



Mahatma Gandhi, Mankind, and the World: Relevance of His Ideals

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to study the importance of the thoughts and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi for mankind and the world in the current situation. Human civilisations have passed through several acts of violence and bloodshed. Now, the world has several destructive weapons which can destroy the entire making of world in a few seconds. In this condition, a great question has arisen in the world: 'How are Gandhian thoughts, ideals, philosophies, and practices, which he practised very successfully in his lifetime, relevant to the current situation of the world?' This article reveals that his ideals, thoughts, philosophies and practices have become more important and relevant for the world than ever before for international peace and harmony, which should be fostered over the globe.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi began his work in South Africa before leading the Indian freedom movement. He used to live in South Africa to fight against injustice and class division, and within 10 years, he propagated the philosophy of Satyagraha there and astonishingly propelled the country towards a class-discrimination-free society. He arrived in Durban in 1893, and soon he became the popular leader of the South African Indian community. His involvement in the nonviolent movement in South Africa had made such an impact that even now, his ideals, thoughts, practices and philosophy are an inspiration for the masses over the globe. He worked there between 1893 and 1914 as an attorney and a public worker. He said in a meeting in New Delhi that he was born in India, but was indeed made in South Africa.

Mahatma Gandhi is regarded as ever-lived and the greatest man in the world. He is an inspiration for many other leaders who have persevered for the improvement and betterment of humankind around the world. His natural and magical leadership inspires millions of people around the world, even 78 years after his death, and his presence is in the hearts and minds of millions of people around the world. His ideology and its application were cardinal in India's nonviolent struggle for independence. He was indeed both a transformational and a transactional leader, which was the prime reason for his lasting impact on the struggle throughout his life. Gandhi was ever relevant and will be till the end of the drama of this Creation. Only his ideals can restore peace and rest to the world, which is now totally fractured

in different ways. People are lacking faith in religion because it has failed to grant justice, peace, and rest to mankind. Society is always in the same condition. Politics has also become unable to grant justice to the people. So, the world needs to follow the ideals, thoughts, practices and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, and he is now more relevant than ever before. Mahatma Gandhi is no more in this world, but his spiritual hold on the masses of the Indian people and millions over the world is still firmer than ever before.

Gandhi started Satyagraha in Champaran and Kheda in India, where the condition of farmers was worsened by the then landlords, who were mostly British, imposing taxes and leaving them in poverty. The landlords forced the peasants to grow cash crops instead of food crops necessary for their survival, and this led to a situation of famine there. They suffered too much. In their own fields, they were legally bound to grow crops according to the will of their rulers. Gandhi held a detailed survey and study to abolish that devastating famine and poverty. He began leading the cleaning of the villages, the building of schools and hospitals, and encouraging villagers to condemn and combat many social evils, such as purdah (covering the faces of women) and untouchability. Not only that, but he held protests and strikes against the landlords that resulted in the termination of the revenue hikes and collection of taxes till the famine ended.

Mahatma Gandhi played an instrumental role in India's nonviolent struggle for freedom. He is well-known for his policy of truth and non-violence. He was a supreme political and spiritual leader of India who led the country in the Noncooperation Movement in 1922 and the Salt March in 1930, and later in the Quit India movement in 1942 during its struggle for freedom. He was also well-known as Beloved Bapu in India in the hearts and minds of Indians. He adopted the policy of mass disobedience and non-violent resistance as weapons against British Rule in India and followed the principle of Nonviolence throughout his life. He also endured several hardships, was arrested and occasionally beaten in his journey in the way of nonviolence and Satyagraha and struggled for Justice and freedom.

Gandhi started noncooperation, nonviolence, and peaceful resistance as the most effective weapons against British rule. During the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the violence that followed, Gandhi felt an immediate need for a self-controlled government and total control over all Indian government institutions. Later on, the concept of self-rule or complete individual, spiritual and political freedom evolved. He urged the people to boycott foreign-made goods and clothes, to resign from government services, and to forsake British titles and honours – encouraging them to wear khadi (homemade) clothes. Gandhi himself wore a traditional (home-made) Indian dhoti and shawl, which was made with yarn he himself spun on a charkha, which he felt was needed at the time to defeat poverty.

