

RELEVANCE OF GANDHI'S ECONOMIC THOUGHTS

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Introduction

Gandhi was not an academican and He did not give any economic model regarding the development of economy but gave some basic ideas based on which we can decide what kind of economic composition is most preferable for Indian economy. Gandhi understood that the very backbone of India was its villages. His main idea aims the socio-economic reconstruction of society. Unless the village economy could be reformed, nothing could be achieved on the economic front. After 69 years of the independence can we implemented the Gandhiji's socio -economic views. India of Gandhiji's dream was truth, non-violence, sarvodaya, ramrajya, swadeshi, morality, rural development, development of small scale industries etc. But today's India is totally different. Is it that India which Gandhiji was expected?

Now a day's India is facing so many problems such as poverty, unemployment, increasing birth rate, corruption, pollution, terrorism, ans so on. If we had implemented Gandhiji's ideas in some manner, there would have been altogether different scenario.

Present study is based on the secondary data. This research paper focused on some of the economic thoughts of Gandhiji & its relevance to the 21st century. As per as economy is concerned, it is essential to implement certain economic idea in a certain time. His ideas should have been implemented before 50 years. Because if we think both the ways theoretically or piratically we realize that Gandhi's idea are outdated.

Basic Tenets of Gandhi's Economic Views

Gandhi's views on economics were simple and straight forward which would make India economically self sufficient, manufacturing and satisfying its own needs in domestic market, home-grown ways.

Gandhi stressed on rural economy and emphasis on a simple life. Gandhi's economic models were based largely on his understanding of the Indian situation. According to Gandhi economic equality is the master key to non violent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital & labour. He believed that the high capitalist endeavors were at the root of all suffering. Gandhi wanted to turn the entire flow of profits from the pockets of the big industrialists tot eh workers. Therefore, Gandhi focused on income equality.

It means he was totally against of capitalism. He tried to level up the economy. Where 20% rich people in whose lands the 80% of the nation's wealth has been concentrated & reaming 20% of wealth has been distributed in the 80% semi starved naked people. To explain his concept of income equality he told the fundamental law of nature. "Without exception, that nature produces enough for our wants from day to day; & if only everybody took enough for himself & nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would any man dying for starvation."¹

But in reality nobody thinks or acts like that. Gandhi thought that wealth is only a means & not an ends. He always said that "Eat for living, don't live for eating". But in the present would wealth have taken

place of means as well as ends. People are living for eat & not for live. For that everybody is breaking, laws, rules & regulations, humanity, morality & non violence etc. Nobody take care of nation's security. Wealth is everything for everybody. Education, job, promotion transfer & change in government aim are same behind all the things & that is wealth. Today there is gross economic inequality & it is a base of capitalism. If we want socialism, economic equality is the necessary condition in today's world. Ramrajya is not possible in the present state of iniquities in equalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses are trying to fulfill basic needs.

Opposition to industrialization and mechanization is a very prominent feature of Gandhian economics. According to him because of it output & unemployment can increase. It is feasible when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. According to Gandhi it is a curse for mankind. Other side he believed that mechanization increase the laziness. Lack of work can cause immense physical and spiritual deprivation among the populace. Large scale industries have use capital intensive technique which would increase unemployment because India is a most populated country and people wants more jobs. However with the effect of globalization or technology based industrial expansion and use of machines have created more unemployment in country. The rapid growth of large industries due to globalization has not passed benefits to everyone. Profits are goes to only entrepreneurs therefore gap between the rich and the poor has been increased. Apart from this, large scale industries has also ruin of the environment through pollution which affects the health of human beings.

The opposition to industrialization was probably based on his empirical observation that even though considerable development of modern industry had occurred in British India over the fifty years 1881-1931, there was no appreciable increase in gainfully employed workers over this period – whatever increase in employment had occurred in the organized sector was counterbalanced by the fall in employment in the traditional sector. Gandhiji's model of development was one in which every

village produced all its necessities and a certain percentage in addition for the requirement of cities. But he is no obscurantist, and he recognises that a moderate amount of industrialization may be necessary for a nation's survival. He therefore concedes the existence of heavy industry, only cautioning that "Heavy industries will needs be centralized and nationalized. But they will occupy the least part of the vast national activity which will be mainly in the villages." ²

Gandhi was only against of mechanization and large scale industries; not of small scale industries. According to him village economy can't be complete without the essential village industries. Khadi is one of them Gandhi's great approach of Self reliance and Swadeshi (Khadi) is playing a significant role for the improvement of human beings. According to him raw material for Khadi industries could be easily available in villages from agriculture sector and automatically market for agricultural products will be available at the same place. Beside it– grinding, hand – pounding, soap making, paper making, match making, tanning oil – pressing etc. He believes that if we develop these small scale industries, everybody should get job and raw material which is required for above industries will be also supplied from rural sector. And so that automatically so many problems will solve like poverty, unemployment and finally everybody could able to fulfill their basic needs.

His concern for the predicament of the Indian villagers was genuine as was his concern for a heartless mechanization of the world economy sans ethical considerations. In his time the influence of his economic model was immense and has been dutifully followed in various parts of the world as well as in India, with varied degrees of success.

Conclusion

Gandhiji was not economists and he did not propound any model for economic development. He was just a charming leader of the Indian National Movement with prime intention of obtaining freedom from the British rule and re-established self-reliance of India's population. He just wanted a

freedom from British government. At that time India was facing so many problems like, poverty, unemployment, economic inequality, etc. for solving these problems he suggested Swadeshi, Rural Development, Ramrajya, and most important development of small scale industries.

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