

# **COMMUNICATOR**

**The Journal of Indian Institute of Mass Communication**

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**Volume LIV, Number-1, January-March, 2019**

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**ISSN: 0588-8093**

## Message From Editor-in-Chief

Mahatma Gandhi was one of the greatest communicators ever. His life was his message. As students of mass communication, we have a lot to learn from Bapu and there cannot be a more appropriate occasion than his 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary year that the nation is currently celebrating.

In his autobiography or *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, the Mahatma, who edited and published several journals, said, "In the very first month of Indian Opinion, I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countryside and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy.

If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this piece of reasoning is correct, how many of the journals in the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil generally, go on together, and man must make his choice (*An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, p. 211).

His views remain as relevant today. With his simple lifestyle and communication skills, Gandhi brought himself at par with his audience – the larger Indian masses. His silence also spoke volumes. At a time, when there was hardly any electronic or social media and print media was confined to the literate few, one clarion call from Gandhi brought the whole sub-continent to a standstill. It is this credibility of the messenger that we need to imbibe and inculcate when the Fourth Estate, the world over is facing a crisis of credibility.

A strong votary of free speech, free press and the independence of the institution of the Editor, Gandhi vehemently opposed unwarranted restrictions on the media.

"The editor of a daily newspaper when he begins writing his leading article does not weigh his words in golden scales. He may be betrayed into a hasty word. Must he pay for it even though he did it obviously in good faith without malice and in the public interest? These libel actions are calculated to demoralize Indian Journalism and make public criticism over-cautious and timid. I am no lover of irresponsible or unjustifiably strong criticism. But the caution to be beneficial must come from within and not superimposed from without", he said. (*Young India*, August 7, 1924).

It is a matter of great joy that the Communicator – India's leading mass communication journal – is bringing out a special issue on Mahatma Gandhi as a communicator. I am confident that this collector's issue would remind media persons, scholars, academicians and students of their sacred duty to the profession, society and the nation at large and inspire them to restore the independence and credibility of the Fourth Estate, which is so critical for our survival as a democracy.

**K. G. Suresh**  
Director General, IIMC  
March 25, 2019  
New Delhi

## Editorial

It is my pleasure to bring out a collector's issue on "Mahatma Gandhi as a Communicator" on the occasion of 150th birth anniversary year of father of the nation and world's iconic leader. This issue of Communicator in its intellectual essence demystifies the journalistic personality of Gandhi and can be seen as a befitting tribute to the Gandhian ways of journalism and communication. Team Communicator received huge response to the call for papers on Mahatma Gandhi as a communicator and has chosen the relevant ones for publication after double blind review process.

Bapu's contribution to India's Independence can be attributed to his principles of non-violence and civil disobedience. With his peaceful strategies, journalistic abilities and democratic means of communication, he could mobilize millions of people in the freedom struggle. This issue focuses on communication and journalistic endeavours of Gandhi to spread awareness, educate and mobilize the people to attain independence. Being a great Communicator, Gandhi believed in the power of 'Satyagraha' (upholding the truth) as a guiding light for communication and also supported 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) as a core principle to lead his life. He demonstrated the same when he said, "My life is my message".

Gandhi's view on journalism and its role and responsibility in the society is well reflected in many of his sayings. To quote a few, he said, "The sole aim of journalism should be service". He also said "Journalism should never be prostituted for selfish ends or for the sake of merely earning a livelihood or, worse still, for the amassing money ". He further said "I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and resist under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of Satyagraha which is a direct corollary of nonviolence and truth". He believed that "Journalism has a distinct place in familiarizing and expressing public opinion and journalist's peculiar function is to read the mind of the country and to give definite and fearless expression to the mind". Regarding the Freedom of press he believed that it is a precious privilege that no country can forego. He emphasized that the fourth Estate is definitely a power, but to misuse that power is criminal. He stressed upon the fact that the newspapers should be read for the study of facts. They should not be allowed to kill the habit of independent thinking. His views remain relevant even after decades of journalism in India.

In this special issue, Prof DVR Murthy and Dr. Y D Ramdas emphasized on the practices of Gandhian journalism and how Gandhi could resist the 'Powers that be' during his time while adhering to the values of Journalism. Dr. Mrinal Chatterjee and Sambit Pal mapped Gandhi's journey from a food writer to a journalist to a political philosopher and they reflected upon the role journalism played in the transformation of Gandhi into Mahatma. Dr. Sanjay Bharthur, in his paper reflected on Gandhi's communication process, strengths and weaknesses of mass media as a variable and how the nation was able to identify with his approach, strategy and achievement of our independence. Dr. Madhudeep Singh proposed a new media theory based on Gandhian philosophy of Sarvodaya, and discussed the indicators of this theory in respect of diversity and plurality. Dr. Dhiman Chattopadhyay conducted a textual analysis of Gandhi's autobiography "The Story of My Experiments with truth" – to explore the communication strategies used by the Mahatma to spread his philosophical and political ideas across the world. Dr. Charu Lata Singh studied how Gandhi envisaged and created roles for women to influence change in their own lives and lives of others. Dr. Ravindra Chincholkar attempted to evaluate Mahatma Gandhi's contribution as journalist. Prof. V. L. Dharukar paper talks about different perspectives of Mahatma Gandhi's Journalism. Paper in detail elaborates upon the

“Gandhian Philosophy” in respect to Journalist which not only emphasised on the importance of free speech but also the role of individual in the media as an institution.

Dr. Dharmesh V. Dhawankar and Vinit Beley projected Gandhi and his communication strategies in 21st century with tools available in the digital age and envisaged how successful they would be in present scenario. Dr. Bhavneet Bhatti looked at communication approaches of Aristotle, David Berlo, the concept of persuasive communication and the factors of Effective communication by Wilbur Schramm and used these approaches to understand the communication strategies used in journalistic writing and speeches of Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. Manash Pratim Goswami worked on the Celluloid versions of Gandhi and studied significant films produced in Hindi and English by Indian and foreign filmmakers on the life, struggle, philosophy, teaching and practices of Gandhi and Gandhism. Dr. Jolly Jose explored nine characteristics of the modern development journalism and approach of Gandhi in Young India and Harijan. Chhavi Garg analyzed Gandhi’s non- verbal communication. Dr. Ankuran Dutta and Dr. Anupa Lahkar Goswami studied Gandhi’s activist – journalist endeavours. Shabarni Basu and Dr. Saswati Gangopadhyay analyzed how Gandhi communicated his messages with various tools of communication such as his speeches, satyagrahas, padyatras and his ideas as published in newspaper.

This issue also comprises of five book reviews one of them being a latest release on Mahatma Gandhi as a Journalist and Editor, edited by Dr. Mrinal Chatterjee and Snehasis Sur. The second book is about the untold story of India’s first newspaper by Andrew Otis. Prof M R Dua has reviewed a book authored by Rachel Davis Mersey named as Can Journalism Be Saved? The other two books reviewed in this issue are ‘An integrated approach to communication theory and Research’ and ‘Media, the state and Marginalisation- Trackling challenges’.

I am sure that this issue will remind the scholars, media educators and professionals about their duties and journalistic responsibilities and help revive journalism practices in the country.

**“You must be the Change; you wish to see in the world.”**

**Dr. Surbhi Dahiya**

Editor, Communicator

Course Director, English Journalism

March 28, 2019

New Delhi

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# Gandhian Journalism<sup>1</sup>: A Perspective

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## Abstract

*Though Gandhi viewed that the duty of the newspapers was only to serve the people, he used Young India to resist the Britishers boldly in not compromising with any aspect related to the freedom of India, and also the freedom of the press. In the face of mounting hostility against the British administration, the government brought in the Press Act of 1910, which imposed heavy security deposit to open a printing press, and thereby muzzle the freedom of the press. However, Gandhi stood firmly for the freedom of the press, and two cases reported in this article illustrate how Mahatma argued his cases related to contempt of court, and sedition which he accepted eventually to go to jail. The present paper views the practices of Gandhian journalism and how Gandhi could resist the 'powers that be' during his time while adhering to the values of journalism.*

**Keywords:** Mahatma Gandhi, Cases, Journalist.

## Introduction

In 1888, Gandhi went to London for the study of Bar-at-Law and during his stay in London he spent hours reading the columns of Daily Telegraph, the Daily News and the Pall Mall Gazette. Gandhi showed interest in reading travelogues with plenty of illustrations (Bhattacharyya, 1965:1). Newspaper reading was a novel experience to him as he recorded in his autobiography, My Experiments with Truth that he never read a newspaper in India. As noted by Bhattacharyya (1965:1), that Gandhi found newspapers informative and entertaining, and he had a desire to see his name and article in print. Encouraged by Alfred Hills, Chairman of the Thames Iron Works, London, and persuaded by Josiah Old Field, the editor of a magazine, the Vegetarian, Gandhi wrote nine articles on diet, customs, festivals, etc., of the Indians (Raj Mohan Gandhi, 2006:45), between February and April 1891. 'Three years of writing and staying abroad enlarged not only his scope of writing, but made him a better and more accomplished free-lance journalist.' (Bhattacharyya, 1965:2). 'If the London Vegetarian Society afforded him a forum to write and speak, the political situation in South Africa chiseled him into a conscientious journalist' (Raj Mohan Gandhi, 2006). During a brief spell in India, from the middle of 1896 to November 1896, he was touring in India to enlist the support, among others, editors, for South African Indian cause. He came into contact with G. Pillay, editor of the Madras Standard, who provided an opportunity for Gandhi to edit the newspaper,

and subsequently, Gandhi published his famous *Green Pamphlet*, wherein he highlighted the grievances of his countrymen in Africa (ibid).

His association with editors and working closely with the editorial staff of the newspapers helped Gandhi in acquiring some inside knowledge of the working of these papers. This bolstered him to start one journal in South Africa. Mahatma Gandhi was instrumental in launching, *Indian Opinion*, in 1903 in South Africa; a weekly which started publication in four languages – English, Hindi, Tamil and Gujarati with an intention to serve all Indians in South Africa. Two close associates of Gandhi, Madanjit Vyavaharik and Manshuklal Hiralal Nazar launched *Indian Opinion* on June 4, 1903, while the latter, a journalist from Bombay was looking after the editorial function of the weekly. The intention of the journal was to act as a voice of the Indian community, in order to improve their lot, and thus the journal did not have any commercial leanings. As the two gentlemen could not run the journal, the responsibility fell on the shoulders of Gandhi, who took over the journal in October 1904. His friend, Albert West, who gave up his business as a printer was managing it, while Gandhi was editing the journal with the sole intention of educating and mobilizing Indians through the weekly columns on various aspects of life. Gandhi's mission was to portray the sufferings of every Indian in South Africa, and indicated the line of duty that every Indian must follow in order to win his elementary rights (Bhattacharya, 2002:44). The fool-scaped sized, three-column journal published news and views of Indians in South Africa.

The journal was known for its moderate policy and sound news. The *Indian Opinion* carried two or more editorials, a few editorial comments which dealt mostly with Indian problems and discriminatory laws. It also carried a small correspondence column, reproduced articles on Indian problems from other journals. It also published the "Weekly Diary", a popular column, which contained different aspects of Satyagraha was eagerly read by Indians. Gandhi had to suspend Tamil and Hindi editions of *Indian Opinion* for want of compositors and editors.

The journal, in particular carried the popular biographical sketches of eminent men in many parts of the world such as Count Tolstoy, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. Also, he supported the publication financially. In his autobiography, he noted that lack of funding to the weekly forced them to discontinue the publication in Tamil and Hindi. He outlined the three objectives of the journal, *Indian Opinion* (Bhattacharya, 2002: 44-45). They were: 1) to make Indian grievances known to the Governments in South Africa and Britain and to the people of India, 2) to make the Indians in South Africa aware of their own shortcomings and try to overcome them, and 3) to eliminate the prevailing distinctions between Hindus and Muslims and among Gujaratis and Tamils and others. Therefore, Gandhi said, "I poured out my soul in its columns and expounded the principles and practice of *satyagraha* as I understood it". The journal had a circulation of 3500 and every Indian was eagerly waiting to receive it every week (Nanda, 1998: 98). Gandhi mostly wrote on philosophy of Satyagraha, which served as inspiration to Satyagraha movement, and on intellectual and aesthetics subjects.

Gandhi, penned the first editorial, 'Ourselves' for the inaugural issue. He also wrote the second lead article, 'The British Indians in South Africa, and short notes like 'Is it fair', 'Virtuous Inconsistency', 'Better late than never', 'Words and deeds',

*Gandhi was editing the journal with the sole intention of educating and mobilizing Indians through the weekly columns on various aspects of life.*



‘Minute by Mayor’, all of them were unsigned. Gandhi took over the reins of *Indian Opinion*, as issues steadily mounted. In 1904, *Indian Opinion* wrote an editorial with a heading ‘Ourselves’, a repeat of first editorial under the same caption, of July 1903. The editorial unfolded the newspapers future plans, and outlined how the paper was run since eighteen months of its inception.

Since, *Indian Opinion* incurred losses, and to surmount the already existing losses, the size of *Indian Opinion*, was reduced from 16 pages to 8 pages, and was brought out on Wednesday instead of Saturday. Though Gandhi said that no apology need to be offered, the *Indian Opinion* of January 1, 1910, published the following under the heading ‘Ourselves’: “With the present issues, this journal appears under somewhat changed dress...”

Changes were made in Gujarati edition on January 4, 1913; the journal was printed in two columns instead of three, to make it appear better. After Gandhi left South Africa, *Indian Opinion* lost its sheen (Bhattacharyya, 1965:28). When Gandhi returned to India on January 9, 1913, journalism was still in its nascent stage in the country, and yet to establish itself as profession except the Anglo-Indian press in India. Newspapers had to depend on sales and monetary help from individuals. Highly popular Indian newspapers did not match the technically superior Anglo-Indian press in news coverage.

Gandhi, in fact, wrote only two books, ‘*My experiments with truth*’ in Gujarati and ‘*Hind Swaraj or Home Rule*,’ which was written in Gujarati, was translated by him into English. In the preface to the book *Hind Swaraj*, he said:

It (*Hind Swaraj*) was written in 1908 during my return voyage from London to South Africa in answer to the Indian school of violence and its prototype in South Africa. I came in contact with every known Indian anarchist in London. Their bravery impressed me, but I felt that their zeal was misguided. I felt that violence was no remedy for India’s ills, and that her civilization required the use of a different and higher weapon for self protection. The Satyagraha of South Africa was still an infant hardly two years old. But it had developed sufficiently to permit me to write of it with some degree of confidence. What I wrote was so much appreciated that it was published as a booklet... In my opinion it is a book which can be put into the hands of a child. It teaches the gospel of love in place of that of hate. It places violence with self sacrifice. It pits soul force against brute force. It has gone through several editions and I commend it to those who would care to read it.

*Hind swaraj* used the technique of dialogue between the reader and the editor. The purpose of adopting of such dialogue seemed to be that Mahatma did intend to clarify the doubts that would linger in the mind of the reader (Murthy, 2010). He answered many queries posed by the reader such as education, civilization, culture and so on. Answering a query of the reader in *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi explained the objectives of newspaper. He said ‘one of the objectives of the newspaper was to understand popular feeling and to give expression to it; another was to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments, and the third was fearlessly to expose popular defects’. While explaining the objectives of the newspapers, he further, commented on the power of the press.

‘*Hind Swaraj*’ was written in 1908 during my return voyage from London to South Africa in answer to the Indian school of violence and its prototype in South Africa.

“In the very first month of *Indian Opinion*, I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countryside’s and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this line of reasoning is correct, how many of the journals in the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless? And who should be the judge? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil generally, go on together, and man must make his choice.

As soon as he returned from South Africa in 1915, Gandhi started his political life. However, he launched three newspapers during 1919-20 defying the Indian Press Act<sup>2</sup>. Although the Act barred new publications, he boldly launched *Satyagrahi* (in Hindi and Gujarati), *Navajivan* (Gujarati), and *Young India* (English).