There was a nationwide success of his programmes, and people from all parts of the country, including women, participated in them. But he terminated it in February 1922, when a violent clash broke out in Chauri-Chaura. Gandhi was arrested in March, tried for sedition, and sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment. During this period in prison, the Indian National Congress began to split into two parts – one group was led by Chitta Ranjan Das and Motilal Nehru, and the other was led by Chakravarty Rajgopalachari. So, cooperation between Hindus and Muslims also weakened at that time. But later on, people understood the power of his way of struggle for freedom against the armed Britishers.

Apart from the above, there were several other occasions when Mahatma Gandhi successfully led the nonviolent movements for freedom. The then British government appointed a new constitutional reform under Sir John Simon, which did not include any Indians. So, Indian political leaders boycotted the commission. In December 1928, Mahatma Gandhi demanded India be granted dominion status and warned them to face a new non-cooperation campaign all over the country with complete freedom as its goal if their demands were not fulfilled. Its effect was seen on the ground. On 31st December 1929, the Indian flag was unfurled in Lahore, and the next year, 26th January was celebrated as Independence Day by the National Congress Party, which was leading the movement. It was commemorated by almost every Indian organisation. In 1930, Gandhi started a new Satyagraha protesting the tax on salt. He marched from Ahmadabad to Dandi with his 78 nonviolent team members to make salt himself. Consequently, thousands of Indian people joined him in this 400-kilometre march, which was marked as his most successful Satyagraha against British rule in the history of the Indian independence movement, showing the bright and successful nonviolent struggle for the fulfilment of any legal, social, moral, human, or political demands of the world.

The Irwin-Gandhi pact was signed in 1931, and the British government agreed to release political prisoners if Gandhi denounced the then civil disobedience movement. The British government granted untouchables separate electorates in 1932 under the new constitution. Gandhi started a new campaign after that to improve the lives of untouchables, whom he called Harijan. His chief aim was to grant equality and justice to the untouchables.

When the Second World War started in 1939, Gandhi opposed the inclusion of India in the war. He said that India cannot be a part of the war being fought for democratic freedom, while there was no freedom in India. Thus, Mahatma Gandhi and other Congressmen intensified their movement for complete freedom, demanding that the British 'Quit India'. It was indeed the most vigorous movement in the history of the Indian Independence Struggle, in which thousands of freedom fighters were killed, imprisoned, and injured. Several violent clashes broke out in every part of India. They demanded complete freedom. However, Gandhi appealed

to maintain discipline in all ways. He also said it was a time to 'Do or Die' for the country's freedom.

Consequently, Gandhi and many other political leaders were arrested on 9th August 1942, and Gandhi was imprisoned in Aga Khan Palace for 2 years. Kasturba Gandhi was also arrested with him and died after 18 months in prison on 22nd February 1944. Later on, Gandhi called off his struggle at the end of the war. The time of freedom was near for those hard-working politicians, and their sacrifices for the country were the agency that awarded freedom. Gandhi always thought about India as a place where Hindus and Muslims lived in harmony and wanted to see them always happy. But unfortunately, India was divided into two different countries, because most of the Muslims living in India were in favour of the partition, whose leader was Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Consequently, the Congress leadership was compelled to approve the partition plan to avoid a looming Hindu-Muslim civil war. Gandhi never desired India to break into two parts, an independent India and Pakistan, based on their population and religions, and he was alone struggling non-violently to save the partition, showing the bright and successful nonviolent struggle for the fulfilment of any legal, social, moral, human, or political demands of the world.

As mentioned above, these were contributions of Mahatma Gandhi to India and the world. Now our question, to be answered, is ahead. *'How are Gandhian thoughts, ideals, philosophies, and practices, which he practised very successfully in his lifetime, relevant to the current situation of the world?'* The following paragraphs give us a look at the facts that this article tends to show to the world for the betterment of mankind and the world, which are based on several citations from more than a dozen books, and we hope readers will benefit from it.

