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## GANDHI AND NON-VIOLENT MANAGEMENT

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### **Abstract**

Mahatma Gandhi's ideology of non-violence is more relevant in the present times. Non-violence means "lack of desire to harm or kill". Non-violence is a key ingredient of Gandhian thought. He was opposed to war. On his point of view the two groups engaging in it may not stand on the same plane. The reason of one side may be more than the other, so that even a non-violent person might wish to extend his or her moral support to one side rather than the other. A closer look at the history of world reveals one of the exceptional men who have been involved in immense battles and have been winning amazing victories using non-violence principle. Violence is learned, it is necessary to unlearn violence by practicing love and compassion at every possible opportunity. Non-violent comprise three categories: Acts of protest, non co-operation and non-violent intervention. Apart from non-killing, non-aggression or non-injury, but also being free from prejudice, jealousy, hatred, animosity, pride and ego. Gandhi follows his own teaching and seeking to summon up greater self-discipline and self-realization from himself as a moral agent, responsible for putting non-violence into practice. He considered it as a spiritual weapon for self-purification and empowerment. Gandhi stated that just as the perfect straight line as understood by Euclid cannot be drawn. Similarly perfect non-violence cannot be attained. But limited non-violence can be attained. He says: If we can manage to apply non-violence successfully at home, it will in its pure form become an irresistible power in the service of the state. All beings are united by God and the act of unification is made possible



through love or non-violence. It is ultimately the cementing bond of the Universe that has its origin in God or Truth. Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all-children, young men and women or grown up people provided they have living faith in the God of Love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not be applied to isolated acts. Key Words: Ideology, Non-violence, self-discipline, Empowerment and pervade

Meaning of Non-violence: Non-violence means "lack of desire to harm or kill". It is the personal practice of being harmless to self and others under every condition. In the present times, nonviolent methods of action have been a powerful tool for social protest and revolutionary social and political change. The term "nonviolence" is often linked with or used as a synonym for peace.

Gandhi and nonviolent principles: At the outset there will always be conflict, great and small in human affairs. Mahatma Gandhi said "I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and nonviolence are as old as the hills". Gandhi was very clear about his programme of social reconstruction. His ideology of non-violence is more relevant in the present times. It is powerful weapon which cuts without wounding. Nonviolent action generally comprises three categories: (i) Acts of protest (ii) Non co-operation and (iii) Non-violent intervention.

(i) Acts of Protest: It is a symbolic actions performed by a group of people to show their support or disapproval something. The main aim of the action is to create public awareness to an issue, influence a particular group of people, to facilitate future nonviolent action.

(ii) Noncooperation: It implies the purposeful withholding of cooperation or the unwillingness to initiate cooperation with



an opponent. This method includes labour strike, economic boycott and sex strike

(iii) Nonviolent Intervention: It is direct method of nonviolent action. It can be used in a defensive way. Intervention is often more immediate and effective way to solve the issues.

### **Objective**

- Influence of nonviolent management

Review of Literature: "All his life he battled against the cult of non-violence and war against cruelty of man to man, against industrialism and domination of man by machine, against senseless multiplication of wants and the blind worship of mammon, against inequality and discrimination. He lived his message by resolute adherence to non-violence and truth, resistance to evil, by Satyagraha and self-suffering, cutting down his wants to the minimum and pursuing his moksha by service to mankind". The bedrock of Gandhian management is the Gandhian Philosophy, which is a monolithic structure of truth, love and non-violence. Gandhi applied his philosophy as a litmus test to confirm his principles, and as a fire-test to warrant his practices. It is the integration of this philosophy with his principles and practices that adds a new dimension to the field of management. It defines a new set of management values and hence a new school of management thought. The important element of his philosophy is non-violence which does not only mean non-killing, non-aggression or non-injury, but also being free from prejudice, jealousy, hatred, animosity, pride and ego, since these elements too implicitly cause some kind of perturbation, a sort of violence towards one's self or others.