Consequent upon the World War I and the massacre at Jullianwalla bagh, B G Horniman, the English editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, was vehemently condemning the British administration for the atrocities and supported the National Movement. As a result, Horniman was deported to Britain. The directors of the *Bombay Chronicle* who were running the other journal, *Young India* requested Gandhi to take over the journal. Gandhi agreed on the condition that the editorial office would be shifted to Ahmedabad from Bombay, as he set up an *ashram* at Ahmedabad, which would require his guidance. As he purchased a printing press, Navajivan Publishing House to publish his monthly, *Navajivan*, he would bring out *Young India* from Ahmedabad. He gave a note to the subscribers in the first issue of *Young India* on October 8, 1919

The editing of “*Navajivan*” has been a perfect revelation to me. Whilst “*Young India*” has a little more than 1200 subscribers, “*Navajivan*” has 12000. The number would leap to 20000 if we would but get printers to print that number. It shows that a vernacular newspaper is a felt want. I am proud to think that I have numerous readers among farmers and workers. They make India. Their poverty is India’s curse and crime. Their prosperity alone can make India a country fit to live in. They represent nearly 80 p.c. of India’s population. The English journals touch but the fringe of the ocean of India’s population. Whilst therefore I hold it to be the duty of every English knowing Indian to translate the best of the English thought in the vernacular for the benefit of the masses, I recognize that for a few years to come i.e. until we have accepted Hindustani as the common medium among the cultured classes and until Hindustani becomes compulsory in our schools as a second language, educated India, especially in the Madras Presidency must be addressed in English.

But I will not be party to editing a newspaper that does not pay its way. “*Young India*” cannot pay its way unless it has at least 2500 paying subscribers. I must appeal to my Tamil friends to see to it that the requisite number of subscribers is found, if they wish to see “*Young India*” continued. The more so now, because the proprietors of “*Young India*” have decided to give up all advertisements. I know that they have not been entirely if at all converted to my view that a newspaper ought to be conducted without advertisement. But they are willing to let me make the experiment. I invite those who wish to see “*Young India*” free from the curse of advertisements to help me to make the venture a success. The Guajrati “*Nava*

The directors  
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Chronicle* who  
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other journal,  
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to take over the  
journal.

*Jivan*” has already demonstrated the possibility of conducting a newspaper without advertisement soiling its pages. What a financial gain it would be to the country, if there was for each province only one advertisement medium-not a newspaper-containing innocent unvarnished notices of things useful for the public. But for our criminal indifference, we would decline to pay the huge indirect taxation by way of mischievous advertisements. Some readers who are interested in the purity of journalism recently sent me a most indecent advertisement extracted from a well known newspaper. I have refused to soil the pages of “*Navajivan*” by reproducing it. But anyone turning to the advertisement sheets of even leading journals can verify the aptness of my criticism.

He did not accept advertisements and believed that the newspapers should survive on the revenue from subscribers. The circulation of *Young India* went up to 45000, and his articles were effective (Krishnamurthy, 1966). However, *Young India* was closed in 1932, owing to repressive acts of the British administration.

The thought of having another weekly was lingering in Gandhi’s mind when he was in prison in Poona on account of Civil Disobedience Movement (Bhattacharya, 2002:94). Though he was in prison, he established Harijan Sevak Sangh and asked the Sangh to publish *Harijan*.

On February 11, 1933 *Harijan* was published as a weekly, at the request of Gandhi which carried, ‘Gandhi’s views on untouchability, village sanitation, rural reconstruction through village industries, women’s education, women’s rehabilitation, basic education, and the upliftment of all (*sarvodaya*) through employment for every able bodied person (Vilanilam, 2005: 81).

For instance, Gandhi wrote in *Harijan* on February 27, 1937: “I believe in the proper education of woman. But I do believe that woman will not make her contribution to the world by mimicking or running a race with man. She can run the race, but she will not rise to the great heights she is capable of by mimicking man. She has to be a complement to the man”.

The weekly newspaper priced at one anna (six paise), was devoted to the cause of Harijans and scrupulously excluded politics. The English edition came out first, followed by the Hindi. Edited by RV Sastry, the weekly newspaper carried news items on Harijan welfare, the main editorial was devoted exclusively on untouchability and a column titled, ‘To the Reader’, which explained the importance of the newly launched movement. It also featured English rendering of poem written by Tagore in Bengali translated by Shri S Datta, entitled ‘Scavenger’. Outlining the aims of *Harijan*, Gandhi said, it would be devoted for the service of Harijan and would highlight all efforts for the removal of untouchability. Through *Harijan*, Gandhi espoused the cause of Harijan; he demonstrated that service should be a motto of journalism.

With such educative contents, the print order of the weekly was 10000. However, in response to the censorship imposed on the newspapers, Gandhi suspended the publication of *Harijan* in November 1940 with an article, “good-bye”, and within

*‘Harijan’ was a weekly newspaper priced at one anna (six paise), was devoted to the cause of Harijans and scrupulously excluded politics.*

a gap of one year, he resumed the publication in January 1942. In eight months of its' resumption of publication, Gandhi went to prison on August 8, 1942, and immediately the administration closed down the weekly. But it resumed publication after a lapse of three and half years on February 10, 1946 (Bhattacharya, 2002:200). As Gandhi was upright in his attitude, he wrote in *Harijan* in July 1947: Perhaps we may have to close the *Harijan*. My mind rebels against many things that our leaders are doing. Yet I do not feel like actively opposing them. But how can I avoid it if I am running a paper? Further, he wrote: Sardar (reference to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel), I feel that *Harijan* should now be closed. It does not seem to me to be right to give contrary guidance to the country (Bhattacharya, 2002: 201).

Though Gandhi viewed that the duty of the newspapers was only to serve the people, he used *Young India* to resist the Britishers boldly in not compromising with any aspect related to the freedom of India, and also the freedom of the press. In the face of mounting hostility against the British administration, the government brought in the Press Act of 1910, which imposed heavy security deposit to open a printing press, and thereby muzzle the freedom of the press (Murthy, 2010). However, Gandhi stood firmly for the freedom of the press, and two cases reported below illustrate how Mahatma argued his cases related to contempt of court, and sedition which he accepted eventually to go to jail.

### Contempt of Court

As a journalist, Gandhi never shirked from the responsibility of carrying the burden of proof, and he favoured objectivity in the news reports, and also exhorted the newspapers to abide by objectivity instead of favouring other methods to escape the law. He boldly published a letter against the judge to express the truth. He stood by his conviction in questioning the judge's attitude. He was prepared to face the consequences of violating the rule, and in the face of tough stance of the judge, he firmly argued his case to resist contempt of court. In the two issues of *Young India*, he published articles which attracted the law of contempt. On March 10, 1920, in *Young India*, contempt of case proceedings were reported with a heading, 'Was it contempt of court? Proceedings against Gandhi and Mahadeo H Desai'. Two judges Marten, and Hayward Kajiji were hearing the contempt case against Editor Gandhi and Publisher Desai of *Young India* for publication of a letter addressed by Kennedy, District Judge of Ahmedabad, to the Registrar of the High Court, complaining of the conduct of certain Satyagrahi lawyers of Ahmedabad. In April 1919, Judge Kennedy found that certain lawyers in Ahmedabad had signed the Satyagraha pledge, and he asked them to explain why their Sanads<sup>3</sup> should not be cancelled for their having signed the pledge.

He did not consider their explanation satisfactory, and hence, addressed a letter to the Registrar of the High Court on April 22, 1919. In consequence, two notices were issued by the High Court to the lawyers concerned. A copy of Kennedy's letter was given by the Registrar to Divetia, pleader for one of the lawyers, who handed the same to Kalidas J Jhaveri, one of the Satyagrahi lawyers, who in turn handed it to Gandhi. On August 6, 1919, the letter was published in *Young India* with a heading "O'Dwyerism in Ahmedabad" along with an article commenting on the letter with

*As a journalist, Gandhi never shirked from the responsibility of carrying the burden of proof, and he favoured objectivity in the news reports, and also exhorted the newspapers to abide by objectivity instead of favouring other methods to escape the law.*

a heading “Shaking Civil Resisters”. As soon as the proceedings were completed, the Registrar addressed a letter to Gandhi directing him to appear before the Chief Justice’s Chamber, to give an explanation as regards the publication of the letter. Gandhi replied through a telegram explaining his inability to attend on the appointed date as he was going to the Punjab.

The Registrar replied saying that the Chief Justice did not wish to interfere with Gandhi’s appointment and that a written explanation would do. Gandhi was asked to publish an apology in the paper, which was refused by Gandhi. Following his refusal, the judge declared the publication of the letter would come under the contempt of court. On the judgment of the High Court, Gandhi stood firmly on the ground saying that he would honour the independence of the journalist and would go to any extent to undergo punishment. The article appeared on March 24, 1920 in Young India with a heading, contempt of court as follows:

The long-expected hearing of the case against the editor and the publisher of Young India in connection with the publication of a letter of the district Judge of Ahmedabad regarding Satyagrahi Lawyers and my comments thereon has been heard and judgment has been pronounced. Both the editor and the publisher have been severely reprimanded. But the court did not see its way to pass any sentence upon either of us. If I dwell upon the judgment it is only because I am anxious as a satyagrahi to draw a moral from it. I wish to assure those friends who out of pure friendliness advised us to tender the required apology, that I refused to accept their advice not out of obstinacy but because there was a great principle at stake.

I had to conserve a journalist’s independence and yet respect the law. My own reading of the law was that there was no contempt committed by me. But my defence rested more upon the fact that I could not offer an apology if I was not prepared not to repeat the offence on similar occasion. Because I hold that an apology tendered to a court to be true has to be as sincere as a private apology. At the same time I owed a duty to the court. It was no light thing for me to refuse to accept the advice of the Chief Justice especially when Chief Justice was so very considerate in the correspondence with me. I was on the horns of a dilemma. I therefore decided not to offer any defence but simply to make a statement frankly and fully defining my position, leaving it to the court to pass any sentence it thought fit in the event of an adverse decision.

In order to show that I meant no disrespect of the court and that I did not desire to advertise the case I took extraordinary precautions to prevent publicity and I venture to think that I succeeded eminently in convincing the court that behind my disobedience - if it was disobedience, there was no defiance but perfect resignation, there was no anger or ill-will but perfect restraint and respect: that if I did not apologize, I did not because an insincere apology would have been contrary to my conscience. I hold that it was about as perfect an instance of civil disobedience as it ever has been my privilege to offer. And I feel that the court reciprocated in a most handsome manner and recognized the spirit of civility that lay behind my so called disobedience. The luminous judgment of Justice Marten lays down the law, and

*‘I had to  
conserve a  
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and yet respect  
the law’  
M. K. Gandhi.*

decides against me. But I feel thankful that it does not question the propriety of my action. Justice Hayward’s judgment recognizes it as an instance of passive. i.e. civil resistance and practically makes it the reason for not awarding any sentence. Here then we have an almost complete vindication of civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil must be sincere, respectful, restrained, and never defiant, must be based upon some well understood principle, must not be capricious and above all must have no ill-will or hatred behind it. I submit that the disobedience offered by Desai and myself contained all these ingredients.

### **Sedition Case**

Gandhi published three articles in *Young India* dated September 29, 1921, with a heading ‘Tampering with Loyalty’, another article on December 15, 1921, with a heading “the puzzle and solution”, and the third article on February 23, 1923, with a heading ‘Shaking the Manes’. In these articles, he severely criticized the British administration, and asked the people to rebel against the government, and in particular the Indian sepoy to rebel against the government. For instance, December 15, 1921 contained the following passage.

#### **“A puzzle and Its Solution”**

Lord Reading is puzzled and perplexed. Speaking in reply to the addresses from the British Indian Association and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta, His Excellency said, “I confess that when I contemplate the activities of a section of the community, I find myself still, notwithstanding persistent study ever since I have been in India, puzzled and perplexed. I ask myself what purpose is served by flagrant breaches of the law for the purpose of challenging the Government and in order to compel arrest.” The answer was partly given by Pandit Motilal Nehru when he said on being arrested that he was being taken to the house of freedom. We ask arrest because the so called freedom is slavery. We are challenging the might of this government because we consider its activity to be wholly evil. We want to overthrow the government. We want to compel its submission to the peoples will. We desire to show that the government exists to serve the people, not the people the government. Free life under the government has become intolerable, for the price exacted for the retention of freedom is unconsciously great. Whether we are one or many, we must refuse to purchase freedom at the cost of our self-respect or our cherished convictions. I have known even little children become unbending when an attempt has been made to cross their declared purpose, be it ever so flimsy in the estimation of their parents. Lord Reading must clearly understand the non - cooperators are at war with the government.

Because of these writings, a case of sedition was registered against the editor, M K Gandhi and the publisher, Shankarlal Ghelabai Banker on March 18, 1922, in the district and sessions court, Ahmedabad. The charges were “bringing or attempting to excite disaffection towards his Majesty’s Government established by law in British India, and thereby committing offences punishable under section 124A<sup>4</sup> of the Indian Penal Code”. When the charges were read out in the court, the judge, C N Broomfield called upon the accused to plead to the charges. He asked Gandhi

whether he pleaded guilty or claimed to be tried. Gandhi pleaded guilty to the charges and Banker too pleaded guilty to the charges. The judge wished to give his verdict immediately, but the advocate-general, J T Strangaman insisted that the due process of law must be followed. The advocate-general requested the judge to take into account “the occurrences in Bombay, Malabar and Chauri Chauri, leading to rioting and murder”. In respect of Banker, the advocate-general said that the second accused, the offence was lesser as he published them, and did not write them. Therefore, the advocate-general asked for a substantial fine in addition to imprisonment as might be possible. However, the judge asked Gandhi that “would he like to make a statement?”. Gandhi agreed to give a statement, and the judge asked for a written statement to be recorded. Gandhi made an oral statement, which was followed by a written statement. Gandhi said:

Before I read this statement I would like to state that I entirely endorse the learned advocate-general’s remarks in connection with my humble self. I think that he was entirely fair to me in all the statements that he has made, because it is very true and I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this court the fact that to preach disaffection towards existing system of Government has become almost a passion with me, and the advocate-general is entirely right when he says that my preaching of disaffection did not commence with my connection with Young India but it commenced much earlier, and in the statement that I am about to read, it will be my painful duty to admit before this court that it commenced much earlier than the period stated by advocate-general. It is impossible for me to disassociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages of Bombay...I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenuating act. I am here, therefore, to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime, and what appears to me to be the highest duty of the citizen. The only course open to you, the judge, is, as I am going to say in my statement, either to resign your post, or inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and law you are assisting to administer are good for the people.

Further, Louis Fischer (1994: 259-260) who authored, *The Life of Mahatma* recorded as follows:

When Gandhi sat down, Justice Broomfield bowed to the prisoner, and pronounced sentence ‘The determination of a just sentence,’ the judge declared, ‘is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever heard or am likely to have to try. I would be impossible to ignore the fact that in the eyes of millions of your country men, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and even saintly life.’

The judge then announced that Gandhi must undergo imprisonment for six years, and added that if the government later saw fit to reduce the term ‘no one would be better pleased than I’. Banker received one year jail and fine of one thousand rupees. On hearing the sentence, the Mahatma rose and said that the sentence ‘is as mild as

any judge could inflict on me, and so far as the entire proceedings are concerned, I must say that I could not have expected greater courtesy’.

The two cases reported above illustrate that Mahatma Gandhi never compromised on the principles he enunciated throughout his life. As said earlier, Gandhi considered journalism as a by-product of his activities, and newspaper was a vehicle for him to propagate his views. He firmly asserted that he was writing these articles only to awaken the Indians and to rouse desirable sentiments in them against the British rule while engaging more number of people with nationalism.

### End Notes and References

1. The term, ‘Gandhian journalism’ was used by J V Vilanilam in his book, Mass Communication in India: A sociological perspective, New Delhi: Sage. 2005
2. With the repeal of vernacular Act in 1881, printers and publishers had to register their newspapers with local officials, and publications had to carry their names and addresses. Press Act in 1910 (repealed in 1922) and 1931 attempted to keep newspapers under some form of legal control, but by 1931...it was understood that it was politically impossible to leave decisions about newspapers simply to officials, the court had to be given a role’ ( Jeffrey, 2003:186).
3. The license to practice and plead in District and High Courts. The system was in vogue till 1932.
4. Section 124A of Indian Penal Code. Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the government established by law in India, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.