Mahatma Gandhi was unlike anyone else in the world. He was truly a citizen of the world, though he worked for the freedom of India from foreign rule. Humanity was his religion, and he believed that for victory, nonviolence was the bluntest weapon and the sharpest one. He obviously abhorred the concept of might being the right. Gandhi entered politics to fight irreligious acts and to restore humanism in politics, too. He said that for the fulfillment of Truth in any field, nonviolence is the best weapon. He believed that there should not be challenges of any kind of human-made boundaries against human beings. Gandhi (2007) said in his letter:

Nonviolence is the greatest force man has been endowed with. Truth is the only goal he has. For God is none other than Truth. But Truth cannot be, never be, reached except through nonviolence.

Gandhi was rich in values and virtues, unlike others – he was rich in all aspects, and that brand of religion that taught us to believe absolutely in the soul and rely solely on soul force for fighting all the ills prevalent in human society. Truth and Ahimsa, for him, were indeed God. He said that the way to God is truth, and without truth, none can imagine any religion. Nonviolence was the only weapon to fight against social ills and blots, and he practised it throughout his entire life. Gandhi (2007) writes:

Satyagraha literary means insistence on truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is connoted by the word satyagraha. Satyagraha, to be genuine, may be offered against parents, against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow citizens, even against the whole world.

The first school of Satyagraha, for Mahatma Gandhi, was indeed Champaran. He got a great lesson in Satyagraha from his movements in Champaran in 1917 against the Tinkathiya System of British rule. This was his first experiment, and he was wonderfully successful. The evil of the Tinkathiya System was abolished by the government, and cases lodged against the Champaran peasants were withdrawn. After the success of Satyagraha in Champaran, he practised it for his entire life, and the country welcomed its independence through Satyagraha, which he first practised in Champaran. Gandhi (2007) writes:

It is no exaggeration, but the literal truth, to say that in this meeting with the peasants, I was face to face with God, Ahimsa, and Truth...When I come to examine my title to this realization, I find nothing but an expression of my unshakable faith in Ahimsa...That day in Champaran was an unforgettable event in my life and a red-letter day for the peasants and for me.

Gandhi's view about nationalism was also different. He was indeed not a nationalist in the narrow parochial sense in which the word is used and understood; rather, he was a nationalist of a different type. His nationalism was, in a real sense, intense internationalism – his nationalism was indeed cosmopolitanism. He wished for 'One World' without militarised boundaries and all the natural and human resources to live happily. He wanted all the sciences and technology which are today marshalled and arrayed for destructive purposes to be used for the elimination of poverty, ill health, and ignorance. Gandhi (2007) said in his letter:

Love has no boundary. My nationalism includes the love of all the nations of the earth irrespective of creed.

Mahatma Gandhi was internationally familiar with his ideals and philosophy, practised even in the opposite situation. He was a universally acknowledged greatest man in the world who got his political force from his inner soul, and he was above all the frivolities of political life. This inner strength only comes to a man when he has a belief in nonviolence, truth, and an abiding faith in the innate goodness lurking in all fellow beings. It is a rare character in man. He was a man of an immaculate personality of an extraordinary quality – a man full of godly characters and practices. It was the quality of Mahatma Gandhi that made him a leader of world leaders, the greatest man in the world. Gandhi (2007) said in his letter:

Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, brahmacharya, non-possession, body-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness on all occasions, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi and sparshbhavna – these eleven vows should be observed in a spirit of humility.

The end of war is not war. Every war ends with a treaty for peace and rest. All human beings know that bloodshed and violence can only bring unrest and pain – nonviolence brings peace and rest, along with love and respect – and nonviolence has always been a great practice in the world in different manners to maintain peace, rest, and social harmony. It was not Gandhi's invention, although known as the father of nonviolence, because he raised nonviolent action to a level never before achieved in the entire history of human civilisation known and practised by mankind. Gandhi was indeed the first person in human history to extend the principle of nonviolence from the individual to the social and political plane to bring peace, rest, and social harmony, freedom that paved the way for religion, development, promotion, and welfare to the well-being. Law, society, politics, religion, justice, cooperation, and many more are also its hands that strengthen the Large Tree of Nonviolence. Andrews (2006) rightly says:

Gandhi is the founder of the world's peaceful – not passive – resistance movements, the man who led India to freedom and independence, the inspiration and role model for civil rights leaders... His influence in the world, east and west, is without parallel.