The virtue of a truly scientific frame of mind is the readiness to reject what is false and untrue. "We know as well from our exercises in the pursuit of science that fear, fright and coercion also strongly interfere in the process of finding truth as they also create



perturbation, distort our perception and delude our findings. What one logically deduces is that for scientific management, a manager has to manage the affairs of an organisation without ego, pride, predilection, prejudice, jealousy, hatred, and coercion, fear etc., because they all reflect violence in one form or the other. At the millennium World peace Summit held at the UN headquarters, New York, in the last week of August, 2000, about 1,500 religious and spiritual leaders from 75 faiths and 92 countries assembled and unequivocally affirmed the dire need to establish peace and harmony in the world. They condemned violence and issued vigorous statements on the subject 'Towards a World Movement for Non-Violence' Betty Williams, the Nobel Peace Laureate from Northern Ireland, stressed in her speech that practicing non-violence is not for the faint-hearted, as it requires exemplary courage. Ela Gandhi, granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi and member of the South African Congress, reiterated: "Non-violence is not a passive concept but an active one-one that demands courage and love hatred". Gandhi was profoundly influenced by the teachings of Jesus, as he explained in a speech in 1925 "Non-violence... requires greater heroism than brave soldiers... The world does not accept today, the idea of loving the enemy. Even in Christian Europe the principle of non-violence is ridiculed... Christians do not understand the message of Jesus. It is necessary to deliver it over again in the way we can understand... But I must say that so long as we do not accept the principle of loving the enemy, all talk of world brotherhood is an airy nothing". According to Gandhi, to move fearlessly to the dreadful jaw of violence is called non-violence. His concept of nonviolence is preferable to cowardice. He believed that non-violence was certainly superior to violence and forgiveness was far manlier than punishment.

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant.



Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul, and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration. And so I am not pleading for India to practise nonviolence because she is weak. I want her to practise nonviolence being conscious of her strength and power. No training in arms is required for realization of her strength. I want India to recognize that she has a soul that cannot perish, and that can rise triumphant above every physical weakness and defy the physical combination of a whole world.

### **The characteristic features of Gandhian non-violence**

- Non violence is not the same as non killing
- Non-violence is a higher value than life. (Gandhi regarded nonviolence to be an ultimate value on three reasons. First, it is universally applicable, secondly, it enhances all other values without detracting from any, and thirdly, it is unlimited in its application.
- Non-violence is not non-resistance born out of cowardice.
- Nonviolence implies bread-labour. Which Gandhi derived from Ruskin and Tolstoy and ultimately from the Bible. Gandhi defined it as the 'Divine Law that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands'
- Non-violence implies several positive values. These values include love, active, resistance to injustice, courage in the face of violence, non-possession, truthfulness and brahmacharya

Non-violence is the central concept of Gandhi's philosophy. In positive sense non-violence means "Love". It means love towards all living creatures.

Gandhi teaches that the one who possess nonviolence is blessed. Blessed is the man who can perceive the law of ahimsa (non-violence) in the midst of the raging fire of himsa all around him. The more adverse



the circumstances around him, the intense grow his longing for deliverance from the bondage of flesh which is a vehicle of himsa or violence. Gandhi objects to violence because it perpetuates hatred. A true nonviolence activist accepts violence on him without inflicting it on another. Gandhi feels that violence is not a natural tendency of humans and it is a learned experience. There is a need for a perfect weapon to combat violence and this is nonviolence. Non violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than any weapon of mass destruction.

Nonviolence is a great solution when opposing a reasonably moral and civilized foe. But if all the people of the Western Ukraine who want to live in a free country laid down their arms does anyone think that the drunken Russian separatist and Vladimir Putin's army would say, "Oh, well they're using nonviolence now so we better go back to Russia and leave Ukraine alone."? No. They would take the Ukraine in one big gulp and then start looking at Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Slovenia, Poland, and Belarus hoping they would defend themselves with non-violence too. How well did nonviolence work for the Jews and Roma People of Nazi Germany? (James Holloman). There is an important quote that "Negroes of the United States, following the people of India, have demonstrated that nonviolence is not sterile passivity, but a powerful moral force which makes for social transformation (Martin Luther King Jr Nobel acceptance Lecture 1964)