Explanation 1: The explanation “disaffection” includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity.

Explanation 2: Comments expressing disapprobation of the measures of the Government with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under this section.

Explanation 3: Comments expressing disapprobation of the administrative or other action of the Government without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under this section.

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## **Transformation of Gandhi to Mahatma: The Journey from a Food Writer to a Journalist and Political Philosopher**

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### **Abstract**

*Mahatma Gandhi's engagement with journalism had been long, intimate and life changing. Gandhi, the Journalist predates Gandhi, the Mahatma. Gandhiji as a journalist and Editor carried the ideological moorings of Gandhiji, the Social Crusader and Freedom Fighter-which finally shaped him as the Mahatma. Gandhi's first foray into writing for periodicals was as a 'food-writer'. He wrote about vegetarianism in a periodical titled Vegetarian. It was not much to talk about. But it started his engagement with the act of writing for an audience. His engagement with journalism matured in South Africa. The Boer War was an opportunity for him to hone his skills to see with a journalist's eye. He was quick to realise the power of the press to reach the audience and mobilise public opinion. In Indian Opinion he experimented with the idea of using newspaper as a tool of protest. It was also in a way the laboratory of his political philosophy, which he attempted to put into operation in India. This historiographical study attempts to map Gandhi's journey from a 'food writer' to a journalist to a political philosopher. It tries to reflect on the role journalism played in the transformation of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi into the Mahatma.*

**Keywords:** Vegetarian, Indian Opinion, Public Opinion, Tool of Protest, Gandhi's Political Philosophy

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Mahatma Gandhi has not only been an effective communicator, perhaps the most important quality of any mass leader, he has been a practicing journalist all through his life. Delving into his works as a journalist, one can find a strong correlation between his journalistic writings and shaping up of his political and philosophical self which drove him to lead the freedom movement in a unique way- till then unseen in the modern civilization.

His engagement with the world of mass communication had a humble beginning. His first writings were on food- vegetarianism to be specific. But he was fascinated by the very act of writing for masses and thereby reaching out to them with his observations and ideas. This fascination grew into lifelong love affair with the world of journalism. This love affair played a very important role in shaping Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi into Mahatma Gandhi. It was through his writings that he reached out to the masses. It was through journalism that his political philosophy emerged and evolved. This paper aims to capture the trajectory of his political philosophy along with his genre of journalism over the six decades of his life.

Political Philosophy is concerned with the “concepts and arguments involved in political opinion” and it mainly deals with the use of public power for enhancing the quality of human life (Bowe and Arneson 2019). Though Gandhi did not systemize his political arguments, he dealt with political thought generating out of his understanding of various forms of philosophical discourses as well as his experience and response to certain circumstances. This process had undergone a huge change from the time he sailed to England to study law till the end of his life. As a seeker of truth, Gandhi had addressed different situations in his life in different ways, but not deviating from his fundamental beliefs (B. Bhattacharya 1965). The whole journey of Gandhi, the political philosopher reflected through the image of Gandhi, the journalist. Gandhi (1939) himself wrote,

*“At the time of writing I never think of what I have said before. My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment.”*

The strangest fact was Gandhi, who was to be the editor of several newspapers and use journalism as a tool to achieve his mission later in his life, never read a newspaper until he was 19. The first newspaper that he grabbed was not in India, but in London around 1889. Gandhi (1956) himself mentioned that, “In India I had never read a newspaper.” After he arrived in London and before he took up regular studies, Gandhi started reading newspapers for about an hour regularly. He used to glance through newspapers like *The Daily News*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Pall Mall Gazette*. Interestingly his search for a vegetarian restaurant and struggle with his dietetics took him closer to the first weekly journal that Gandhi contributed to. In order to bring changes in his internal and external self in England, Gandhi experimented with his diet that was cost-effective for him as well as enough to fulfill his appetite. As he refused to eat meat and decided to practice vegetarianism only, Gandhi (1956) found that the writers on vegetarianism in England had dealt with the subject “very minutely, attacking it in its religious, scientific, practical, and medial aspects.” He was also moved by their arguments that practically and economically vegetarian diet was the cheapest. He had found a pamphlet on the window of a vegetarian restaurant. The pamphlet, Henry Salt’s (1885) *‘A plea for Vegetarianism’*, further made him determined to stick to his diet despite temptations and provocation to eat meat. Gandhi had vowed to his family before leaving for England that he would abstain himself from eating meat, but, according to Hay (1989), it was Salt’s

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appeal to the people to be kind to the animals made Gandhi find a rationale in practicing vegetarianism.

His physical and philosophical quest for vegetarianism brought him in connection with the London Vegetarian Society (LVS) which used to bring out a weekly journal called *Vegetarian*.<sup>t</sup> He came in close contact with Arnold F Hills who was the founder and owner of *Vegetarian*. Another person who must have influenced him in joining LSV was Josiah Oldfield. Josiah was also Gandhi's close friend and his roommate in London. Gandhi finished his law examinations by December 1890 and then, apart from fulfilling residence requirements, he did not have much to do. During this time Gandhi started writing for the *Vegetarian*. He wrote in total 12 articles including six on Indian vegetarians, three on some Indian festivals, two on his difficulties in leaving India and one on the foods of India (Hay 1989).

Apparently Gandhi contributed to the *Vegetarian* as a freelancer and on topics that do not really match with the personality Gandhi was later known to be. In the article published in the issue of February 7, 1891, Gandhi wrote (Bhattacharya 1965) on the misconception that all Indians were vegetarians and how diverse the food habit in India was. In another article on March 28, 1891, he wrote about Indian customs and festivals.

Looking deep into the content of the articles, it would show that Gandhi's crusade for a cause was shaping up from these initial years as a student in England. In Gandhi's own words, "The brief and the modest experience gave me some little training on organising and conducting institutions." His friend Josiah Oldfield (1951) echoed Gandhi's words,

*"These were happy days of consciousness that we were helping to make the world better, and they formed a fine training ground in which Gandhi learnt that by quiet persistence he could do far more to change men's minds than a loud and oratory trumpeting."*

Gandhi was known as a shy gentleman who was afraid of addressing any gathering during his stay in London as a student. But he found a voice through the articles he had written and the meetings of LVS that he attended. Since this period, Gandhi's philosophical discourse was highly influenced by the Western as well as the Oriental thinkers or thoughts (Parekh 1989).

After leaving London and a brief stay in India, Gandhi sailed to South Africa to practice law. Though he was a barrister by training, his days in South Africa transformed him into an outright practicing journalist. As he got involved into the mud and soil of politics to defend the rights of the Indian diaspora in South Africa and before he launched *Indian Opinion*, he kept on writing 'Letters to the editors' in various Indian as well as South African newspapers including Pioneer, Allahabad, The Madras Standard, The Hindu, The Statesman and came in close contact with Amrita Bazar Patrika, Bangabasi in India and Natal Advertiser and Natal Mercury in South Africa. His idea was to ventilate information about the struggles of the Indians under the oppressive rule of the South African authorities. In order to serve

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this purpose he took help of the newspapers. As a South African correspondent, he also wrote on the issues involving Indian diaspora there for *India* journal launched by the ‘grand old man of India’ Dadabhai Naoroji in London. His objective was clear as he once wrote in *Times of India*, “Publicity is our best and perhaps the only weapon of defence (Gandhi 1896).”

As mentioned earlier, Gandhi was not a philosopher (Parekh 1989) in the true sense of the term. Rather he was a deep thinker who carefully reflected and theorised his experience. He was a man “both of thought and action” as well. South Africa was the breeding ground of his political thought. As Parekh (1989) mentions, “He acquired there intense sensitivity to racism, an acute sense of racial self-respect and a strong sense of Indian identity.” At the same time like many Indian thinkers, he was also confused with how he should respond to the British rule.

At this juncture, when Gandhi was deliberating on the cause of the British colonialism, quite interestingly Gandhi launched his ‘career as journalist’ with war reporting as he joined the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) raising, with much difficulty, an Ambulance Corps for the British. Apart from working as the volunteer of the Natal Indian Ambulance Corps, he started reporting from the field and sent regular dispatches for *The Times of India* weekly newspaper. Here too Gandhi showed his character as a journalist. Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill who joined the war as a soldier of the British army, too wrote on the same Boer War. When Churchill’s dispatches were mainly on the technical details of the military operation, Gandhi concentrated on the activities of the Indian Ambulance Corps and the human interest stories that he could generate from the ground. In one of the dispatches he wrote (Gandhi 1960) how an Indian woman fruit seller emptied her basket as the soldiers landed at the Durban Wharf and she said that was all she could contribute. There are controversies over his role in Boer War. Many questioned his support for the British when his own country was under the oppression of the British rulers, but Gandhi later spoke publicly referring to this service and many such ones like during Zulu rebellion in 1906 or World War I. He wanted to use the opportunities to gain confidence of the British rulers in order to attain equality in the Empire. Gandhi (1956) had confessed that initially his sympathies were with the Boers, but being part of the British citizenry he found it to be his duty to defend the British Empire. He in fact, at that time, believed that “India could achieve her complete emancipation only within and through the British Empire.”

Soon Gandhi realised that mere ‘freelancing’ and letters to the editors and occasional dispatches to the Indian newspapers would not help his purpose in creating impact on the stake holders. As a journalist he took a huge plunge in launching his own journal *Indian Opinion* in 1903. He turned out to be an editor. Having worked closely with the editorial staff and his acquaintances with the editors must have encouraged him to take the decision (Bhattacharya 1965). Though Mansukhlal Nazar was the first editor of *Indian Opinion*, later Gandhi had to take up the responsibilities of

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own journal  
'Indian Opinion'  
in 1903.*

editorship as Mansukhlal did not want to venture into the intricate political issues in South Africa. In *Indian Opinion*'s inaugural issue, Gandhi (1903) wrote:

*"...the Indian community in South Africa is a recognised factor in the body politic, and a newspaper, voicing its feelings, and specially devoted to its cause, would hardly be considered out of place; indeed, we think, it would supply a long felt want".*

He used the newspaper to attain many goals. On the tactical ground, Gandhi wanted his newspaper to serve two purposes: safeguarding Indian interest by informing the Indians in South Africa about their plights and also making the Englishmen staying in South Africa and also in England aware of the ground situation. In one word he used his newspaper to create public opinion. Gandhi (1939) had later recorded in his book Satyagraha in South Africa,

*"I believe that a struggle which chiefly relies upon internal strength cannot be wholly carried on without a newspaper it is also my experience that we could not perhaps have educated the local Indian community, nor kept Indians all over the world in touch with the course of events in South Africa in any other way, with the same ease and success as through the Indian Opinion, which therefore was certainly a most useful and potent weapon in our struggle."*

Through '*Indian Opinion*' as an editor Gandhi had built a close relationship with his readers with diverse background. This kind of 'virtual interactions' through letters that the readers used to write and dispatches sent by the correspondents helped Gandhi to feel the pulse of the people by studying the human nature through words. These interactions had immensely helped Gandhi to shape and hold his future movements with more confidence.

As we are attempting to examine how journalist Gandhi had shaped Gandhi the freedom fighter with a strong philosophical foundation, we must focus on Gandhi's own confession in his autobiography (Gandhi 1956), "The changes in the journal (*Indian Opinion*) were indicative of changes in my life...it was a mirror of the part of my life." *Indian Opinion* was Gandhi's training in self-restraint. He had also confessed that without this journal, the idea of Satyagraha or passive resistance could not be a reality.

Gandhi had realised the power of newspaper and journalism as he described it to be a tool to serve the society. At the same time he had warned that like an uncontrolled "torrent of water", an uncontrolled pen could destroy everything. Gandhi did not want to bring revolution through his kind of journalism in *Indian Opinion*. Rather he was moderate in expressing the discontent of the Indian community in South Africa. He also concentrated on educating the Indian diaspora on sanitation, good citizenship, self-discipline. Apart from the news on the community, Gandhi also wrote on the life of great thinkers around the world including Tolstoy, Lincoln, Mazzini, Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Raja

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Ram Mohan Roy mainly to inspire the Indians living in South Africa under the oppression of its rulers. Gandhi's belief that the Britishers were always determined to deliver justice and their inherent fair attitude towards delivering it had diminished with time. His moderate attitude of submitting patient petitions and humble appeals transformed into long resistance movement in South Africa. This change in Gandhi's attitude had reflected on the pages of *Indian Opinion*.

In the issue of 15 September 1906, it was reported that a resistance movement was organised at the Empire Theatre in connection with the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance. A resolution was passed as the prayers of the British Indian Community in Transvaal were rejected by the authorities, now "every British Indian in Transvaal will submit himself to imprisonment" as long as their prayer for withdrawing the bill is not met by the Emperor. But The Transvaal Act received Royal assent. Then Gandhi wrote in *Indian Opinion* an article titled 'Will Indians Be Slaves?' His strong words and a determination to bring justice to the people through peaceful resistance movement was a clear indication of Gandhi's future movements.

*Indian Opinion* naturally became the mouthpiece of the Indians living in South Africa and became quite popular among the readers. Its subscription rose from 1200 to 3500 in a short span of time. However, there were financial constraints in running the journal. The printing press and the editorial department had to be shifted to Phoenix Settlement, but there too Gandhi propagated his ideas of running the paper in a kind of 'commune' system where everyone shared the job of publishing the paper from editing to printing.

In 1913 Gandhi left South Africa to return to India. He got himself engaged in the Indian freedom struggle and took up a political role. Still the journalist in him remained intact. Since his arrival in India, Gandhi went on to edit and publish newspapers along with the freedom movement that he led. However, more than news, these newspapers turned out to be 'viewpaper' (Bhattacharya 1965). Gandhi used the newspaper as a tool to preach his views to the masses. The nature of his political philosophy clearly changed with time and that reflected in those publications. He addressed the need of the society and changed the theme of his publications.

According to Nikhil Bhattacharya (1965), Gandhi wanted to ensure that there was a political emancipation to bring up 'mass consciousnesses. Once the masses became aware of their political rights, they will work hard to achieve social and economic emancipation. His newspapers were to aid Gandhi's political and philosophical journey for the betterment of the Indians. As Gandhi himself wrote, "newspaper, if otherwise well edited, can become a most-powerful vehicle for transmitting pure ideas in a concise manner".

As the World War I ended, Indians were shocked to receive Rowlatt Act in place of the Home Rule as was promised by the British. Under Rowlatt Act, not only the publication of 'subversive' document, but their possession was also punishable. The whole country rose to protest against the draconian law. Gandhi was also in the middle of this movement. After the success of Satyagraha in South Africa, Gandhi wanted to replicate the same model in India. On the one hand he gave a

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call for civil disobedience, on the other defying the Indian Press Act he brought out a newspaper *Satyagraha* (or *Satyagrahi* as was mentioned in the first issue) which remain unregistered. The first issue which was published on April 7, 1917, clearly charted out Gandhi's plan for Satyagraha. It was written in no uncertain terms what people joining Satyagraha should do in order to force the British government to withdraw Rowlatt Act. The Satyagrahis were asked to court arrest by "committing a civil break of certain law".

Another significant point should be highlighted about Gandhi's activism through publishing his newspapers. He preached what he practised. In the "Our Credentials" section it was mentioned that in case of public speech, a speaker need not to demonstrate what he preaches. Here the newspaper was published by disobeying the law of the country and this is how *Satyagraha* newspaper set an example. Gandhi also suggested that whatever will be published in his newspaper, those advices would be tested by the publishers through personal experience.

Although he became an editor, Gandhi showed his 'ground-reporting' skills when he decided to visit Champaran and collect first-hand information about the plight of the indigo farmers. On much insistence of the farmer-activist Rajkumar Shukla, Gandhi visited the remote village in Bihar in 1917. He did an investigation and recorded the statements of about 8000 farmers to understand the nature of exploitation there (Shanker 1969). Based on the information collected, Gandhi also produced a report.

Gandhi's proposition that he would publish what he believed in was tested when after calling off Satyagraha on the face of Jallianwala Bagh massacre, he was asked to take up the editorship of Bombay Chronicle. He refused to edit the paper. Rather he wanted to publish something on his own and the paper, he thought would give him the freedom to preach what he believed in.

