



Gandhi's Sarvodaya Movement and Social work Profession

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Abstract: *The concept of development has been looked at from a different than merely as the gross national product to improve the economic condition of people. Development should not lead to tensions and inequalities. People have been disenchanted with the development workers who have changed from innovative missionary workers to workers for the maintenance of the status quo and creators of the institutions as designed by aid-giving agencies. The professional social workers have not given a good account of themselves in enlisting and encouraging people's participation in the planned development of the country. Gandhi was very much concerned with the plight of the common man. He felt that we must change the current state of affairs so that the poor man too can raise his head with dignity. He found three way us to do this first, the gospel of love should be followed in place of that of hate. Second violence should be preplaced by self-suffering. Third, do put should force against that of brute force. Therefore, greed by love and everything will be all right. If this is followed in the truth spirit it will enhance the value of professional social work and enthuse others engaged in similar task to work with the people.*

Key Words: *Sarvodaya movement, Social Work, Gandhi and Non - violent*

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi's genius as a social reformer lay in his intuitive ability to fuse timeless principles with evolving strategies. This is best seen in the vast array of activities he initiated under the single umbrella of the constructive programme. From the twenties until his death 1948, Gandhi gradually shifted the emphasis of his political endeavors from non-violent resistance to constructive schemes for the social good.

For him, non-violent resistance (satyagraha) and the Constructive Programme a concrete embodiment of sarvodaya were logical corollaries of the same philosophical perspective. Non-violent resistance, however, aimed to set right entrenched abuses or to abolish some patently unfair law or practice. Gandhi combined constructive work with

struggle against injustice. Social evils and injustice must be resisted, to cooperate with them is to accept them and get assimilated with them. A free man not only constricts but fights injustice. Satyagraha is the soul force and Truth. The Satyagraha should not have any hatred in his heart against the opponent. The issue must be true and substantial. This Satyagrahi must be prepared to suffer till the end for his cause. His whole life as he said was a continuous experiment in the search of truth.

Mahatma Gandhi sought to uplift the whole of society, whilst encouraging self-sufficiency in each sector and region. If civil disobedience and non-violent resistance could arouse the conscience of others, the constructive programme could channel that awakened sensitivity in beneficial ways. Within the Indian context, this meant nurturing communal



unity, abolishing untouchability, fostering adult education and systematic improvement of villages. It meant uplifting the peasants and developing non-violent labour unions, working towards economic and social equality, promoting cottage and small – scale industries as a means for decentralizing economic production and distribution and eradicating a wide variety of social evils.

Gandhian ideology and Sarvodaya movement

Gandhiji's value system has moulded the social policy of the government of India since the achievement of independence. His efforts are reflected in adoption of constitution guaranteeing freedom of conscience, worship, speech and expression and prohibited discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex; political-administrative consolidation of the country; progress towards a welfare state focusing on the problems of social welfare and a thorough examination of issues associated with them.

Sarvodaya and Social Welfare

Gandhiji conceptualized social welfare as Sarvodaya meaning "the wellbeing of all in all phases of life". In the same time he paid special emphasis on the welfare of the lowest, humblest-underprivileged such as Harijan, women, destitute, rural folk. His constructive programme not only emphasizes the wellbeing of all but also deals with all aspects of individual, social and national life. Mahatma Gandhi while advocating the cause of social reform and dedicating himself to eradication of all social evils, indirectly brought in specific plans of action. He promoted inter group relations, created favorable public opinion, launched mass programmes and

induced changes at a mass level. Gandhiji's philosophy was based on dignity and worth of individual. He believed in the dignity of labour and the right of all people to earn a livelihood. He did not impose his views on other people, but showed understanding and love for them.

The main stay of 'Sarvodaya', emphasized the values of Swarajya and Lokniti, that is people have to govern themselves in order to obtain equity and justice. This philosophy accepted that people are knowledgeable workers being interested at one and the same time in social reform and in helping the individual adjust to his present circumstances. Gandhiji, thus played a significant role in preparing the intellectual climate for the growth of professional social work in India.

Sarvodaya Movement

Gandhi's ideals have lasted well beyond the achievement of one of his chief projects, Indian independence (Swaraj). His followers in India (notably, Vinoba Bhave) continued working to promote the kind of society that he envisioned, and their efforts have come to be known as the Sarvodaya Movement. Anima Bose has referred to the movement's philosophy as "a fuller and richer concept of people's democracy than any we have yet known." Sarvodaya workers associated with Vinoba, J. P. Narayan, Dada Dharmadhikari, Dhirendra Mazumdar, Shankarrao Deo, K. G. Mashruwala undertook various projects aimed at encouraging popular self-organization during the 1950s and 1960s, including Bhodan and Gramdan movements. Many groups descended from these networks continue to function locally in India today.