Influence of nonviolent management: Gandhi fought for removal of violence at every stage and put lot of efforts to bring peace through nonviolent management. One cannot deny that the world today is overshadowed by poverty and starvation, exploitation, ecological destruction, war and violence. The standard of the people has risen for a comfortable living. In the present world no wonder, man has emerged as a violent species. Gandhi had a vision on how to make India nonviolent. If we want a better world, we must be prepared with some



deliberate thinking. It is time we stopped being unelaborated on a matter that touches us all so closely. For in reality this matter of handling conflict constructively is of immediate concern to everyone who has ever been angry or afraid, resentful, revengeful or bitter; who has ever taken part in a fight, mob violence or war, or who has been the object of anger, hatred, exploitation or oppression. It touches all those who are troubled lest the vast economic, political and social questions that are pressing upon all nations will issue in still more appalling violence and increased insecurity for everyone, or even destruction of the human race. It is also important to those who hope that somehow the ideals of mankind can be made practical and harmonized with its conduct. (Richard B.Gregg)

Gandhi had averred "Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man". Gandhi succeeded in getting the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Indian people, to adopt his non-violent strategy of national liberation only, because of his total identification with the poverty stricken Indian people, his high moral stature, innovative communication, management and strategizing skills and the impressive results his non violent struggle produced 1920 onwards. Gandhi innovate "Satyagraha", nonviolent strategy in South Africa and first used it out on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1906. Truth and nonviolence had never before been combined as two sides of the same strategy. When the British granted Independence to India in 1947, they left it as friends, vindicating Gandhi's assertion that "A nonviolent revolution is not a programme for seizure of power. It is a programme for transformation of relationships ending in a peaceful transfer of power. Gandhi follows his own teaching and seeking summon up greater self-discipline and self-realization from himself as moral agent, responsible for putting nonviolence into practice.



Gandhi's life in search for a purpose, his eminent high managerial calibre and global management values which he applied in human resource management and organisational development for constructing a new society of higher order, where ethics and human values find respectable place in interactions and nonviolent. Ego which cuts into conscience and interferes with the knowledge and understanding of the Buddha and Jesus have been deified and Gandhi not yet. Both Buddha and Jesus lived in seclusion, either alone or with their disciples, isolated from common man, but Gandhi lived in the midst of common men. What make him essentially different from Buddha and Christ is that (a) No miraculous is assigned to him (b) he all alone synthesised truth, love and nonviolence into a juggernaut and transformed it into a corporate movement too powerful to be ignored. (c) He was determined to empower despondent society and wanted it to be independent, responsive and responsible and (d) that he imbibed and upheld reasonable and testable truth ever cherished in Hinduism, Islam and Christianity to enlighten his own conscience, thus creating a separate weltanschauung benevolently interactive with all the communities and people of all kinds.

Gandhi tested his philosophy in India, and used his managerial acumen to lead masses and activate mass movements many time. The strong influence of his persona was so deep and irresistible that it changed the mindsets of the people not only of his country, but of the world at large. Gandhi often said that while nonviolence was superior to violence, violence in turn, was superior to passivity in the face of injustice. For example "I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence.... I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence". Nonviolence, according to Gandhi, must





be founded on love. Nonviolence never evades violence. On the contrary, it carries on a constant struggle against arrogance and violence. He considered non-violence would never retreat at the sight of violence. They would rather devote themselves to the task of changing the hearts of perpetrators of violence through self-torture for establishing truth. Gandhi stated that just it as a spiritual weapon for self purification and empowerment. He also stated that just as the perfect straight line as understood by Euclid cannot be drawn. Similarly perfect non-violence cannot be attained but, limited non-violence can be attained. He says: If we can manage to apply non-violence successfully at home, it will in its pure form become an irresistible power in the service of the state.

Gandhi had an opportunity of speaking on some of the vital problems connected with non-violence. He said that mankind had all along tried to justify violence and war in terms of unavoidable self-defence. It was a simple rule that the violence of the aggressor could only be defeated by superior violence of the defender. All over the world, men had thus been caught in a mad race for armaments, and no one yet knew at what point of time the world would be really safe enough for turning the sword into the plough. Mankind he stated had not yet mastered the true are of self-defence.