Thus came the *Young India*, the weekly newspaper published by the Bombay branch of Home Rule League. He was offered the editorship and he immediately agreed to take up the duty. This was an extension of Gandhi's plan of action to take forward the principle of Satyagraha. He also took up the editorship of *Navjivan* and simultaneously from October 1919, both *Young India* and *Navjivan* kept on publishing under the aegis of Gandhi. He had significantly changed his stance on the British Empire. Through the declaration of objectives of *Indian Opinion*, Gandhi wanted his paper to "promote harmony and good-will between the different sections of the one mighty Empire". But while publishing *Young India*, his tone had changed. On realising the true nature of the British colonialism, his objective was to turn the consistent resistance into a duty to remove injustice that was being inflicted on the Indians. From a "staunch loyalist and cooperator" or British Empire he turned out to be "an uncompromising disaffectionist non-cooperator" (Gandhi 1922). In the *Young India* dated June 1, 1921, he wrote, "An India prostrated at the feet of Europe can give no hope to humanity. An India awakened and free has a message of peace and 'good will to a groaning world.'" Despite the strong opposition from a section of the press, Gandhi did not deviate from the path of his 'non-cooperation' movement against the British rule. He was even imprisoned for writing seditious article against the British rule and he was forced to stop writing for *Young India* and *Navjivan*.

*Gandhi was offered the editorship of Young India and he immediately agreed to take up the duty. This was an extension of Gandhi's plan of action to take forward the principle of Satyagraha.*



He had also changed his stance on the issue of foreign propaganda. When he launched *Indian Opinion*, one of the goals of his newspaper was to generate public opinion among the British population against the atrocities of their own Empire. He also travelled to India and England to canvass before the editors and prominent personalities on the problems of Indians in South Africa. However, in India, when Indian National Congress entrusted on him the duty to carry out publicity on the Indian freedom struggle in foreign land, Gandhi opposed the idea. In the issue of March 9, 1922, Gandhi explained the reasons of his opposition. He clarified that by looking outside the country to garner support for India's freedom movement would make the Indians less self-reliant and it would harm independent interest of the individual countries on Indian situation.

Satyagraha was a political tool to attain its goal against the oppressive British rulers, but soon Gandhi understood the importance of the economic and social emancipation of the Indian citizens. Gandhi also firmly believed Swaraj (Self-rule) cannot be handed over to the Indians by any outside force. It has to be obtained from within as 'self-control' would be the key to 'self-rule'. His preached the idea of nonviolence and satyagraha which were integral to his plan of action to achieve Swaraj (Morris-Jones 1965). Gandhi had realised the British colonialism had dominated India at three different levels. If one was political, the others were economic and cultural. He believed that British rule, which was primarily for finding a market in this country, had destroyed the indigenous industries to serve the British economy (Parekh, 1989). Gandhi's mission was to liberate the Indians from all three levels of oppressions. Perhaps, that is why in the middle of the civil disobedience and Khilafat movements, Gandhi stressed (Bhattacharya, 1965) on the issues of Swadeshi goods, spinning wheel, Hindu-Muslim Unity, non-violence, place of vernaculars, etc. in his editorials. After his release from the prison, in *Young India's* issue of May 24, 1924 Gandhi wrote a 6000-word piece on Hindu-Muslim tension and its remedies. He realised (Morris-Jones, 1960) there were two most significant problems inherent in Indian society: one was Hindu-Muslim antagonism and other was the distortion of the caste system and untouchability as its offshoot.

If *Young India* was to help Gandhi to continue with his ideas of Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience movement, his next objective was to bring a social order and launch a mission to remove the social stigmas. Here after a few turbulent years, Gandhi was looking for a mouthpiece to address the social issues. In his conquest to fight the problem of untouchability, on February 11, 1933, he launched *Harijan* weekly under the trusteeship of The Servants of Untouchables Society. In the first issue itself Gandhi made it ample clear that the newspaper would work towards the betterment of the Harijans and removal of untouchability. It also propagated ideas for development of village industries. As Gandhi has realised the people should work towards achieving social and economic emancipation along with political victory. Gandhi separated *Harijan* from politics. It became integral to his parallel social movement across the country. In the September 24, 1938, issue of the *Harijan*, Gandhi almost made a confession about his newly found genre of journalism, "*Harijan* is not a newspaper, it is a viewspaper representing those of one man. Even Mahadev and Pyarelal may not write anything whilst I am alive." To him *Harijan* was a weekly dose of instructions about the conduct of daily life for a common man under the principles of nonviolence.

*Satyagraha was a political tool to attain its goal against the oppressive British rulers, but soon Gandhi understood the importance of the economic and social emancipation of the Indian citizens.*

Publication of *Harijan* had to be suspended on November 10, 1938 as Gandhi did not want to abide by the instruction of the British government that every issue had to be checked by the Press Adviser in New Delhi before its publication. It was also advised that no publicity to the incidents of Satyagraha should be done through the newspaper. Gandhi did not want to bow down to this pressure. Finally in August 1942, *Harijan* had to close down as the government instructed the district administration of Ahmedabad to destroy all old and current copies of *Harijan*. On February 10, 1946 *Harijan* was revived. He wanted to use this paper as a carrier of his thoughts on truth and non-violence and also reactions of the current incidents in India.

In the final years of his life Gandhi had a strong difference with his colleagues in the Congress and he wanted to refrain from writing against the attitude of his fellow politicians. But till the end of his life he kept on writing for the newspapers and also gave long interviews to the journalists.

His life as a journalist was in full conformity to his life as a political philosopher. If the *Vegetarian* taught him to ventilate his opinion in a mild manner, *Indian Opinion* provided him a space to develop his idea of *Satyagraha* and later *Young India*, *Navjivan* and *Harijan* turned out to be his mouthpiece to teach the nation political, social and economic lessons based on his ideology of truth and nonviolence.

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## Mahatma Gandhi and Communication: Charkha a Meaning-Generating System- A Sesquicentenary Tribute

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### Abstract

*This year marks the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi (MG), Father of the Nation. The seeds of nationalism had been sown a few years before his birth. His life and contributions have been a subject matter of academic discourse spreading across the spectrum of our thought processes. As a journalist his approach to the profession, beliefs and practices has been commented upon (Sur, 2019). A review of the articles reveals certain facets of his kind of journalism. By recognising the limitations of isolating the communication dimension of what can be described as the Gandhian Communication Strategy, this paper will reflect on the communication process, strengths and weaknesses of mass media as a variable and how the nation was able to identify with his approach, strategy and achievement of our Independence. The spinning wheel as a symbol of a development strategy and belief further represents a holistic sign: "For me", Mahatma Gandhi once wrote, "nothing in the political world is more important than the spinning wheel". The spinning wheel (charkha), for Mahatma Gandhi was not just a tool of political emancipation but it was a metaphor of 'ancient work ethics' and a symbol of economic and social reaction to the British rule (Sadan, 2004). While the focus will be on his pursuits to gain our Independence, a few formative references will be made. His life and the various communication strategies that can be deduced will provide an explanatory framework recognising that linear extrapolation will be challenging in this attempt. Select academic references will be used to delineate and understand Gandhi's communication strategy. While Gandhi's first and only broadcast address in India on November 12, 1947 is commemorated as Public Service Broadcasting day, a perspective will be provided how All India Radio during the British Colonial Regime perceived and dealt with overall freedom movement and Gandhi in particular. Available histories and reflections of broadcasting in that era will be used to offer a perspective. Essentially Gandhi as a communicator in the formal sense (journalism etc.) and what he symbolised. Gandhi did not have to communicate. He meant many things to Indians. It will be a review to arrive at a perspective on Gandhi and Communication.*

*The spinning wheel (charkha), for Mahatma Gandhi, was not just a tool of political emancipation but it was a metaphor of 'ancient work ethics' and a symbol of economic and social reaction to the British rule.*

**Keywords:** Mahatma Gandhi, Charkha

The meaning and relevance of Mahatma Gandhi (MG) to us Indians and globally is perhaps eternal. British colonialism, apart from scattered French, Portuguese and Danish forays had shackled us. The seeds of nationalism had been sown through heroic uprisings and resistance in the period preceding the arrival of MG in carrying forward the struggle. As a much written, talked about and followed leader, references to biographical and contextual history are no doubt essential but may not be relevant in the focus of this paper.

Isolating communication as a variable in the nationalist movement allows us to recognise the holistic nature of Gandhi's approach to negotiate with the colonizer and mobilise the nation. By 1920, the newspaper as a medium of communication was established in India with many of the policies of more than 100 years of its existence contested and resolved. The differentiation between the English and the Indian language press was evident, although the news and editorial values that guided them had many standard features. Radio as a medium of communication in the broadcast sense had not yet arrived in India. When it did in the early 1920s, its struggle to sustain in due course led it to be an organisation under the colonial administration.

Although the Indian press has been linearly analysed its role in the nationalist struggle, its reach is a contested domain given the large scale functional illiteracy in the people being able to follow the contents. The holistic personality of Gandhi and its meaning to the people was a strategic tool for the political leadership to pursue and participate in the struggle for Independence.

Mahatma Gandhi (MG) believed in Journalism and its missionary potential, albeit not convinced about advertising support for publishing newspapers. His beliefs and practices as a journalist and editor have been a subject matter of many academic discourses. Isolating journalism in the discussion on Gandhi as a communicator or his communication practices may deny us the holistic advantage but to the millions of Indians from whom Gandhi was both a communicator incorporating both the medium and the message such distinctions may help.

By the dawn of the last century, history had provided many instances of resistance and struggle against oppression and the establishment of certain democratic traditions. The establishment of the Soviet Union had demonstrated the capability of the proletariat to impact the governance structure. Comparisons, for example, are made between the strategies of Lenin, Gandhi, and Mao. The contrast differentiates between the revolutionary character of the movements led by Lenin and Mao and the nationalist movement led by Gandhi (Namoodripad, 1976). The colonisation dynamics in the Indian context is obscured when weighed against the internal struggle of the proletariat. For Gandhi, the task was more arduous in dealing with the entrenched framework of British rule. The identification of the representational aspects of the masses he led required symbolism of simplicity-clothing (Peter, 2010) and their highly decentralised source of livelihood-Charkha and ingredient-salt.

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The larger question of inspiration for his political thought has been analysed and contested about the western influence and Indian texts. In an extended treatise on this subject one analysis, for example, concludes: “As we have seen, much of the existing literature on Gandhi has been focused heavily on trying to situate Gandhi’s thought within more narrow existing frameworks, be it Western or Hindu. However, Gandhi makes painfully clear the inadequacies of this approach. As we have shown, the life and thought of Gandhi cannot be said to be distinctly Hindu, as he is deeply indebted to the non-Hindu idea of Leo Tolstoy. Yet despite this, it would also be a mistake to claim that Gandhi is merely a Tolstoyan; the influence of the Gita on Gandhi is undeniable and pushes Gandhi in radically new directions that cannot be extracted from Tolstoy. In short, Gandhi, like many political thinkers in recent centuries, is a global political thinker. Understanding Gandhi’s place in history requires this perspective (Thomas, 2011).

Gandhi, perhaps, is the fulcrum upon which the communication strategy towards gaining India’s independence rested. The British needed to be convinced, and Indians required the rallying direction for participation and acceptance. Economists across different schools of thought have endorsed the impact of colonisation on India. Equally important to note is the tools of such empire formation that included technologies such as the steam engine, railroads, and telegraph.

Among the many facets of Gandhi and his visual memories among millions across the world his image with the spinning wheel (referred to charkha) stands out as a cumulative testimony to a host of his beliefs and practices. So crucial was this that it became the central image of the Indian National Congress party flag. Scholarship surrounding this aspect indicates that charkha was both a metaphor for work ethics and a symbol of reaction to British rule. An essay on product symbolism concerning Gandhi asserts: “Gandhi lived his life as a well-publicized experiment. Not only did he use everything around him for its symbolic significance, but he ultimately became a symbol himself, a demigod, invested with more mythological meaning that he may have wanted to bear. The enormous popular symbolic importance of Gandhi is demonstrated by the fact that in many Indian homes, the pictures of Lord Krishna and Gandhi are hanging side by side. To gain a deeper understanding of how product semantics is embedded in Indian mythology and how the process of symbol creation works, it is useful to compare the life of Gandhi, a contemporary and real person who became a mythological figure, and that of Lord Krishna who is the most popular mythological figure of the Indian epics” (Balaram, 1989).

Gandhi acknowledged its importance for him in the political world. Gandhian economists see it as a symbol of macro-economic need/option. It represented decentralisation, autonomy, and resistance to the dominant textile economy that the British practiced. The Khadi institutional framework that exists is a manifestation of the thinking and action embedded in the Charkha. Aiding him as a scholar points out in his meditation for long hours and to take this concept to the public, he also spun in public. Since the Charkha was bulky, he floated a contest that led to its box design. Further, its bias if any towards women was not right as it was through his spinning in public adopted by men too. Its incorporation into the party flag completed the structure of its message (Sadan, 2004).

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Focus on media centrality in academic discourses mainly emanating from the North American schools to a great extent, eclipsed the emergence of alternative approaches. Such approaches could have recognised the significant existence of large population outside the media-centric methods. Was Gandhi's communication a derivative of this recognition? Mass mobilisation for many of his initiatives, Satyagraha, non-violence, non-cooperation, and swadeshi seem to have bypassed the incorporation of media. This is not to negate the fact that Gandhi and his actions were continually in the glare of the dominant print media that tracked him.

In the past and occasionally now, communication studies raise the concern of a non-western approach. In development studies, mainly, these aspects have been more significant. While many of the studies focus on nation-building in the framework of reconstruction approaches, serious studies are lacking in the formation of the nation itself. Philosophy as in Eastern and Western about communication has been the focus in a few texts (editor, 2013). Comparison between and among other mass leaders such as Lenin or Mao have attracted the attention of a few scholars (Singh, 2006). It lays stress on its mass line approaches.

More specific approaches, such as *Sadharanikaran* recognise many other studies that touch upon the communication dimension ignore the specifics of a Gandhian theory of Communication. Adhikary who posits this model suggests that a Bharatavarshiya/Hindu view on communication as a useful alternative. Delineating nine elements of communication, the scholar argues that Gandhi's approach could be seen as the use of religious and cultural connotations and "emphasis on the charkha and wearing a particular type of clothes. The charkha (or "spinning wheel") although materially a hand-cranked spinning device used to make thread and yarn, represents a rich metaphor of Gandhian communicative wisdom: a non-verbal symbol of village labor, human dignity, self-reliance, self-discipline, social cohesion, and mobilization, as also standing for actionable participation, protest, and progress. The charkha also symbolized Gandhi's emphasis on "putting the last first," an unequivocal belief in the well-being of the poor, the marginalized, and the overlooked (Nirmala, 2014).

While Journalism as in Print was practiced with his set of beliefs (Bharthur, 2005), Gandhi's access to radio was negligible as providing a voice for him. Radio's arrival in India in the early 1920s and its subsequent incorporation as a media unit of the government rule out the British giving Gandhi a forum on the radio. The "Congress" radio that was launched as a clandestine operation during the Quit India movement and lasted for about 80 plus days was nascent and perhaps was short lived to provide Gandhi a medium (Shruti, 2018). As a journalist, he pursued it as a mission and reached out. For the masses, the person himself was the message to liberally borrow a McLuhansque expression. The masses participated in the movements led by him and its significance resonated in the corridors of power in the British administration.

Can such a national icon be minutely analysed when his impact and influence is legendary? Political parties, despite their differences, are fierce and competitive

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in praising and defending his ideals. When more contemporary development approaches and initiatives fail or fall short of their intended objectives, Gandhian rhetoric is invoked to explain how far away they are from the grassroots approach and belief. This became more relevant in the post-liberalisation phase, where Gandhian alternatives were posited as strategies to negotiate globalisation.

Can Gandhi and his communication approaches in the Indian context be formulated as a continuous process reflective of the diverse and plural background and the asymmetrical reality of the haves and have nots? The just concluded elections and rallying point of many parties and individual campaigns partially addressed the distress among the farmers and ways and means of alleviating them. In his lifetime and considering the overall goals of attaining independence, those concerns were symbolically embedded in empowerment through the charkha. Social movements post-independence have invoked Gandhian techniques as for example, the chipko movement or various farmers and workers struggles. National leadership has invoked Gandhian symbols as well.