Sarvodaya and Social Work

Sarvodaya aims at a complete transformation of the present social structure through quite, constructive, social work carried on primarily at the village level and in slum area, with a view to initiating a non-violent revolution and establishing a more just social order. Sarvodaya draws its inspiration as much from the ancient religious traditions as from the modern, national secular, humanitarians or revolutionary idealism. The ideology of sarvodaya is not a product of intellectual theorization. It grew out of activities, experiences and inner conviction of great soul, i.e., Gandhi who wanted to do away with all kinds of social disabilities, injustices and inequalities.

The constructive programme was designed not only to disseminate Gandhi's basic principles but also to ensure that a variety of shifting opportunities could be taken to secure modest successes wherever possible. A mere succession of violent thrusts at the existing social structure is not acceptable. Gandhi preferred modest gains, each of which stood a reasonable chance of enduring. Leaving the dramatic action of demolishing the old social structure to those who preferred what he was as misguided activity, he sought to build a new edifice brick by brick. The constructive programme could slowly build upon every success whilst leaving the future open to bold experimentation in which there are invariably errors, without threatening to lose the gains already made.

The most important factor of "Constructive Programme" as stressed by Gandhiji was communal Harmony. It

was very relevant then and even now, when Godhra incidence and Akshar Dham (Temple) incidence has taught us the importance of communal harmony. Every one irrespective to his faith should show similar respect to all other faiths (religion) and should treat everyone with brotherhood ship. Until communal peace and religious independence (secularity) is achieved no economic or social development can take place.

Principles of the Sarvodaya

- ❖ There is no centralized authority, and there is political and economic atmosphere in the villages.
- ❖ Politics will not be the instrument of power but an agency of service and *Rajniya* will yield place to *Lokniya*.
- ❖ All people will be imbued with the spirit of love, fraternity, truth, non-violence and self-sacrifices. Society will function on the basis on the non-violence.
- ❖ There will be no party system and majority rule and society will be free from the evil of the tyranny of the majority.
- ❖ The sarvodaya society is socialist in the true sense of the term. All calling will be the same moral, social and economic values. The individual personality has the fullest scope for development.
- ❖ The sarvodaya society is based on equality and liberty. There is no room in it for unwholesome some competition, exploitation and class-hatred.
- ❖ Sarvodaya stands for the progress of the all. All individual should do individual labour and follow the ideal of non-possession. Then it will



be possible to realize the goal of: from each according to his work and to each according to his needs.

- ❖ There will be no private property, the instrument of exploitation and the source of social distinctions and hatred. Similarly, the profit motive will disappear, rent and interest will go.
- ❖ The Sarvodaya Movement is based on Truth, Non-violence and Self-denial.
- ❖ The Sarvodaya Movement makes a sincere and bold attempt to create the necessary atmosphere to bring together such individuals with an unwavering faith in the Welfare of All.
- ❖ The gain to the individual would be small. The development of each quality depends upon every other. If all the qualities are improved a little, then the individual would gain more.

Constructive program

Constructive Program (CP) is a term coined by Mahatma Gandhi to describe one of the two branches of his [satyagraha](#), the other being some form of nonviolent resistance, e.g. civil disobedience, sometimes referred to as "obstructive program". CP is a way of carrying out a struggle through community and self-improvement by building structures, systems, processes, and resources that are alternatives to oppression and promote self-sufficiency and unity in the resisting community.

Though not as well-known as his nonviolent resistance programs, Gandhi recognized the value of constructive program and used it successfully as early

as the first year of his campaigns in South Africa, 1894. In fact, the value of CP in the struggle for the independence of India cannot be overemphasized, as he described civil disobedience as "an aid to constructive effort." Gandhi wrote to his friend and supporter, Jamnalal Bajaj, saying, "My real politics is constructive work." Contemporary nonviolent struggles often lack constructive program, which could easily be integrated and enable them to be proactive, maintain continuity of effort when direct resistance is not possible, and convince the public and opposition that they are not simply disruptive but have the capacity to build as well. Most importantly constructive program can build alternative institutions so that a successful insurrection does not lead merely to a power vacuum that lets oppression back in, as for example in Egypt after the otherwise successful overthrow of President Mubarak in 2011.

Gandhian Values And Social Work

Gandhi was not a social worker in the strict sense of the term. But Gandhian social work is basically concerned with the reconstruction of society based on truth and nonviolence and welfare of the entire last and the lowliest, the poorest of the poor (Antyodaya). The lowliest, the poorest of the poor (Antyodaya). The vulnerable sections of the society are the worst sufferers in the catastrophic situations such as fires, epidemics, famine, wars, not to speak about the welfare Needs of the disadvantaged sections and the problems relating to social injustice, economic exploitation, social discrimination, inequality and the related problems which are the outcome of the discrepancies in the social system. The basic objective of Gandhi a social work



was too fixed out the basic causes and conditions out of which, the above problems would arise. The method of social action would deal with such problems to rectify the discrepancies in the social system keeping in view the truth, social injustice and nonviolence. It is also necessary to bring about fundamental changes in the institutional framework and the values of the society. Social action aims at collective effort and involvement of the people directing collective energies towards combating social problems. The dignity and self respect of the individual is in jeopardy, the laws would be amended to safeguard the interests of the weaker sections and poverty groups.