Some people have a sense of scriptural illusion that only a 'modern atomic weapon' is powerful. People should look into Indian history and get a great lesson from it that the then-powerful weapon of the British government against India became a failure and meaningless, and Gandhi's weapon of Ahimsa won the struggle for independence. So, Ahimsa is indeed a powerful weapon in the world. The entire world can be won by this nonviolent weapon, which

leads to only peace, rest, love, humanism, brotherhood, and finally, well for all. It is the weapon of the brave, not of the coward. It is indeed a living and life-giving force and always relevant to the world without any kind of expenditure or labour. Kumarappa (2013) says:

Ahimsa is a weapon of matchless potency. It is the *summum bonum* of life. It is an attribute of the brave, in fact, it is their all. It does not come within reach of coward. It is no wooden or lifeless dogma, but a living and life-giving force.

Some people believe that nonviolence is the means to be defeated. It is a weapon for helpless persons. But this is not a fact. Ahimsa indeed is the weapon of the strong. It is the weapon of the persons who have deep knowledge of the setting and making of the worldly and divine structure of the cosmos, and a few people can know and understand its power. Gandhi says that there is no matter of defeat in nonviolence. The fact is, violence is defeated by nonviolence at last. Mahatma Gandhi practised it throughout his entire life and proved this fact. Gandhi (2007) says in his letter:

There is no such thing as defeat in nonviolence. The end of violence is surest defeat.

The concept of Satyagraha was first devised by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa in 1907 when he organised opposition to the Asiatic Registration Law, which was also called the Black Act. It took seven years of the practice of Satyagraha, and the Black Act was finally repealed in June 1914. Gandhi proved that perseverance, working with a community, and most importantly, a nonviolent movement can gain the desired goal. Satyagraha was not just a means of non-violent struggle, but later on, it became the philosophy of his life, and he practised it for the freedom of India. Satyagraha showed the light to all mankind to win over greed and fear with love. He introduced the technique of resistance to evil and untruth, overtaking the values and virtues in the world. His practice of Satyagraha was inspired by boundless love and compassion for mankind and the world. It is opposed to sin, not sinners, the evil, not the evildoer. Gandhi (2007) says in his letter:

Satyagraha is a weapon of the strong; it admits of no violence under any circumstance whatever, and it ever insists upon truth.

Mahatma Gandhi deeply studied the setting of society, man, religion, the world, and the grandest Book of Nature. He saw violence pejoratively and also traced two ways of violence,

which are 'passive' and 'physical'. The way of passive violence is indeed a daily affair that we practise either knowingly or unknowingly. It is the storehouse that excites the physical violence. He thought that the well to self is hidden in the well to all, and one cannot expect the self-well, declining to others. So, he advocated sarvodaya, and Vinoba Bhave moved all over India for its sake – for the sake of the common people. He also started several other movements in the public interest. Naik (2005) writes:

He preached sarvodaya (the good of all) – ethical socialism which was to be achieved through decentralization of industry, the establishment of rural communities composed of small, manageable units co-operatively knot together, swadeshi and khadi spinning and the implementation of Tolstoyan doctrine of bread labour.