On the eve of the launch of the 150<sup>th</sup> birth centenary of Gandhi, the government has announced a specific scheme, Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana aimed at the handloom weavers. Other projects that reflect his philosophy are the employment guarantee scheme and swacch bharat. The Gandhi pravasi suraksha scheme is designed explicitly at insurance cover for a particular category of Indian emigres seeking employment overseas (webteam, 2018).

In other nations, legendary icons and leaders of mass, movements have gone through phases of relegation and partial and complete erasure. However, the impact and influence of Gandhi for millions of Indians who can be called as the post Gandhi generation, he remains an icon revisited and analysed through their contemporary prisms. The country now and then has also debated specific strategies and policy outcomes of his approaches to the existing social and economic order. These debates also center around his core ideas and beliefs.

India's communication ecosystem has changed with primacy to social networking amidst the resilience of the legacy media. If communication alone was the criteria, then the volume, spread, and access to information and content ought to have pushed India higher into comparable indicators of development and welfare. The rankings etc. on various social and economic parameters are not yet impressive. Communication, as the cliché goes, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. It needs a Mahatma whose wiping the tear in every eye approach overwhelms the array of media that we have now.

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## Resurgence of Sarvodaya Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi: Need to Inculcate Plurality and Diversity in Media

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### Abstract

*Mahatma Gandhi admired social diversity of Bharat incredibly, and given the concept of 'Sarvodaya', indicates 'Rise to all' and 'progress of all', different sections of society, from minority to majority and poor to rich. Gandhian Sarvodaya movement spread a new perspective of equality and empathy in the country in amid of the waves of social clashes provides equal opportunity to all. At the same, diversity is the basic phenomenon of nature and everything in the universe exist in variety of forms, shapes and matter. Social diversity is the fundamental feature of societies, moreover in our country all possible dimensions of diversity found in terms of geography, region, language, and culture. Sarvodaya media theory, derived from Gandhian philosophy provides a new perspective to media functioning and gives the chance of equal opportunity in terms of reflection of each section of society, in media. There is constantly a debate among media scholars, regarding the reflection of diversity in media performance and functioning. In addition, media is expected to preserve and inculcate social diversity in its performance and functioning. Diversity of media is defined in terms of diversity of channel, content, ownership, and audience etc. Present paper aims to propose a new media theory based on Gandhian philosophy of Sarvodaya, and discuss the indicators of this theory in respect of diversity and plurality, required to incorporate in media to improve the basic function of media in present context. Each dimension of media diversity is significant and decides media performance. Fundamentally reflection of this cumulative approach of media diversity is described in the present proposed theory, especially in Bharatiya context. Along with indices and different diversities of media, theory also suggests the measuring features and elements of diversity. Broad objective of this paper is to suggest the theoretical structure of sarvodaya media theory to preserve media plurality and diversity. In addition present paper also discusses the factors and determinants of Sarvodaya Media theory.*

*The present paper aims to propose a new media theory based on Gandhian philosophy of Sarvodaya, and discuss the indicators of this theory in respect of diversity and plurality, required to incorporate in media to improve the basic function of media in present context.*

**Keywords:** Sarvodaya, diversity, plurality, multiculturalism, hegemony, objectivity, content, ownership, concentration, equality

Power to think, analyse, visualise and create knowledge, transforms biological beings as social beings, scientists coined the term '*Homo sapiens*', is the utmost evolution among species. This special category among species, empowered with communication has given the opportunity of freedom of expression in their actions,

as well enables them to refurbish and generate innovative ideas for the development of society. Along with the skill to craft novel understanding, process of learning and identify the truth is also a unique feature of human beings. In short and nutshell supremacy of developed structure of communication process is the key to develop in different dimensions of life. Concept of communication can be defined as “sharing of experiences by using non-verbal, oral-verbal, and written-verbal and visual communication among communicators”. Communication theorists points communication ‘as sharing: sharing of meaning, although they are not unanimous with regard to who are involved in this sharing’ (Fiske; 1990). Human experiences can be defined as, ‘information, thought, knowledge, emotion, memory and idea gained during their life span’. Simply communication is a social process of sharing expressions among the members of a community or group, further leads the function of socialization. Process of communication is similar to ‘spiders net’ connected to all parts of society and information required to reach the all diverse sections of society involuntarily. Identical to spiders net, nature of communication is multi dimensional, expected to shares and multiply information equally to the diverse social groups.

Mahatma Gandhi, one of the well-known communicator of *Bharat always* proposed communication as a tool of social development. He has explored and revealed vivid dimensions of communication. His famous quote let all the noble thoughts enter the windows, supports the ancient *shloka*, ‘*aa no bhadra krtavo yantu vishwata*’, (1.89.1 *rigveda*) lays emphasis on the diversity of opinions and thoughts are welcomed from all directions of universe. Communication is inevitable and eternal that once idea or thought shared will never ends, relatively travels from generation to generation, and again converted into a fresh idea and shared over again in the society. In this respect process of communication is beyond the time, place and period, being spherical, revolves and spread among social beings and communicated to different parts of world without much effort. Human communication is not confined to one group, family or one nation; rather communication process has to lead diversity and plurality of thoughts as equal intellectual property of all sections or groups of society without any bias, which is the basic foundation of present paper.

## Literature Review

Communication in *Bhartiya* philosophy is always considered as a social phenomenon, along with an individual activity, and not limited to sender- message-channel-receiver simply. Communication happened at any level whether intra, inter and group, the foremost objective of communication is to lead a change for the betterment of society, as well as to maintain equilibrium in the society. Intention of human commutation is to create harmony among different sections of society and escort progress of people. The oldest scriptures “*veda and upanishad*” proves this observable fact of universal approach of communication. *Shaloka* like ‘*sarve bhanti sukhiana sarves santu niramaya*’ (*vrihadaryank upnishad*) illustrates the universal approach of communication. In addition one another *Shaloka* from *rigveda* indicates the equality of thoughts, ‘*sangachadavam samvadadham sarvemanasijanata*’, (*rigveda, 10. 192-2*). This well-known *shloka* also explains talks about the objective of communication that, let’s move together, speak together and think common. The very essence of this *Shaloka* reveals the principle of ‘*unity in diversity*’, and

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192-2 )shloka  
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also motivates to synthesis the social groups. *Bhartiya* concept of communication also aims to describe the function of communication is to maintaining plurality of thoughts to cater balance of diverse opinions, and to provide opportunity of expression to social beings. Present research paper aims to propose a media theory based on, the rise for all, Sarvodaya philosophy proposed by Mahatma Gandhi, to maintain media diversity and plurality, to bring equality and social harmony among all the groups and sections of society. Once he said about freedom of press, freedom is important and it is like a river which is free but needs boundaries to flow in the right direction otherwise it will convert into flood.

Mahatma Gandhi always encouraged press with, “One of the objects of a newspaper, is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it, another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments, and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects”. His idea of communication was to enhance all the sections of society, especially weaker and minority sections must be uplifted and communication can help a lot in social upliftment. Being a communicator who mobilized the public opinion for attainment of freedom, Gandhi ji made optimal use of other channels of communication very efficiently and effectively as he had a rare aptitude of “inventing apt news events” to get the best coverage by the media. Mahatma Gandhi exercised his high moral values in his political life and practice of mass communication which stands out as a light house for all times to come. Gandhian *Sarvodaya* was a concrete manifestation of many spiritual ideas found in many religious traditions. (Sinha, 1978)

In present scenario *Gandhian* philosophy seems very appropriate to show the direction to the Media because the new technology led the flood of information without any control what is right for the society or not. In the age of technological uplifting and too many options of mediums of communication led a revolution of information. Due to information communication technology access of information and sharing of information is very high, but who is disseminating, to whom it is shared and what is the need of it is not clear to anyone. Which information is important for the society, which information is for which age group all these issues are avoided knowingly? Same information is shared to diverse groups irrespective of their age, culture and need, which is leading confusion in the society.

*In present scenario Gandhian philosophy seems very appropriate to show the direction to the Media because the new technology led the flood of information without any control what is right for the society or not.*

Electronic media and social media are blamed to share same information to different group and diversity of need of age, language, geographical location, economic and education is not considered at all. According to research studies only three subjects are highlighted in news that is crime, politics and sports and glamour. Films and serials cover more urban and metro urban society. In the country like *Bharat*, approximate seventy per cent of rural population lives is not neither discussed in media content, nor their issues seems to be important for media. Moreover, Films and television also showcases the high class elite rather showing the poor and dirty faces of ‘made in *Bharat*’ people. Media is more interested in showing the high class glamour community which occupy only one or two percent space geographically but occupy 99 percent spaces virtually in media. This kind ignorance of a big population of a country misleads the society in many ways such as urban become insensitive of the real issues of society and poor feel ignored and marginalized and cheated.

Elite become irresponsible to contribute to the needy people as they received only one-sided picture. If real picture will be present in media there is possibility that all sections motivated to think problem of each other.

In this context “*Sarvodaya* Media Theory is proposed for the country like Bharat which is at the edge of technological development as well possess too much diversity. In our country media recommended to incorporate the theory to maintain the diversity of country. *Sarvodaya* means development of all in the society. The very concept of the theory is derived from Gandhiji’s *Sarvodaya* movement.

The phrase *Sarvodaya* is coined By Mahatma Gandhi which means ‘progress for all’, however it is described in all *Bhartiya* ancient scriptures also. Western philosophers also discussed this approach as pluralism, future divided in social, cultural and political pluralism. According to this theory “*Sarvodaya* is an agency of service for common welfare of all sets its face squarely against the politics of power and exploitation”. This theory also emphasise on moral values, to create the environment of trust and compassion among diverse groups of society. ‘The dynamics of *Sarvodaya* assumes a process that begins with the last and the least in the society and moves on toward the dawn of a Moksha on earth or Ram Rajya (Kingdom of God). This kingdom was to be attained on earth and had to be created and nurtured with *Sarvodaya* beliefs and practices’. (Veltickal, 2002, P-8.)

The theory of diversity manifests in social structures and human beings should be reflected in the media also. Furthermore, Diversity is necessary to complete the holistic approach existing social phenomenon and found more attention at international forum. UNESCO Convention 2005 set the forth the agenda for promotion and protection of expression of cultural diversity. Alongwith, European Commission also considered inclusion of diversity as major strategy, in the age of globalization and privatization. In addition there is a thoughtful discussion in the whole world, on the existence of social- cultural diversity and plurality, and media can play a significant role to sustain the entity of social-cultural diversity. Media is always thought to be a mirror of society, and if it is a mirror of society, it must illustrate the clear and the diverse reflection of society. Furthermore media is also diverse in nature, and expected to give equal space to social diversity. In the present scenario of globalization and multiculturalism study of diversity and plurality reflected in media content, channels and ownership is the need of the hour. According to MacBride Commission report, Important issues, such as cultural diversity and hegemony of images from the West or the imbalance in the increased privatization and ownership of the media, were raised without the ability or political will to connect those to the fates of silent majorities in the world’. (p. 173).

Media diversity is also varied in nature as, diversity of channels, ownership, content and audience, and each type of diversity has its own indicators factors and attributes which require different scales. In order to find out diversity, first need to define and identify the indicators of diversity. One of the major indicators of diversity is; Reflection of diverse voices in the media which is also quantifiable. Society is segmented into different sections and groups based on caste, religion, race, creed, economy and culture. Social groups are also based on political, spiritual ideologies

*The theory of diversity manifests in social structures and human beings should be reflected in the media also.*

and each set has its own interest, opinions, need and aspiration. Media is accountable to present the voices of all set equally without any preference and bias. Westwerstahl (1983) developed a model to investigate objectivity and impartiality. All the sections of a social system are equally important and integrated with each other in such a way that any of the section ignored in the media would be harmful for the entire social system. Society is like the human body and all groups are part of this body. As every part of the human body is equally important and damage in any part would impact entire body, same happens in society and each group has its own importance. It is the responsibility of media to maintain the balance in representation of content. Indeed, it should be the prime job of media and media should be self accountable to sustain and preserve diversity of social groups.

### Objectives

- To propose the new Media theory
- To establish the indices to measure the diversity
- To establish the dimensions of plurality

### Methodology

The present paper is primarily based on the secondary sources of existing theories and research studies. In context of previous research conducted by the of researcher, the proposed theory is derived to measure the diversity and plurality of media. Furthermore other secondary sources especially; Mahatma Gandhi's *Sarvodaya* movement theory is primary foundation of the present paper. Alongwith other works on diversity and plurality in media content in *Bhartiya*, as well western context, has also examines to propose the present theory.

### Introduction: *Sarvodaya* Media theory

*Sarvodaya* Media theory encompasses various dimensions for the functioning of media institutions. This theory proposes certain attributes to set the norms of media that are required to revise to maintain the social diversity of a culture. It focuses that media should be liberal to many voices but simultaneously bound to cover different issues related to the all sections of society. Space in media is allowed in such a way that it may cover different issues of different social groups to maintain the principle of equality and progress for all which is the very basis of *Sarvodaya* Media theory.

### *Sarvodaya* : Concept

Dharma of nature is to sustain the multiplicity and keep balance in all the elements found in nature. Moreover, this law or Dharma is followed strictly by nature itself. This excellence of variation is also manifested in social structures, called plurality and diversity. Furthermore this variation is divided into diversity of races, cultures, religions, caste and creed, languages, regions, and geographical diversity. In addition to this, on the basis of ideology, plurality is bifurcated like; political, religious, cultural etc. Media being the sub-system of society automatically and naturally

*Society is like the human body and all groups are part of this body.*

*As every part of the human body is equally important and damage in any part would impact entire body, same happens in society and each group has its own importance. It is the responsibility of media to maintain the balance in representation of content.*

should reflect this social, cultural and political diversity and plurality in its structure, content and performance.

*Bhartiya* concept of pluralism is '*Sarvodaya*', indicates the growth and development of all the people of the nation, respecting plurality of the country. It is significant to understand note that the word '*Sarvodaya*' propound wider approach than western concept plurality. *Sarvodaya* set out one step ahead of giving equal chance to all voices or viewpoints existing in society, and gives phenomenon of development progress of each and every citizen of society. *Sarvodaya* expression derived from *sanskrit* '*Universal Uplift*' or '*Progress of All*'. The term was first coined by Mohandas Gandhi in John Ruskin's area on political economy, "*Unto This Last*", and Gandhi came to use the term for the ideal of his own political philosophy. *Sarvodaya* movement lead By Mahatma Gandhi was a very significant and serious attempt to establish and preserve plurality of nation. *Sarvodaya* theory put forward the concept of equality and appears close dharma or principle of nature to preserve multiplicity. Concept of *Sarvodaya* theory lies in the decentralisation of society and emphasis on social equality, compassion and liberty.

According to *the Gandhian concept*, '*Sarvodaya*' is an agency of Service for Common Welfare *Sarvodaya* sets its face squarely against the politics of power and exploitation. It lays great importance on moral and spiritual values. It seeks to create new social and economical values. The concept of possession yields places to the concept of trust, empathy and compassion. People will work for the good of all and family feeling will animate the entire community. There will be full scope for freedom, fellowship and equality. *Sarvodaya* stands for the good of all and not for the good of any meticulous entity or class. *Bhoodan* at the early stage, *Gramdan* at a later stage and *Sampattidan* will bring about a change of heart. The rich and poor will give up their ideas of attachment to private property and will strive to work for the good of all.' This movement laid a greater impact on youth and changed the attitudes of youth toward rights and responsibility for the nation. Today in *Yua Bharat*, media institutions need to understand and adopt the concept of *Sarvodaya* in media norms and ethic. In true sense *Sarvodaya* is the example of global village which talks about the equality and progress for all which is also expected from media as well. It is imperative to incorporate this theory in selection, editing, sorting and presenting the facts and information.