Character of Nonviolence: Nonviolence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force. In the last resort it does not avail to those who do not possess a living faith in the God of Love. Non-violence affords the fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honour, but not always to possession of land or movable property, though its habitual practice does prove a better bulwark than the possession of armed men to defend them. Nonviolence, in the very nature of things, is of no assistance in the defence of ill-gotten gains and immoral acts. Individuals or nations who would practice nonviolence must be prepared to sacrifice (nations to



last man) their all except honour. It is, therefore, inconsistent with the possession of other people's countries, i.e., modern imperialism, which is frankly based on force for its defence. Nonviolence is a power which can be wielded equally by all children, young men and women or grown-up people, provided they have a living faith in the God of Love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. The body food we can only take in measured quantities and at stated intervals; nonviolence, which is the spiritual food, we have to take in continually.

Nonviolent actions whose intent or effect disrupts established behaviour patterns, policies, relationships or institutions are acts of intervention. They may also have the effect of creating new patterns of behaviour, relationships or even creating new institutions. Since these methods are more direct challenging the status quo, they provide more immediate visibility to the issue at hand, a more direct challenge to authority, and the possibility of a more rapid resolution. On the other hand, acts of intervention may result in more immediate and severe repression than acts that are intended as protest and non-cooperation.

All beings are united by God and the act of unification is made possible through love or non-violence. It is ultimately the cementing bond of the Universe that has its origin in God or Truth. Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all-children, young men and women or grown up people provided they have living faith in the God of Love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not be applied to isolated acts.

Non-violence management: It is important that Gandhian approach would need courage and freedom. In the late twentieth century he was opposed to the exploitation of the textile workers of Ahmadabad by the mill owners, but he was not found of a strike to end it. In it, and in all the matters in dispute, whether they were small or big, local or national



level he advocated discussions, negotiations, conciliation, arbitrations and adjudication in the last resort. The same method was applied in actions taken time to time for the independence of the country. He inspired confidence and faith in his words. Even in the present circumstances, it is necessary that when we talk of non-violence, we should carry this background in our minds. To-day, many countries in the world, faces different type of internal and external crisis. Due to unprecedented changes in political, economic, social and cultural fields, awakening amongst the various groups of the people has reached to high level which could not be controlled and authorities become helpless. This was witnessed in some parts of India. In such state affairs, Can this non-violent principle by Gandhi, will tackle the situation? The authority in dealing with serious issues in the world must have the humility to understand the opponent view and they should have love for those who cry for justice and rights. In that case there would be room for discussion, negotiation and settlement. Non-violence, humbleness and ready to understand even in the unpleasant stand of opponent. This approach can solve the problem non-violently to those in power. Present society in all over the world with lots of violence, war, domestic crimes, terrorism and murders. For those who cry for justice and in this process even clamouring for separation in many countries non-violent approach and dialogues would certainly be the permanent solution.

Gandhi is more relevant than ever. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the abundance of terrorist movement's means that the world is both tired of the cycle of violence and will refuse to listen to anyone with arms. That means any movement that takes up violence will be considered bad in the world's eyes. Peaceful protests don't work in most places. Very few leaders of moral repute and patience could utilize the tool of non-violence and truth. Non-violence means not to put others into distress. People in general are trapped by ignorance in the material



concept of life and they perpetually suffer material pains. People should elevate to spiritual knowledge, so that they may become enlightened and leave this material world. That is to-day's non-violence.

Conclusion: Gandhi believed that without the practice of non-violence, truth cannot be realised. It is not a cover for cowardice, but it is the supreme virtue of the brave. To manage the path of true nonviolence requires much more courage than violence. Undoubtedly, it is clear that non-violence is the one of the best possible solution to solve the problem at all levels. Violence is learned, it is necessary to unlearn violence by practicing love and compassion at every possible opportunity. Non-violent may take longer time but, certainly, it cause less damage to persons and property and does not leave trace of hatred and ill-will. Ultimately Non-violence imbibed with truth.

**Suggestions:** Training for nonviolent movements

1. Supply of literature and handbooks about the theory and practice of nonviolent struggle
2. Producing and disseminating films that document the successful application of nonviolent struggle in various contexts
3. Offering, on request by local recipient groups, general advice on how to conduct strategic planning for nonviolent action.

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