When Gandhi moved, the earth moved with his movements because he was full of godly elements, and he loved the entire masses, and the masses loved and respected him too much in return. He always wanted to see people happy and living with a minimum of needs available easily, including the responsibility to the government. He had no sense of pride or prejudice, and he loved all mankind. This was the reason that the people of both countries loved and respected him, and the masses were present to participate in his prayer meetings. Nanda (2011) writes:

Three-four lac people began to participate in the prayer of Gandhiji, and the national flags of India and Pakistan were waved in those prayer meetings. Gandhiji seemed very satisfied and happy seeing those conditions. He had said – we have enjoyed the poison of hate, so this nectar of brotherhood is sweeter. (English Translation of the original text)

He knew the world and his responsibility to it. His duty to the country, mankind, and the world was of paramount importance. His views were quite different from those of others in this respect. He said that duties to self, to the family, to the country, and the world are not independent of one another, and one cannot do well to the country by injuring the world at large. But such ideals are merely furthered as the world is full of evils all around. Tagore believed that Gandhi would fail like all other saints, who had also failed, perhaps like Buddha, like Christ, Mahavira, and all others, because worldly evils do not let virtues flourish. He himself became a victim of violence, which he always rejected, but the world needs the practice of nonviolence. On 8 June 1947, in Harijan, Gandhi (2007) writes:

Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this very fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be a usurpation hardly worth fighting for.

As the greatest man in the world, Gandhi's greatest quality was to walk his talk in every way and at every level. There was no dissimilarity between his saying and practice, like all others. He practised whatever he preached and dressed up like the poorest Indian and had the barest of personal possessions in his life. He used to live in huts in the colonies of the poor. He consumed a minimum of things and travelled in the third-class compartments. Fischer (2007) rightly observes:

He did not preach about God or religion; he was a living sermon. He was a good man in a world where few resist the corroding influence of power, wealth and vanity. There he sat, four-fifths naked, on the earth in a mud hut in a tiny Indian village without electricity, radio, running water, or telephone.

The heart of Gandhi was full of love and compassion for mankind. He was a man indeed of only made. Perhaps he was made of love-made fabrics. He unremittingly showered his best wishes upon his devotees, opponents, and friends equally. He had no sense of revenge. He lived and worked for others, not for himself, and always worked with peace, duty, prosperity, and justice. He advocated and tried hard to maintain Hindu-Muslim unity in the country. He knew that in a pluralistic society like India, it was the only way to maintain social and communal harmony. He also knew that India could not gain independence without their unity. Sampson (1961) remarks:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948), who preached Hindu-Moslem unity, civil disobedience and a return to the traditional rural virtues and who became widely revered as the Mahatma or Great Sage.

Mahatma Gandhi was indeed a greater saint, and his thoughts and philosophy can only maintain peace and social harmony in India and the world. He was a gentleman, and gentlemanliness was his creed, not condition-made. He had visited different parts of the world

and had spent most of his time doing works of welfare, so he had much knowledge of the importance of virtues in life, and practised all this forever till his death. Fischer (2007) rightly says:

I felt no awe in Gandhi's presence. I felt I was in the presence of a very sweet, gentle, informal, relaxed, happy, wise, highly civilized man.

The *Holy Bible* mentions that for the rich to go to heaven is as difficult as a camel to enter a needle, and for the poor, it is as easy to enter a thread into a hole of a needle. He loved the poor and the oppressed. He sat in the huts of the marginalised people, and he adopted a girl from an untouchable family. He was widely influenced by Tolstoy, *Sermon on the Mount*, and the *Bhagavad Gita*, and he had unending sympathy for the poor, the lowliest, and the lost. Andrews (2006) rightly observes:

The love of the poor and of the oppressed is deep in Mahatma Gandhi's nature. His whole attitude towards life ever since his great conversion, owing to the reading of Tolstoy and his study of the *Sermon on the Mount* along with the *Bhagavad Gita*, has been one of complete identification with those who are the poorest, the lowliest, and the lost.

Mahatma Gandhi sacrificed his whole life for the independence of India, for breaking up the chains of slavery of Bharatmata, and for the service of humanity, maintaining nonviolence for the sake of mankind and the world and showing a new light to the cosmos. He worked with peace, prosperity, duty, and Justice. He is revered for his unending compassion, courage, and devotion to human, social, moral, legal, political, national, international, and religious values and duties. He lived and worked for others, not for himself. He has done everything possible for the country which a common man cannot even think of doing for himself. Sujata (2015) rightly says:

We have chosen an eternal path of truth and nonviolence for securing the freedom of India. Those who tread this straightforward and narrow path never suffer. We should gain admiration and expectation from God's pleadings. (English Translation of the original text)