Need to Propose Indices to Measure Diversity and plurality in Media Nevertheless, due to cut throat competition, privatization and globalization it is difficult to adopt this principle completely or as it is in media. Yet according to the need of contemporary society, media can carry out slight changes and modifications in the concept of *Sarvodaya*. The major principles media can extract from *Sarvodaya* concept are like; equality for all, welfare for all, fellowship, balance, equal chance of growth and freedom. It is significant to note here that all these principles can be easily adopted to preserve diversity and plurality. Equality, in fact is the other name of plurality, very important to maintain while presenting facts. Equality outsets the proportionate presentation of incidents in the media content and leads harmony in news and other content. Balance is also considered a significant element of media diversity as provides equal chance of selection the facts within the news and also selection of news. A careful examination of significant elements required before

*The Gandhian concept, 'Sarvodaya is an agency of Service for Common Welfare Sarvodaya sets its face squarely against the politics of power and exploitation.*

incorporating them as media ethics. In media education institutes, *Sarvodaya* concept is required to teach and research in order to establish and postulate new theories with the perspective of diversity being the peculiar feature of human societies especially in Asia countries. The western theories of media are appears imperfect to present a comprehensive picture of media ethics, role and norms. Individually, each media theory explains significant depiction of media performance in terms of impact on the audience, role, presentation of content, etc. But the lack of an integrated theory of media is observed in academia which, can establish importance of plurality and diversity.

There is a need to measure the levels of diversity and plurality in the media in order to ascribe the quality grading to the media. In this regard to design and develop standardized instruments and methodologies to measure diversity and plurality become the necessity of the hour. Criticism, discussion and debate in society or academia are not sufficient to increase the reflection of social diversity in media, but concrete solutions are required to provide. None other than academicians of media discipline can fulfil the need to develop tools and scales to measure the plurality and diversity. However, communication research is about two hundred years old, yet academia has given less importance to design and develop the methodologies to measure media diversity. Still very few studies are focused to measure content diversity, ownership diversity and plurality of news. However, in pure scientific instruments are designed and proposed to quantify the multiplicity of nature; species, environment and bio-diversity, but these instruments and scales are seem to be insufficient to measure the diversity of media content. Media content diversity is both qualitative and quantitative so existing scales of pure sciences appear incomplete to measure the media diversity. Communication disseminated through media appears to be more complicated to quantify with these existing scales.

In addition, era of globalization and privatization information flow becomes more free and liberal, which gave chance to monopoly of market on media messages. In contemporary scenario, it becomes a serious issue of debate how to protect the reflection of social plurality in media content. At the same time discussed by a researcher "For the purpose of the study media pluralism should be understood as diversity of media supply, reflected, for example, in the existence of a plurality of independent and autonomous media and a diversity of media contents available to the public." (Doyle, 1997) However, a lot of efforts have already been done by scholars, yet there are lots of scope and need is felt to identify the indicators of diversity and develop the instruments to measure media diversity and plurality. In this burning issue, Media institutions and education institutes can play an important role to protect and measure socio-cultural media diversity.

Media diversity is of many types given below; (2017; Madhu, p.43)

1. Diversity of subjects
2. Diversity of opinions
3. Diversity of persons
4. Diversity of place
5. Diversity of source
6. Diversity of audience, listeners, readers
7. Diversity of medium
8. Diversity of layout and presentation
9. Diversity of ownership

*Criticism, discussion and debate in society or academia are not sufficient to increase the reflection of social diversity in media, but concrete solutions are required to provide.*



Due to globalization and liberalization, some new characteristics appeared in the media, which directly influence the media content. The most visible change occurred is the domination of powerful economies of world over the media, which has transformed the ownership patterns. Vaseem Ahamd very rightly mentioned in his publication, “The domination of Entertainment programming across the Third world was criticized as a cultural imperialism that implemented alien western values on audiences. The role of transmission media in undermining national sovereignty was another major concern. The capitalism and economic imperialism, the global media were seen as working primarily to serve marketers and advertisers, thus reinforcing the inequalities of the global economy.” In a study Doyle look at the economic implications of pluralism and diversity of content, and further explains, ‘pluralism is always at risk when the media engage in editorial sharing of products or sources, weather this is done within the consolidated media company (with same owner) or between competing companies’. Another study supports the adverse effect of concentration on media content “The impact of Media Concentration on Professional Journalism that shows the advertising influence on the editorial line of the newspaper (p. 74).”

Media houses are merged into big business industries and multi-national companies of the world. Another prominent change is high concentration, responsible for monopoly in media. Monopoly creates imbalance in information flow which leads domination of single ideology and culture. High concentration is also responsible for low levels of plurality and diversity. The individual market share of media houses turned into media companies or industries need to study and measure to give a clear picture of effect of high concentration. It is a very challenging issue to study ownership patterns, distribution patterns, types of concentration in media. Ownership is a very big issue need to study minutely without any bias to examine; who are the owners, what are the purpose of buying houses, what is the process of selection of content? Influence of the ownership and concentration measured in the study conducted by Doyle “Although diversity of ownership will not guarantee diversity of output, the existence of a diversity of suppliers will still contribute positively to pluralism. Even if all suppliers choose to rely on or share many of the same sources of content, their rivalry will promote a culture of dissent which is healthy for democracy.” (1997, p. 32). Influence of changing market conditions and concentration on media content is very important to explore determine the degree of diversity.

### **Sarvodaya Media Theory**

Conception of diversity and plurality deeply rooted in the *Bhartiya* philosophy of spiritualism. One energy appears to be manifested in diverse bodies, space and forms, yet it is undivided. The diversity appears in form of nature and all the shapes and forms of nature are taken care equally. All the materialistic forms, living forms get equal air, sunshine, food etc. Nature provides all what its forms required without any bias and preference that is called *Sarvodaya* or universal social growth. According to spiritual notion all forms of the universe are connected with the same energy which seems to manifest in the diversity of forms and matter. However, social being also appears to be diverse in races, religion, cast and creed, yet all are connected with the same energy of nature. In order to maintain this diversity of social beings, compassion and harmony in society is required to adopt and almost

*Influence of changing market conditions and concentration on media content is very important to explore determine the degree of diversity.*

all social-religious groups accept this concept of fraternity among human beings despite being diverse. Media being sub-system of social system is expected to adopt the phenomenon of universal growth and development.

The major idea of *Sarvodaya theories* of media is that the media should work for the growth of all sections of society including minority and economically poor. It does not mean that media will look after the poor people or financially help people. The notion is simply that media's purpose is to share information and provide platform to all the voices and media is required to take care of this. Media must give priority equally to all rather preferring anyone. Any kind of bias like; market bias, hegemony bias, religion-caste bias is not expected in the performance of media. *Sarvodaya* theory also suggests media to cultivate the culture of equality in its content and presentation. Diversity means the equal and proportionate presentation of all voices of society.

To determine media diversity and plurality following issues are suggested to study and examine in proposed '*Sarvodaya media theory*'.

<b>'Sarvodaya Media Theory'</b>	
1.	To give space to different issues in content
2.	To sustain the diversity of ownership
3.	Equal participation of diverse audience
4.	Reflection of Social diversity in content
5.	Equal opportunities to all Political ideologies
6.	Presentation of Cultural diversity in media programs, including news, serials, cartoon, films etc.
7.	Reflection of social diversity in media: to measure in terms of the ratio of social verses media diversity
8.	Comparison between existing Political Plurality and media plurality to examine the existing proportion of opinions
9.	Diversity of reach and access in order to maintain equality in flow of information

*The major idea of Sarvodaya theories of media is that the media should work for the growth of all sections of society including minority and economically poor.*

Figure-1  
(2017; Madhu, p.152)

<b>Content related to Welfare of society must given preference</b>
Reflection of all groups of society
Development and progress of all
Degree of Objectivity in terms of bias, balance
Plurality in terms of no. opinions
Degree of Truth
Variety of Information –supply
Variety of Information –consumed
Freedom to all voices
Presence of wide geographical locations
Degree of Concentration
Balance in presentation of subjects, people, source and opinions
Market influence on content selection
Process of selection of content especially news
Social media and reflection of different culture

Figure-2  
(2017; Madhu, p.153)

Indicators discussed in the above table are suggested to measure the diversity and plurality of media. These indices are the key characteristics of theory which illustrates the foremost principles of *Sarvodaya* media theory. Each principle represents a different dimension of media diversity, essential to enhance media performance. Indices of *Sarvodaya* media theory are not merely suggested to measure the media diversity, rather obligatory to integrate in different fields of media to incorporate ethics such as truth, accuracy, equality and objectivity in media, which further leads social development. Along with these indices following are the factors *Sarvodaya* media theory to determine the degrees of plurality, equality, balance and objectivity in terms of media performance. Indicators are the characteristics which show, whether media possesses diversity and plurality in its content, structure and ownership. However, factors are the elements of effect on the indicators of media diversity and plurality. Simply Indicators are aim to measure the degree of diversity, rather factors are aim to measure the impact on indicators.

**Factors to Determine Plurality and Diversity**

<b>Equal concentration of media market to sustain more healthy competition and quality of information</b>
To promote plurality in media policy and ethics
To promote Diversity and plurality in media content
Constantly check on objectivity in media content
Constitution of Council or regulatory body to preserve media plurality
To check the balance in the flow of information and access to different groups
To maximise the equality
Need to standardize the structure and ownership to keep balance and objectivity
Entertainment industry required to follow principle of diversity
Entertainment content must reflect all the groups and cultures of society, rather focusing on a few sections
Identify different cultures presented in content to determine the balance
Domination of conglomerates on selection of media content
Reduce the Hegemony impact on media institutions- for example, If impact of hegemony is high, it will reduce the ratio of democratic, liberal voices. Low hegemony impact will lead information imperialism and will lead monopoly in content.
Less Reflection of western ideology in media ( if it is high than diversity and balance in terms of ideology is low)

Figure-3  
(2017; Madhu, p.153-54)

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# The Mahatma and Agenda Building: A Study of Gandhi's Use of Mass Media to Spread His Philosophy

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## Abstract

*Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was not just a charismatic political leader. The man many Indians referred to as Bapu or the father of the nation was also a master strategist, and above all an astute mass communicator. This essay revisited his autobiographical work, The Story of My Experiments with Truth, to examine how Gandhi used different types of media to reach out to people in the remotest corners of India and beyond, to spread his message. Historians have often wondered how Gandhi was able to motivate millions to his non-violent movements, force the British government on the defensive without lifting a weapon, and communicate equally effectively with friends and enemies. This essay conducts a rhetorical analysis of his book to argue that Gandhi used his past experiences in South Africa, and his experience as a newspaper editor, to build a powerful communication strategy. His agenda building methods depended on who he was communicating with. Modern communicators, including political leaders, have much to learn from his agenda building and message framing strategies. This paper conducted a textual analysis of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's autobiography The Story of My Experiments with Truth—to explore the communication strategies used by the Mahatma to spread his philosophical and political ideas across the world. Findings indicated that Gandhi used his past experiences, including his experience as a newspaper editor, to build a powerful agenda. His agenda building methods depended on who he was communicating with. Modern communicators, including political leaders, have much to learn from his agenda building and message framing strategies.*

**Keywords:** Mahatma Gandhi, Textual Analysis, Autobiography.

## Introduction

Much has been written on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and passive resistance, and the successful use of this method in India's freedom movement. Several scholarly works have acknowledged that his path of ahimsa (non-violence) and satyagraha (passive resistance and sacrifice), as well as his charismatic leadership style, convinced millions of Indians to use peaceful means in their fight to overthrow the 200-year-old British Empire (Bligh & Robinson, 2010; Dalton, 2012), and that this style of protest later inspired those like Martin Luther King Jr and the US peace movements such as the American Friends Service Committee, and the War Resisters League, to fight the against racism and white supremacy in their own cultures (Kosek, 2005; Cortright, 1997).

*This paper attempts to dissect Gandhi's strategies by revisiting his early years.*

What is less studied perhaps, are the agenda building strategies Gandhi used, to reach out to both domestic and global audiences, and effectively communicate his philosophies of nonviolence, peace, gender equality and religious harmony. What means did Gandhi employ to engage with people from diverse ethnic and cultural groups who lived hundreds of miles apart, at a time when radio and telegraph was just taking off in India and television was still a few decades away from reaching Asian shores? How he used different forms of media and methods Gandhi and agenda building to communicate to diverse audiences divided along cultural, linguistic and economic lines is perhaps a subject worth revisiting at a time when many governments are trying to find out effective means of communication similar social messages to very diverse audiences. This paper attempts to dissect Gandhi's strategies by revisiting his early years as a civil rights activist and by conducting a textual analysis of his own works, to gain a better understanding of how he managed to persuade diverse audiences to his way of thinking, looking at the phenomenon through the lens of Agenda Building theory.

Indeed a study of Gandhi as a master communicator cannot be undertaken without a probe into his early life experiences in London and South Africa, since many of his philosophies regarding resisting temptation of all forms and using non-violent means to communicate messages were born during his days as an activist-barrister (Andrews, 1930) and fine-tuned as Gandhi learnt from his initial failures.

### **Gandhi the Master Communicator: A Less Studied Aspect**

Many studies on the life and works of Gandhi have focused on his political philosophy of non-violence from a historical or political science perspective (e.g. Chakrabarty, 2006; Dalton, 2012; Mehta, 1993). In comparison, fewer scholarly works have examined the strategies he used as a master communicator, or how he built an all pervasive agenda. Agenda Building is distinct from Agenda Setting. The latter refers to the effect of media agenda on society, (Rogers & Dearing, 1988) and focuses largely on the transfer of such media agenda to a more public agenda (Berkowitz, 1992). In contrast, building an agenda assumes a degree of reciprocity between mass media and society and theorizes that media and public agenda together have an impact on and influence public policy (Lang & Lang, 1981). For the purposes of this study, a Gandhi and agenda building 3 rhetorical analysis of Gandhian texts as evidenced in his autobiography, was conducted, to understand how he interacted with his followers and others, through the use of different media and he used mass media to transfer his philosophy in to a public agenda to impact policy decisions.

### **To this end, the study explores three research questions:**

1. RQ1: How did Gandhi develop his communication strategies?
2. RQ2: What strategies did he use to communicate with diverse audiences?
3. RQ3: How did he use different media to communicate his messages?

To seek answers to these questions, a qualitative content analysis of Gandhi's autobiography *My experiments with truth* was conducted, to explore key themes

emerging from the text. Analysis of Gandhian rhetoric as evidenced in his autobiography, helped explain how the Mahatma's communication strategies were developed and applied. The first research question was addressed by conducting a textual analysis of the book. Findings indicated that Gandhi used most of his failures and struggles in his early life as teaching moments and built his philosophy piece by piece as he learnt from his mistakes.

Exploring the next two research questions, eight key themes emerged from the analysis of text, those that specifically addressed the questions. The themes that Gandhi used to build his agenda included: using folk culture, time as a potent weapon, optimizing print media, non-verbal communication, snowball effect, engaging with the enemy, and the power of clarity.

As some scholars have argued, the dominant characteristic that sets apart India's freedom movement from other great movements in history is its tremendous sweep. No other movement in history set in motion so many millions of people (Chakravarty, 1995, p. 1). India's freedom struggle depended almost wholly on igniting the masses by injecting into them an urge for independence. India's freedom movement was also characterized by armed guerrilla warfare and a petition-style protest, the successive waves of protests that brought down British rule was arguably a result of the raising of the level of consciousness of millions of Indians, including many who were as yet uneducated (Chakravarty, 1998).

This is where the unique contribution of Gandhi's communication strategies needs to be understood. When historians talk of Gandhi having taken politics from the "monopoly of the intelligentsia to the wider world of the common humanity", it is not just a question of quantitative increase in the number of participants in the movement, but qualitatively "a different type of movement that emerged with its distinct hallmark" (Chakravarty, p. 26). How was a nation divided by cultures, religions and languages, united? What was the weapon by which mass consciousness was raised? This study argues that Gandhi largely won his battle against the British by effectively building an agenda and communicating this message to lift popular consciousness. Gandhi played a pivotal role by using different media to not just tell his followers "what to think but also how to think about it," (Stacks & Salwen 2008, p. 92).

Based on existing literature that has touched upon Gandhi's role as a communicator, as well as a brief textual analysis of both Gandhi's autobiography and some of his speeches, letters and other collected works this paper identified seven distinct communication strategies that Gandhi used to spread his philosophy of non-violence and passive resistance to a wider audience.

