to use khadi clothes. It was an important economic statement made by Gandhiji. All forms of rural handicrafts achieved great encouragement from Gandhi.

### Gandgi Vs Nehru

The policy of the Congress Government led by Nehru was based upon the fact that there must be industrial development at all costs. Nehru wanted a country with Modern Large Scale Industries, a Large Army, a Strong Navy and Air Force and a socialist development in the country with "touch' of capitalism. Gandhi, who was in favor of autonomous villages where Panchayats should perform the legislative, executive and Judicial functions, did not find any place in the government. The objection of Gandhi of developing large cities was rejected but Panchayati Raj with 'modifications' was accepted later. A basic difference between Gandhi & Nehru's economic philosophies was that Gandhi wanted village as an independent unit, while Nehru wanted it a subordinate unit to a higher organization. Gandhi wanted a cottage based economy, Nehru dreamt of major Industries in India.

Gandhi's ideas were basically spiritual and he was uncompromising with his principle of truth, non-violence and purity. Nehru never attached due importance to spiritualism. His ideas were rational, pragmatic and global. He wanted to compromise with the situation when circumstances demanded.

Gandhi was quite traditional in his approach. He never needed doctors, police, and machines and wanted to pursue traditional methods to realize the ends. Nehru never believed such things. He had faith on doctors, police, press, machines and he wanted to promote welfare of the society through them.

With his entire benign smile, hard work, traditional -approach, Gandhi was regarded as the 'Father of the Nation'. With his entire pragmatic outlook, dream



to modernize India, massive industrialization etc. Nehru became the architect of the modern India.

Thus Gandhian modal of rural development was differed the Nehru industrialization model. As prime minister, Nehru was concentrated on heavy and basic industries rather than the rural industrialization as engine for the economic development.

### **Globalisation and Gandhian economic Ideas**

A major part of Gandhi's criticisms towards industrialisation was geared towards preserving India's rich natural resources. As globalisation has progressed, so has the tendency to try and exploit every possible resource in the country to increase the GDP. Rapid deforestation has occurred throughout the developing world and serious environmental hazards are faced by most developing countries today.

By now thousands of papers and hundreds of books have been written on the topic. One can be sure that there are many definitions trying to explain globalisation. Many see it as a primary economic phenomenon, involving the increasing interaction, or integration, of national economic systems through the growth in international trade, investment and capital flows. However, one can also point to a rapid increase in cross-border social, cultural and technological exchange as part of the phenomenon of globalisation.

The course on Gandhi and Globalization will address the multiple crisis that globalization has unleashed – the economic crisis, the ecological crisis and the political crisis. The economic crisis is now being felt worldwide including in

prosperous Europe and USA. The high resource demand of globalization is creating resource wars across the planet – wars over land, wars over water, wars over seed and wars over food. This is increasing violence and militarization. Gandhiji in *Hind Swaraj* explains the implications of fall in the moral standards in the society following material prosperity.

Corporate globalization has also undermined representative democracy making States representative of corporate interest rather than public interest.

Gandhi's philosophy and politics are more relevant than ever before in finding ways to live peacefully, equitably and sustainably on this fragile planet. The course will explore the contemporary relevance of Gandhi's key concepts of Swaraj, Swadeshi, Sarvodaya and Satyagraha.

The course will show how Gandhi's observation that the earth has enough for everyone's needs and not for some peoples greed can be translated into emerging movements for the defense of the earth and people's rights.

One of the fields where Gandhian philosophy has been totally rejected is that of global spread of violence. Throughout the post WWII period when globalisation was maturing, numerous conflicts outline the Cold War. To this day, bitter conflicts exist in numerous parts of the world, notable ones being in Africa, Middle East, Chechnya and Kashmir. Post 9/11 has also seen international terrorism coming to the global arena with new and hideous dedication towards violent means. This spread of violence can be directly linked to the globalisation process. The only



consolation remains that non-violence in anti-globalisation movements remains alive as can be seen in any protests outside a WTO convention. Thus, the crucial question facing us surely is Are the notions of Gandhi and Globalisation contradictory? Not necessarily, it seems. Some of his ideas may seem utopian and unrealistic in the global society today, while others may seem in direct opposition to everything globalisation and liberalisation stands for. However, many of his principles remain valid even today and applied worldwide, the most notable being the principle of satyagraha. He brought forward practical issues facing the globalisation process today that of environmental concerns, equality of rights for all, rural development and evils of violence. However, to sum up Gandhian attitudes towards globalisation as it stands today, it seems apt to conclude by quoting KaviguruRavindranath Tagore –

"We have for over a century been dragged by the prosperous West behind its chariot, choked by the dust, deafened by the noise, humbled by our own helplessness and overwhelmed by the speed. We agreed to acknowledge that this chariot-drive was progress, and the progress was civilisation. If we ever ventured to ask, 'progress towards what, and progress for whom', it was considered to be peculiarly and ridiculously oriental to entertain such ideas about the absoluteness of progress. Of late, a voice (Gandhi) has come to us to take count not only of the scientific perfection of the chariot but of the depth of the ditches lying in its path."

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