Ammu M. Mazundar says "in the course of many of his activities of a social welfare nature, Gandhi had developed certain principles, practices and procedures which harmonize remarkable with the principles and techniques of pre-professional social work as it has developed in the western world-settlement houses, social group work, social case work, community welfare organization, social legislation, social action". Gandhi was not a social worker in the street sense of the term as it is understood by professional social workers. A social worker is one who enables the individuals in distress, singly or in groups, to adjust to their situation by helping them to help themselves to overcome their difficulties through the well-defined techniques of case work, group work and community organization. But he combined the social work spirit with his activities in the field of politics social reform and social welfare.

Gandhi's Constructive Programme from Social Work Perspective

Social work is both palliative as well as responsible for changing institutions. It helps individuals in the framework of existing conditions as well as to help change social institutions. It recognizes the multiple causation of problems and realizes that the cause lies neither exclusively in the individual nor in the societal structure. It becomes clear that profession which works towards social justice in a wide sense must feel responsible for amelioration and social change. The change should begin the change should begin from within to influence the policies at vicarious levels to change the plight of Dalits and disadvantaged sections of the population.

Social workers must create conditions which would help the people to be self-reliant and realize the ideals of justice and equality. The basic philosophy of social work is to enlist the people's participation in their development, especially rural development. Gandhi's ideals and experiments provided much needed strength and inspiration to professional social workers. Gandhi's constructive programme is the key to the construction of Poorna Swaraj or complete independence by truthful and honest means and it has greater relevance today.

Gandhian Social Work

Gandhian social work is concerned with the reconstruction of society based on truth and non-violence and with welfare of the entire last and the lowliest. Hence, it cannot ignore the problems relating to social adjustment and maladjustment, to social welfare needs of the people and also the problems relating to social injustice and economic exploitation. The objective of Gandhian



social work would naturally be to find out the basic causes and conditions out of which arise all suit problems. The laws which are considered bad and obedience to which would be inconsistent with the self-respect of the individual or human dignity will have to be opposed or disobeyed if necessary which is the ultimate value of the profession of social work. Whenever collective energies are directed towards combating certain problems for obtaining long term results, we have social action.

The Gandhian model envisaged that development and governance should be bottom up and not be top-down goal should be self-defined and not stranger defined, production should be aimed at basic goods to fulfill basic needs with useful vale and not at non-basic and greed-oriented luxury goods, the process of production should be by the masses and not through mass production and whole model in the words of J.C. Kumarappa leads to decentralized economic planning and actually economic of permanence, while in the model of industrial economy there is the danger that the rich becomes richer. The need of the hour is that leaders and people of the country be inspired by the ideals and teaching of Mahatma Gandhi.

The principal element of Gandhi's significance lies in his constructive programme which aimed at changing the very basics of the whole social and economic order. Social work has been recently developed to help in solving social problems of modern society. It is something like curative approach, whereas the constructive programme acts as a preventive approach in social behaviour. The constructive programme is based on non-violence, eliminating violence, domination and inequality

which are the causes for all the fundamental problems of mankind.

Revamp Social Work

To revamp and change programme of social work education to suit to the contemporary needs of the society. The following areas of intervention need emphasis in social work education.

1. Peace Movements
2. Resolution of conflicts
3. Social legislation and social action
4. Policies and programmer for development of SC's and STs and BCs
5. Anti-poverty programmes
6. Sarvodaya (Gandhian model) Vs Western model of development
7. To build participating democracy for grassroots upward through Panchayat Raj System
8. Communication and its effective use in educating people

The upheaval which was started by Gandhi was not carried forward by the labeled Gandhians or even by a handful of dedicated men in different political parties. It can only be carried forward to success by mass mobilization and mass action on basic social and economic issues with keeping secular fabric intact. We have once again become slaves under neo-imperialistic forces that govern our country through remote control. Purna Swaraj can only be attained through implementing constructive programme of Gandhi for achieving sustainable development works including social



work and they complement each other. The ultimate goal of Gandhian constructive work and social work is the good of community at large. Both constructive work and social work are the noble work which can be carried out by the individuals and organization wedded to the welfare of all which means the creation of a Sarvodaya Society and a sarvodaya social order and there is a need to revisit Gandhian Ideology of rural development green revolution sustainable agriculture, rural livelihoods and empowerment of rural masses that Gandhi needed.

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