In many instances, the references previous literature and Gandhi's autobiography to argue that many of his communication strategies were developed as a result of his rich and varied experiences in London and South Africa, prior to his return to India. In other instances, the agenda building strategies were developed as he led larger and larger movements in India during the first two decades of the 20th century. There are many other lessons that Gandhi admits he learnt during his early days, which he

*Findings indicated that Gandhi used most of his failures and struggles in his early life as teaching moments and built his philosophy piece by piece as he learnt from his mistakes.*



later incorporated in his core philosophy. These include his journey to overcome lust (Gandhi, 1927, p. 101), his experiments using “natural therapy to cure all ailments” (p. 238), his “diet experiments” (p. 165) and his philosophy centered on “spiritual education to free the mind” (p. 249). Important as they are to Gandhian philosophy, this study did not dwell on these ideas in detail, focusing instead on how Gandhi used various media to communicate his philosophy and his clever use of Agenda Building to create awareness and influence the behavior of masses both in India and abroad.

## **Gandhi & Agenda Building: Emergent Themes**

### **Lessons from the past—using folk culture to unite diverse groups:**

In his autobiography: *My Experiments with Truth*, Gandhi admits on many occasions that he learnt lessons from each of his experiences and experiments and incorporated these lessons later in life. For instance, during his days in South Africa between 1896 and 1906, he ran a “pilot project” of his new Satyagraha technique against Apartheid rule (Gandhi, p. 235), when he protested against a new bill that marginalized Indians living in that country and sought to impose draconian laws.

Drawing on his South African experience—where he struggled to bring together Indian Hindus, Muslims and Persians in a united fight against Apartheid—he made a special effort at cultivating the minority communities to bring them into the mainstream movement, when he returned to Gandhi and agenda building India and launched his fight against the British. This philosophy of uniting divergent groups through various programs and events that revolved around the ideas of fasting, sacrifice and passive forms of protest, became Gandhi’s main method to launch India-wide campaigns “involving the common masses” (Gandhi, p. 369), such as the Non-Cooperation Movement.

He left out no means or technique to rouse the consciousness of the people. He took up a wide range of non-verbal or symbolic communication techniques that affected all sections of people—from education to village welfare, from the spinning wheel to cattle protection (Mohanty, 2012). His effort at total identification with the village poor was communicated through his personal attire (the Khadi loin cloth) and way of living (Gonsalves, 2010). Clearly, both his philosophy and his communication strategy reached this maturity thanks to his South African experience.

Gandhi used multiple media platforms to communicate his core philosophy to people. During his five-decade career as a political philosopher, he edited at least three newspapers and periodicals—*Indian Opinion*, *Young India* and *Harijan*. A one-man endeavor, they conveyed his message to his countrymen. But it was not just the print media that Gandhi used to communicate with a global audience. From traditional interpersonal means—including travelling bards such as the Baul folk singers of Bengal—to the educated student going out on literacy-cum-patriotic missions, the composing of patriotic songs and the setting up of choirs in villages, nothing was left out. It was a gigantic operation, sustained through the ups and downs of the freedom struggle (Chakrabarty, 2012). His experiences in South Africa, where he fought to

unite people from different races and ethnic groups against Apartheid, provided him with the perfect learning curve on how to communicate effectively to unite warring factions (Andrews, 1930). As Gandhi himself admits, his failures in South Africa to communicate his philosophy and messages in a timely manner became pillars for his success in India (Gandhi, p. 88).

Lessons from the past—timing and wording of communication is vital: Gandhi was aware of the need to consider the level of awareness of his target reader or listener when communicating his ideas. This can be seen in the very naming of each of the movements. None of these were just spontaneous upsurges (and therefore not revolutions in that sense of the term), but each one was preceded by meticulous preparations. Gandhi chose the form of struggle, the target and even the language of every campaign in keeping with the level of consciousness of the common people (Gonsalves, 2010). In the first round it was Non-cooperation (1920). Ten years later, it was more assertive—Civil Disobedience (1930-32). And a decade later, having considered both the internal and the external circumstances, it was Quit India (1942). “With every stage, the tempo was raised higher, mass involvement more intense and widespread than before, until the grand finale was reached with the battle cry of Do-or-Die” (Chakravartty, p.28). Gonsalves (2010) argues that this was proof of the acute sensitivity to his surroundings of a great philosopher-cum-communicator.

It may be worthwhile here to refer briefly to a couple of specific instances of how Gandhi used time and space to spread his ideas. Before he undertook the march from Dandi for the Salt Satyagraha in 1930, Gandhi envisaged a long drawn-out movement in which the masses would have to be involved. Scholars have argued that he was conscious of the need to cultivate public opinion abroad as well (Suchitra, 1995). So, the defiance of the salt law was taken up as the initial item of civil disobedience. Focusing on the iniquitous tax on salt, Gandhi expected to mobilize international support, at least to expose the exploitation of the Indian people under the British Raj.

The very acts of protests, therefore, were planned to maximize this support.

The march from Ahmedabad to Dandi passed through villages, providing space for non-stop propaganda for Gandhi and agenda building weeks against the British. As the walk progressed slowly, it gave enough time for Gandhian volunteers to “mobilize villagers along the route” (Gonsalves, p. 23). The Indian and the foreign press reported these events, igniting passion in other parts of the country and the world. The actual march was undertaken by just 80 people, including Gandhi. The other 79 were chosen to represent all the provinces in India, and they were drawn from all communities—Muslims, Christians and Hindus, both upper caste and the depressed. He also chose his two main lieutenants carefully—one was a Muslim man and the other a Hindu woman—perhaps symbolically representing the Muslims and the womanhood of the country. And when Gandhi finally sent his letter to the Viceroy notifying his decision to break the salt law, it was sent through an Englishman, Reginald Reynolds. This, too, was arguably an act of symbolic communication, to show that “this was not a matter of Indians versus British but of principles” (Chakravartty, p. 28).

*“With every stage, the tempo was raised higher, mass involvement more intense and widespread than before, until the grand finale was reached with the battle cry of Do-or-Die” (Chakravartty, p.28).*

The whole nation and indeed, as history bears out, many developed, western nations too were influenced by this new philosophy of mass action—totally peaceful and non-violent, even when facing police brutality. How he was this uniformly successful in communicating his philosophies is the subject of further research, but at the very least the examples above show how Gandhi used a combination of the written word, speeches and symbolic gestures to communicate his philosophy of non-violent resistance to both Indians and the outside world.

Lesson from the past—optimal use of print media: One of the most effective ways in which Gandhi communicated was through the press, even as he recognized that the written word in newspapers had the power to cause as much as damage as good (Gandhi, p. 211).

He recognized that communication was the most effective tool to shape opinion and mobilize Gandhi and agenda building popular support. Gandhi was associated with six journals, for three of which he was the editor.

His first paper, Indian Opinion, was started in South Africa. In order to air the grievances of Indians and mobilize public opinion in their favor, Gandhi started writing and giving interviews to newspapers. He focused on open letters and letters to editors, but soon realized that occasional writings were inadequate for the political campaign he had launched (Gupta, 2001).

He needed a mouthpiece to reach his philosophical doctrines in a timely manner to the people; so, in June 1903, he launched Indian Opinion. Through the columns of the newspaper, Gandhi tried to educate South African readers about sanitation, self-discipline and good citizenship. How important the journal was to Gandhi is seen from his own statement in his autobiography: “Indian Opinion was a part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns and expounded the principles and practice of Satyagraha as I understood it” (Gandhi, p. 210). This lesson in how the media could be used to propagate a philosophy and mold public opinion was to stand Gandhi in good stead later in life. When he launched his movements in India, he realized that much of the traditional media was controlled by the British. So, he launched his own newspapers, both in English and in the vernacular. Both Young India and Harijan became powerful vehicles of his views on all subjects. He wrote simply and clearly but forcefully (Iyer, 2000). The written word was perhaps Gandhi’s greatest friend in communicating his philosophy.

Lesson from the past—the power of non-verbal communication: Gandhi also used nonverbal or symbolic communication strategies to great effect. The most famous of these, of course, was the use of khadi or locally woven cotton to communicate the message of superiority of Indian cotton and to convey to the British that India was united in rejecting British rule.

This symbolic use of khadi is often spoken of as a “defining moment in India’s freedom movement” Gandhi and agenda building (Gonsalves, p. xix). This choice was not fortuitous. Through it he not only wanted to eradicate unemployment, but also empower, unite, and liberate his people from centuries of foreign domination.

*“Indian Opinion was a part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns and expounded the principles and practice of Satyagraha as I understood it.”*

The choice gave to clothing, a conventional form of nonverbal communication, a historical, social, psychological and moral significance that had no precedent. In terms of scale, context, method, and consequence, the dress revolution he initiated “transformed a disunited and submissive mass of over 383 million people into one independent nation” (Gonsalves, p. xix).

Whether Gandhi’s communication strategy can be replicated as an agenda building tool, is perhaps a subject for future research. But a few instances that the literature studied for this essay threw up show how those who came in contact with him perceived his power of communication. Here is one instance: Dr. Harold H. Mann, the Director of Agriculture in Bombay from 1921 to 1927, was once asked by Sir Thomas Jones, secretary to the British cabinet, “How many of the 310 million in India have heard about Gandhi?” Dr. Mann replied, “Three hundred and nine million” (Gonsalves, p. 2).

The hunger-strike or fast was another effective communication tool Gandhi fine-tuned early in life, even though he says that initially he “didn’t believe in the efficacy of fasting” (Gandhi, p. 243). It was during his stay at the Tolstoy farms in 1900-1901 that he once got members of different religions to fast together during religious festivals. Through this he realized how fasting could be used not just to “curb animal passions” (p. 245) but also to unite different religious groups under one roof. This is a method he used to great effect, during the final decades of British rule in India. As scholars who have conducted archival research on Gandhi’s influence on the media testify, the British press that had earlier deemed fasts as blackmailing tactics now hailed his fasts as “a power which may prove greater than the atom bomb” (Merriam, 1975, p. 296).

Gandhi had found yet another non-verbal way to communicate his philosophy of nonviolent resistance very effectively.

The power of this form of non-verbal communication is further confirmed by those who witnessed it up close. Alan Campbell-Johnson, who served as a press attaché to the British Viceroy in India during the 1930s and who was present in Delhi during one of Gandhi’s fasts, wrote: “You have to live in the vicinity of a Gandhi fast to understand its pulling power. He has a genius for acting through symbols, which all can understand.” (Mosley, 1961, p. 24).

Lessons from the past—the snowball effect: Gandhi used several symbolic means of communication to spread his ideas across India and beyond its shores. When he did speak, though, he was a rabble-rouser. Ironically, Gandhi says he was an introvert and shy person for much of his life. In his autobiography he notes: “My shyness I retained throughout my stay in England. It was impossible for me to speak impromptu. I hesitated whenever I had to face strange audiences and avoided making a speech whenever I could,” (Gandhi, p. 44). However, as only a master strategist can, he turned this weakness into his strength. “My hesitancy in speech, which was once an annoyance, is now a pleasure. It has taught me the economy of words,” he recalls in his autobiography (p. 45).

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Even then, Gandhi realized that it would be impossible for him to travel across the length and breadth of a country as large as India (stretching from the present-day Afghanistan border in the west to what is today Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan—all were part of undivided India). So, he utilized what can only be called a snowball technique. He would speak to a large group of dedicated volunteers and followers, and then, like the Buddha did centuries ago, tell them to travel across the country and spread his words (Andrews, 1930). The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi records over 10,000 speeches, interviews and lectures in his lifetime, apart Gandhi and agenda building from the numerous letters, reports, articles, telegrams and books he wrote. Writing the introduction to his classic book, *The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of his Writings on his Life, Work and Ideas*, Louis Fischer therefore observes: “Gandhi’s words are a river. His collected works fill one hundred volumes,” (Fischer, 1962, p. x).

He wrote as extensively as he spoke or used non-verbal means, to engage people with his philosophy. Again, the method of speaking to a smaller group of people and using them to build an agenda was an idea he learnt when fighting racial injustice in South Africa.

Lesson from the past—be clear, be direct: This brings us to the next question: what was his style of writing that so endeared him to those who read his philosophy? A causal reading of Gandhi’s writings reveal the simplicity of his grammatical style. His choice of words and phrases were kept to the bare minimum. He often used active voice and came straight to the point (Gonsalves, p. 9). He was also a prolific letter writer. Gonsalves, who conducted a detailed study of Gandhi’s correspondence, notes that he wrote to Queen Victoria and Adolf Hitler just as he did to children and youth.

Further, he replied to any and every letter that anyone wrote to him. In his memoirs, free India’s first President Babu Rajendra Prasad recalled: “There was hardly any letter calling for a considered reply which he did not answer himself. For a great period in his life he did not take the help of a stenographer or typist and used to write whatever he required, by his own hand. There were occasions when he became physically unable to write with the fingers of his right hand and, at a late stage in his life, he learnt the art of writing with his left hand. He did the same thing with his spinning” (Prasad, 1955). Such narrative discourses illustrate how persistent and committed Gandhi was as a communicator, especially when it came to spreading his philosophy.

Another Gandhian way of communicating was through imaginary dialogues with readers. This is a style he perfected when writing in the *Indian Opinion* in South Africa. In this newspaper, he wrote on subjects such as “What is freedom?”, “Why was India lost?”, “The condition of India”, (in five separate articles), “How can India become free”, “Brute force”, and “Passive resistance”. In the articles, he used dialogues between imaginary readers and the editor in order to philosophize. In each article, a reader would ask pertinent questions and the editor painstakingly answered those questions, addressing concerns, misgivings and fears while raising the reader’s awareness about a certain issue (Mukherjee, 1993). When readers actually wrote to

*Gandhi’s correspondence, notes that he wrote to Queen Victoria and Adolf Hitler just as he did to children and youth.*

him and asked more questions, he answered each one personally, thus increasing his network every day (Andrews, 1930).

C.F. Andrews, a Christian missionary who was a lifelong friend and associate of Gandhi in South Africa and India, wrote in his own memoir-like book on his friend that Gandhi often used such dialogues in real life to engage his associates in philosophical arguments, in order to illustrate a point. This, he felt, only made things clearer to his associates, who could then pass on his message much more easily to a wider audience wherever they went (Andrews, p. 248-253).

Lesson from the past—love thy enemy: Gandhi had also realized that it was as critical to communicate with his friends as it was with his opponents. This too was a technique he picked up in South Africa. Historians sometimes question why Gandhi succeeded in remaining on good terms with the British colonial leadership, unlike many of his peers who faced a point of no return with the British. Gonsalves suggests that Gandhi could maintain this fine balance because he considered no one an eternal enemy and even enemies as potential friends (Gonsalves, p. 4).

But what was the communication method he used to achieve this end? Noted Gandhian scholar B.R Nanda argues that Gandhi felt it was the duty of Satyagrahis to reason with their adversaries, to try to dispel their prejudices and appeal to their dormant sense of humanity. To illustrate his point, Nanda tells a story: In South Africa, Gandhi had negotiated, fought and finally reached an agreement with the racially prejudiced army commander, General Smuts. Yet, his parting gift to his chief antagonist (before Gandhi left for India) was a pair of sandals, which he had himself stitched! In India, from 1916 till 1948, Gandhi corresponded with and treated as his friends all the Viceroy—Chelmsford, Reading, Irwin, Willingdon and Linlithgow—keeping his lines of communication open even while he engaged them in a do-or-die non-violent battle (Nanda, 2004). His philosophy of separating personal and political relations was communicated effectively to his enemies through a combination of written correspondence as well as non-verbal means (such as his parting gift to General Smuts).

### **Gandhi's Utilization of the Media**

Gandhi was acutely aware of the power of mass communication and what positive international coverage could do for India's cause. He often used different forms of media and tailored his messages to the particular media to communicate with a larger audience. Gonsalves argues that Gandhi "showed extreme media awareness" (Gonsalvez, p. 18) and that Satyagraha as a powerful weapon of mass protest may not have had such an impact on mass consciousness across the world had it not been for the international media reports. The newspaper was always Gandhi's "first choice of media to voice his opinion" (p. 19) but he also used the relatively new technology of international telegraph cable. Some scholars have argued that he deliberately timed his Salt March in 1930 a year after a company called Imperial and International Communication opened the first ever cable lines between USA and UK and the British colonies (Suchitra, 1995).