Gandhi always advocated that 'means and motive should always be fair'. So, for the freedom of India, Mahatma Gandhi never supported violence; rather, he followed the path of nonviolence and Satyagraha. He had firm faith in the practice of these two peaceful weapons, and he said that India can gain freedom only in the way of nonviolence, not by violence. Sujata (2015) rightly observes:

I can declare the truth in the name of God that freedom cannot be gained on the way of violence. (English Translation of the original text)

He, as a politician, was quite different from others, not only in India but also around the world, who practised the weapon of Satyagraha, Fasting, Truth, Ahimsa, Disobedience, and Non-cooperation for the country's independence. He was then the only instrument to further the divine purpose. Throughout his life, he advocated for love, peace, tolerance, justice, truth, non-violence, purity, fraternity, honesty, simplicity, service, charity, and duty. He had no prejudice against any caste, colour, race, sex, community, religion, nationality, rich and poor, or low and high. Mundra and Sahni (1991) write about Mahatma Gandhi:

Mahatma Gandhi dominated the Indian national scene, and Gandhian strategies, techniques, and approaches shaped the course of India's destiny. Gandhi's image and personality and his socio-political philosophy influenced millions of people in India, including a large number of poets, novelists and other men of sensibility who looked up to him as their literary and spiritual mentor.

He had always had a new idea for the sake of mankind. He said that in every action of man, he should think about the good of others, even to his opponents. During the practice of Satyagraha, he insisted on inborn gentleness, not on made-up gentleness or condition-bound gentleness. A man without civility is like a body without bones, and it plays an important role in the life of every man. Civility, according to Gandhi, was an eternal part of Satyagraha. Gandhi (2007) writes in his *'An Autobiography'*:

Experience has taught me that civility is the most difficult part of Satyagraha. Civility does not here mean the mere outward gentleness of speech cultivated for the occasion, but an inborn gentleness and a desire to do the opponent good. These should show themselves in every act of Satyagraha.

He was also an extraordinary writer. All of his letters, question-and-answer, articles, messages, and lectures are a great storehouse of truth and nonviolence that lead the way to God and will always be a great source of inspiration to all mankind in the world. His writing will always be beneficial, relevant and a source of great inspiration to the world for maintaining love and brotherhood. He, in his writings, ever advocated the importance of virtues in life for the sake of mankind. He said that man can only gain anything in his favour when he is also thinking about the welfare of others. In his writings, he has presented his views on almost all subjects, like social, political, economic, cultural, and spiritual issues. Only his philosophy can award love and fraternity to this world. Naik (2005) writes:

Gandhi's writings are a mine of stimulating thought on political, social, economic, cultural, and spiritual issues. He was no erudite scholar, by no means an original thinker with a razor-sharp mind, nor a brilliant theoretician.

His impact on literature was also too much. There is no writing in Indian literature that does not have an impact of Mahatma Gandhi. Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, K.S. Venkataramani, Bahbani Bhattacharya, Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal and several other writers in all other Indian languages were widely influenced by him, and they fuelled the aspects which were practised by Mahatma Gandhi for the freedom of the country. Tilak (1987) writes:

Kanthapura is a novel dealing with the impact of the Gandhian freedom struggle on a remote South Indian village of that name, and what happens in Kanthapura was happening all over India in those stirring years from 1919 to 1931 of the Gandhian non-violent, non-co-operation movement for the independence of the country.

Raja Rao, in his novel '*Kanthapura*', has vividly presented the impact of Mahatma Gandhi on the masses during the freedom struggle. He paints a living picture in this novel. Women in Kanthapura had firm faith in the Government of the Mahatma, which was the only Government for them. They were agitated when they saw the police, and they sang with full-throated ease. Rao (2006) writes:

There's one Government, sister,
There's one Government, sister,
And that is the Government of the Mahatma.

Gandhi had much knowledge of spiritualism, civilisation, history, customs, and idealism. So, he seeks the moral and spiritual regeneration of India on the lines of Indian thought, Indian custom, and Indian idealism. He wanted to exclude the influence of the West, with its industry, trial slavery, materialism, its money-worship, and its wars. So, he wanted to abolish such evils which were on the way to obstructing the freedom of the country. So, he seeks the obliteration of caste distinction and religious differences. He suggested that Indians live peaceably with Hindus and Hindus with Muslims. Then, man must welcome the leadership of mankind in ways of peace and amity.

Mahatma Gandhi was indeed not an ordinary being. He was a man of Great Spirit and understanding. He resided in the hearts and minds of the people. He used to move from city to city, and crowds of thirty and even fifty thousand people assembled to hear his words, thinking of him as divine. When he passed some nights in a village or the open countryside, great throngs came to him to see him as to a holy shrine. He would seem to be what the Indians regarded him — he seemed the perfect and universal man. He was a man of an immaculate personality. Naipaul (1977) writes:

Gandhi had given India a new idea of itself, and also given the world a new idea of India...Now of Gandhianism there remained only the emblems and the energy; and the energy had turned malignant.

Mahatma Gandhi never wanted the partition of India, and for people to suffer in any conditions. He expected good for all after the partition, but when he saw the miserable condition of India even after independence, he was so much shocked. He was unhappy with the then condition. People were not satisfied with the government as it was unable to award justice to them. The leaders were involved in getting posts, not in serving the common people. One can understand the agony of Mahatma Gandhi with the following lines said by him. Gandhi (2006) writes about him in his *Mohandas*:

Death for me would be a glorious deliverance rather than that I should be a helpless witness to the destruction of India, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. That destruction is certain if Pakistan does not ensure equality of status and security of life and property for all professing the various faiths of the world and if India copies her. Only then Islam dies in the two Indias, not in the world. But Hinduism and Sikhism have no world outside India.

Mahatma Gandhi had unending sympathy for the Dalit community. He was shocked to see the miserable condition of the Dalits. He wanted to see them always in the main current of society. He attempted hard to abolish such evils in society. He launched an 'All India Harijan Tour' on 7th November 1933 for their betterment. He also moved a resolution in the Indian National Congress for the abolition of untouchability. Then all the party delegates needed to dine with Dalits, allowing them to enter the temples, schools and fetch water from wells. He was the only man who jerked this evil of centuries, and now the Dalits live in the main current of society. Nanda (2011) writes in *Mahatma Gandhi: Ek Jiwani*:

Sanatanists did not stop opposing, and the direction of the leaders of the Dalit community also remained critical. It must be acknowledged that Gandhiji became able to move the root of the thousands of years of the evil of untouchability. Then Chakravarti Gopalachari, who was the main Congress leader of the Congress from Madras presidency, had written an article entitled Kranti Ki Purnahuti – untouchability now has not been abolished, but the revolution has been finished and now its wastes need to be thrown out. (English Translation of the original text)

Gandhi never suggested that the Dalits of India adopt the way of violence to fight against inequality and injustice in every walk of their lives. He told them to adopt the strongest weapon of nonviolence to embrace a new era of justice and equality in their lives. He himself arranged several programmes for their sake, upliftment and justice and equality. He thought to take rebirth in the house of a Dalit to witness the living agonies of the community. He focused attention on their welfare. He wanted to see them in temples like other caste Hindus. He wrote several articles to raise their awareness and motivated the caste Hindus to stop the discrimination against them. Fischer (2007) rightly says:

Everywhere he collected money for the Harijan cause, wrote for his new weeklies, visited quarters where Harijans lived, sought their entry into temples, and insisted that any welcome address presented to him in town or village should describe the condition of its Harijans.

Mahatma Gandhi was the first leader who moved a resolution in the Congress Party's Calcutta Session in 1920 for the abolition of untouchability. It was passed in 1921 in the Nagpur Session of the party. After that, every delegate of the Indian National Congress had to fulfil 'four' works

in their village: dining with the Dalits, opening the entry to Dalits in the village primary schools, allowing Dalits to enter the temple, and allowing them to fetch water from wells. Gandhi (2007) writes:

Resolutions about Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability and Khadi too were passed in this Congress, and since then the Hindu members of the Congress have taken upon themselves the responsibility of riding Hinduism of the curse of untouchability.

After his assassination, many tributes were paid by great men of the time, which can obviously evaluate his personality and importance to mankind and the world. Gandhi (2006) rightly quotes the comment of Rajagopalachari:

Bharat Mata is writhing in anguish and pain over the loss. No man loved Bharat Mata and Indians more than Mahatma Gandhi.

Obviously, the above findings answer our question: *'How are Gandhian thoughts, ideals, philosophies, and practices, which he practised very successfully in his lifetime, relevant to the current situation of the world?'* The research article proves that Mahatma Gandhi was indeed the ever-arrived greatest man in the world. He was quite unlike others, and whatever he practised in his life was for the betterment of mankind and the world. He continuously tried hard to abolish the then evils in politics, religion, society, economy, culture, and many other areas. His assassination was indeed the assassination of Truth and Light, which had given a direction to the entire mankind to live with a great sense of love, brotherhood, peace, and rest. He had solved several issues in India and South Africa without any bloodshed and violence, showing the bright and successful nonviolent struggle for the fulfilment of any legal, social, moral, human, or political demands of the world. There was/is not even a single man in the world who has done so. He did whatever he said, while many others say something and do differently. He was indeed a paragon of honesty, truth, and nonviolence. He lived to restore virtues, and he unremittingly showered his best wishes upon his devotees, opponents, and friends. He had no sense of revenge. He lived and worked for others, not for himself, and always worked with peace, duty, prosperity, and justice. Mahatma Gandhi sacrificed his whole life for the independence of India, for breaking up the chains of slavery of Bharatmata, and for the service of humanity, maintaining nonviolence for the sake of mankind and the world, and showing a new reawakening to the Cosmos. He worked with peace, prosperity, duty, and

Justice. He is revered for his unending compassion, courage, and devotion to human, social, moral, legal, political, national, international, and religious values and duties. He has done everything possible for the country which a common man cannot even think of doing for himself. As a politician, he had unlimited power of leadership, unlike others. He successfully headed several movements to liberate Bharatmata. Hence, his assassination was the assassination of Truth, Light, humanity, brotherhood, virtues, and values.

2. CONCLUSION

Obviously, Mahatma Gandhi's movement was a revolution that had no place for the practice of force or violence of any kind. The practice of nonviolence was his most conspicuous motto and slogan. He gained victory in South Africa by the cleaner weapon of nonviolence for nobler plans, and he also used it later in India in Champaran Satyagraha, and continued till the freedom of the country. Gandhi said that he was practising nonviolence, not because India is weak, but because India is strong. He said that nonviolence was the weapon of the strong, not of the weak. Gandhi advocated and practised non-resistance because he thought it was right.

In the history of human civilisation over the last 2000 years, there is none equal to him who practised the weapon of Truth, Satyagraha, and Nonviolence. The entire world is facing several crises of social, moral, political, religious, cultural, environmental, scientific, spiritual, and mystical degradation in all aspects of life. Now the world is full of deadly weapons and is always on the brink of war. Modern atomic weapons have challenged the existence of mankind. The war between Ukraine and Russia is at a too dangerous point. The atmosphere of unrest and violence is also in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sudan, Gaza, Syria, Iran, and in some other countries. So, the thoughts and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi are more relevant today for all mankind in the entire world than ever before. Only his ideals can award love, rest, peace, social harmony, brotherhood, affinity, and development to the world. All mankind over the world should salute him thousands of times for strengthening his ideals, thoughts, and philosophy to welcome a new, and godly morning into the entire world so that all mankind could enjoy worldly pleasure and blissful life....!!!!

Additionally, this research article also finds that there is a need for proper and detailed research on the impact of Mahatma Gandhi's practices of nonviolence, Satyagraha, Swadeshi, Khadi, etc, in different parts of the world by other communities or countries. It needs a proper and detailed study, separately focusing on his current influences in the minds of the masses over the globe.

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AUTHOR'S BIO

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