*The newspaper was always Gandhi's "first choice of media to voice his opinion" but he also used the relatively new technology of international telegraph cable.*

“His famous message sent out by cable from Dandi on April 5, 1930 reveals his superb mastery of adapting content, language and style to the medium of communication. The message was crisp, cogent and poetic: ‘I want world sympathy in this battle of Right against Might.’” (Gonsalves, p. 20). Gonsalves concludes that Gandhi used international media effectively to transmit his messages thanks to another lesson he had learnt earlier: “Years of interacting with the British government had made him aware of the extreme sensitivity of the English in maintaining a dignified image before the world” (p. 20). How Gandhi used this seeming weakness of the British psyche can be seen in the following example: A month after the Salt March led to his arrest, an American journalist asked him for his message to the world.

Gandhi replied, “I know I have countless friends in America who are in deep sympathy with this struggle, but mere sympathy will avail me nothing. What is wanted is concrete expression of public opinion. If we attain our end through non-violent means, India will have delivered a message for the world,” (Gonsalves, p. 22).

This strategy of appealing to the conscience of the United States and at the same time creating pressure on Britain seems to have worked. In a matter of days, his struggle for freedom made front page news in USA (Suchitra, 1995). He was Time magazine’s Man of the Year for 1931. Faced with international pressure, the British government was forced to hold 3 round table conferences with the Indian leaders between 1930 and 1932 to resolve the Indian demand for Independence.

It is important to see that while focusing on salt may not have been an original idea, what was novel was the way in which Gandhi was able to transform it into “a powerful tool for communicating with the Indian masses, the British government and the international audience” (Suchitra, p. 745).

Clearly, in every step he took and every move he made, Gandhi was taking recourse to Agenda Building, communicating his ideas swiftly and effectively to a wide and diverse audience. Was Gandhi also setting the agenda and telling people how to think? That is a matter of debate, which future studies may take up.

## Conclusion

This study attempted to explore and analyze how Gandhi used his lived experiences, particularly lessons he learnt in South Africa, as well as his initial experiences in India, to hone his skills as a master communicator, even as his philosophical ideas matured. Finally, the study explored how he used these communication strategies to spread his ideas to the rest of the world.

The findings of the study indicate that Gandhi was a communicator-par-excellence, who did not just use a variety of media but also multiple communication strategies to reach out to the people, tailoring his words, his writing style and his use of symbols to suit each occasion. This indicates that it is mainly because Gandhi was such a versatile communicator that he succeeded where many of his peers failed.

*Gandhi was  
Time magazine’s  
Man of the Year  
for 1931.*

Perhaps not all philosophies that Gandhi espoused are of equal importance for communication scholars, even though in some ways many ideas that Gandhi stood for—nonviolence, peace, the fight against untouchability and religious divide, gender equality and a harmonious way of life—are becoming increasingly relevant for scholars to study afresh, as countries and regions get torn apart by religious intolerance and violence. However, both his core philosophy of non-violence as well as the way he used mass media to build an agenda and communicate his ideas about peace, gender equality and self-image, are worth a relook from the viewpoint of a communication scholar.

This paper argues that re-reading Gandhi in a new light, that of a master communicator may be an enlightening process for communication scholars interested in studying agenda setting, and how ideas can be communicated to diverse audiences in an effective manner. How did Gandhi communicate his philosophy of non-violence to the youth, for instance? Did he use a different medium to reach a younger audience, such as street plays and songs, instead of articles in newspapers that were more targeted at the educated elite?

An analysis of the texts discussed above, suggests that understanding how Gandhi communicated so effectively with his readers, followers and colleagues, how he communicated his ideas both to the rich and the poor, the young and the elderly—may be of immense value to communication scholars and practitioners looking at effective ways to communicate with diverse audiences.

Media houses today, particularly in South Asia and other developing regions, are struggling to find an effective strategy to communicate complex philosophies and ideas such as religious unity, acceptable social behavior, personal hygiene and civic norms—to a diverse populace. Given the amount of miscommunication in the world today, there has probably never been a more urgent need to understand how Gandhi used different media to effectively change mass perceptions and attitudes towards violence and other social issues.

### **Future Research Directions**

This study is not without its limitations. This paper mainly analyzed Gandhi's autobiography and biographical books written by those close to Gandhi, to understand and analyze his communication strategies. Gandhi, however, wrote several thousand letters, speeches, opinion pieces and editorials, all of which can give communication scholars further (and wider) insights into Gandhi's communication strategies and the thought process that led to his actions. In other words, a more thorough textual analysis of Gandhi's works may be needed, to gain a fuller insight into the subject at hand.

This is not to say this study is without its merits. Gandhi's communication strategies and methods are as relevant today as they were in the 1930s, in a theoretical way at least. As my findings suggest, Gandhi was a master at audience analysis and used his



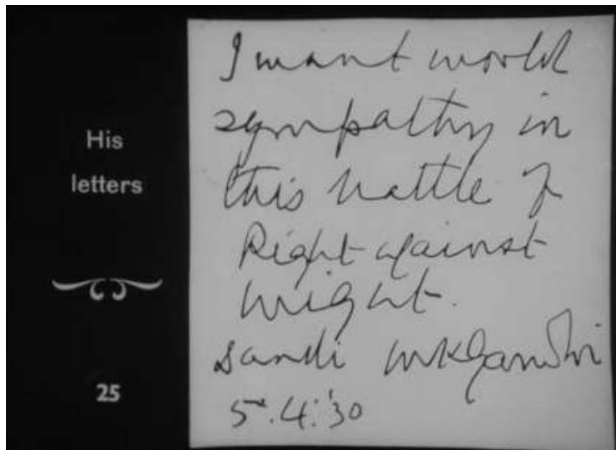
knowledge of diverse audiences to curate his messages to suit his audiences. Reading Gandhi helps us understand that the same message needs to be communicated in different ways and by different means, if they are to have similar effects on very different people. Future research could look at archival records or analyze textual data or even conduct quantitative content analyses to study various facets of Gandhi as a master communicator and the relevance of his communication methods in today's world.

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Figure 1



Gandhi's cabled message to people of United States in 1930 as he launched his civil disobedience movement against the British Empire in 1930 (Source: Wikipedia) While Gandhi was known for long speeches and the use of vernacular languages when addressing Indian masses, this message shows how he could be brief and effective by using language best suited for the medium, in this case a cabled message.

## Gandhi's Communicative Perspectives on Status, Role and Education of Women

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### Abstract

*Gandhi revealed a deep understanding of the pulse of society and reflected its rhythm. He offered non-violent ways for women to join the political movement for swaraj. He saw it as right, as well as possible for women at that time in history. By 1940, he had provided modifications to his earlier more generalised approach to women's contribution to public life. In one of the issue of the Harijan of that year the questions arose about the rising participation of women in activities outside the boundaries of home. The awakening of civil and political consciousness among Indian women had created a conflict between their traditional domestic duties and their duty towards society. It was believed that, if a woman engages in public work, she may have to neglect her children or her household. The questions were asked on liberation of women, liberation of India, removal of untouchability, amelioration of the economic condition of the masses. To achieve the goal of liberation from the various shackles of society, Gandhi believed that he had to work for total change starting right from the villages. He introduced spinning and the salt agitation and wove the women into the web of social fabric and in the freedom movement and at the same time tried to give dignity to women. The late Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, a well known freedom fighter, social activist and an effective constructive worker of India's cultural renaissance asserted that, "while the progressive status of women in the freedom movement was amply propelled by male social reformers and Gandhi, it was actually the advocacy of women which influenced many male leaders including Gandhi". The study is based on the various writings on Gandhi's perspective on women issues in their different roles as builders of the family, community and nation. The paper puts light on how Gandhi envisaged and created roles for women to influence change in their own lives and lives of others. Thereby, leaving a great mark on the freedom struggle with their contribution in a big way.*

*The paper puts light on how Gandhi envisaged and created roles for women to influence change in their own lives and lives of others.*

**Keywords :** Gandhi's Communicative perspectives Women's Status Women's Role in Society, Women's Role in Freedom struggle, Women's education.

### Introduction

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi popularly know as Mahatma Gandhi was not only a great political leader but a passionate lover of humanity. Women and the poor

commanded his most tender attention. He had an instinctive understanding of women and their problems. Gandhi was intentionally conscious of the need for improving the status of women in the society. In Indian context he communicated to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur from Wardha in 1936 and said, "I am firmly of opinion that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of women" (John Moniz, 1996 p.199). He saw no difference between man and woman.

Gandhi's socio-political philosophy of communication is feminist, which emphasises on gender equality. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, sought to bring about a revolutionary change in the status of women in the first half of the 20th century. The views expressed by the Mahatma and the actions undertaken by him may not go entirely with the current times because the times have irreversibly changed but the honesty of the Mahatma, the love and respect he had for women can never be doubted.

His thought revolved around the learnings from history of social and political life, that, brute and aggressive people captured power and used it to perpetuate their self-interest through oppression. They exploited the poor, the needy and the helpless. Capitalism and imperialism became great sources of de-humanising colonial people and destroying of social and economic institutions. Gandhi's Hind Swaraj echoed the same sentiment. He believed, politics and social life has always been associated with masculinity. It is concerned with power struggle, coercion, war, greed, selfishness, domination, bloodshed, hatred, deceit, cruelty and above all violence. He called modern civilization as "Satanic civilization". For him, Fascism and Nazism, the twin most devastating phenomenon of modern times had created immense havoc for human kind by creating jingoist militaristic politics of masculine culture and overpowered the soft, humane and subtle feminine characteristics. He believed, the post-cold war world situation was quite dismal. It represented an environment devoid of feminist qualities, hence closed the door for women for their social and political life.

Considering violence as a hindrance in the feminine voices or not being the feminist in nature, Gandhi aimed at creating a non-violent society based on truth. The greatest contribution of Gandhi was 'Satyagraha' which not only aimed at creating a society which would be based on feminine values but also advocated a feminist strategy to achieve that ideal. It was a unique strategy which had never been used as a practical method of socio-political change. Gandhi advocated for a society based on humanitarian values. It envisaged a society free of exploitation, establishing equality: social, political and economic, which would not discriminate against human beings on the basis of birth, colour, sex or nation. The basis of this society would be love, cooperation, care, sympathy and all those virtues with which women are associated. He dreamed of an inclusive society.

The satyagraha technique he started in Africa continued throughout his life and he kept on refining, sophisticating and sharpening it. In South Africa, Gandhi introduced the method of passive resistance against the unjust 'Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act' as civil disobedience. Gandhi explained passive resistance as a method of securing rights by personal suffering. It is the reverse of resistance by arms. "When

*Capitalism and imperialism became great sources of de-humanising colonial people and destroying of social and economic institutions. Gandhi's Hind Swaraj echoed the same sentiment.*

I refuse to do things that are repugnant to my conscience, I use soul force... It involves sacrifice of self. Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others.” ([https://www.mk gandhi.org/hindswaraj/chap17\\_passiveresistance.htm](https://www.mk gandhi.org/hindswaraj/chap17_passiveresistance.htm))

Gandhi designed his communication strategies very deliberately and chose a distinctively particular form of struggle to encourage women’s participation in social life. He wrote, “My contribution to the great problem (of women’s role in society) lies in my presenting the acceptance of truth and ahimsa in every walk of life, whether for individuals or nations. I have hugged the hope that in this, woman will be the unquestioned leader and having thus found her place in human evolution, will shed her inferiority complex”. (Shah, 1959)

Gandhi’s advocacy of nonviolence created favourable condition for mass participation of women in all the movements he launched. They came out from home instead of hiding in fear, as they usually did when the movements were violent. The satyagraha made women feel that they are not inadequate or inferior to men. Their femininity has not been down-graded because of their propensity to face violence. Rather, they were made to feel that as women, they are strong. However, Kiran Saxena quoted Madhu Kishwar who said, “Gandhi saw woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and suffering” (Savita Singh, 2001).

Actually, Gandhi’s attitudes towards women were as much shaped by his innate sense of comparison and justice as they were by the patriarchal albeit benevolent conservatism that was the sheet anchor of his cultural and social discourse. The contradiction between his liberal feminist pronouncements, his egalitarian, loving and respectful concern for women, his belief in their role in politics and in society are sometimes difficult to reconcile. Yet, Gandhi, more than anyone else, struggled with these paradoxes in the existing social milieu of that time.

There were some occasions when Gandhi communicated and suggested women to play a supportive role in political movements. The case in point is the famous Dandi March of 1930, Gandhi wanted to keep women out amongst the core group of 79 Satyagrahis to break the salt law. The women however resented it. Gandhi pleaded with the women that there were other reasons to exclude the women from the movement than their frailty, that he did not want to give opportunity to the British administration to accuse the Satyagrahis that they used women as a shield to protect themselves. Women did agree with Gandhi’s plea but Mrs. Sarojini Naidu participated in the Dandi March, and large number of women then got associated with Gandhi’s civil disobedience movement by breaking the Salt Law.

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“Woman is more fitted than man to make exploration and take bolder action in nonviolence. There is no occasion for women to consider themselves subordinate or inferior to men. Woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacity. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man’s superior. If nonviolence is the law of our being, the future is with women. Woman, I hold, is the personification of self-sacrifice, but unfortunately today she does not realize what tremendous advantage she has over man”. (Patel, 1997). Gandhiji believed that

India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women. His message almost six decades ago at the All India Women's Conference on December 23, 1936 was, "When woman, whom we call abala becomes sabala, all those who are helpless will become powerful."

### **Gandhiji's idea of Woman as Mother and 'Mother India'**

In the formative years, Gandhi was influenced by his mother, Putlibai who ingrained in him a strong sense of personal ethics and compassion that he later conveyed in his favourite prayer by Narsinha Mehta (Life time: 1414-1481) "Vaishnav Jan to tene re kahiye je peed parai jane re" (A godlike man is one, Who feels another's pain, Who shares another's sorrow). Gandhi said, "The outstanding impression my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness. She was deeply religious. She would not think of taking her meals without daily prayer. She would take the hardest of vows and keep them without flinching. Illness was no excuse for relaxing them." (Gangrade, 1997) He got his mother's permission to go to England for studies by taking an oath, 'I vowed not to touch wine, women and meat.' These three vows shielded him throughout his stay in England.

Gandhi also learnt a lot from Kasturba. Interestingly, Gandhi admitted that he learnt technique of non-violent passive resistance from women, especially from his wife and mother. It was Kasturba's passive resistance against Gandhi's, as a man and husband, unreasonable actions and attitudes, that compelled him change himself from a domineering husband to an understanding husband realizing the spirit of equality and acted upon principle of mutual consideration.

He learnt the fundamental aspects of his soul politics from his mother and his wife, but women's influence on him was not limited to his family. He also was influenced by women in late nineteenth and early twentieth century who created organizations such as All India Women's Council and Bhagini Samaj, founded predominantly by the upper-middle class in urban centres. Well before Gandhi called women to practice Satyagraha, the grandmothers, mothers, wives and daughters of the educated classes in India were already coming together, providing education and training to other women to make free the Indian society from the clutches of colonial structures. Gandhi was profoundly influenced by Annie Besant, a British feminist and a theosophist, Sarojini Naidu, a trusted Gandhi's co-worker, Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya, a fiery Satyagrahi, RajKumari Amrit Kaur and Pushpaben Mehta.

Gandhi rested his ideas on the belief that we need to have feeling and devotion for our motherland and cultivate a mother's heart to purify the society. Motherhood became increasingly his model for liberation of India. He saw no hope for India's emancipation while her womanhood remained un-emancipated. He declared that we can not return our debts to Mother India or Mother Earth or women as mothers who have given us everything. He urged that we should remain loyal to them, cease to exploit and 'rediscover' the status of women.

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Gandhi believed women could do much to transform India on all levels. He believed that equal rights for women and men were necessary. In a letter written to RajKumari Amrit Kaur from Wardha on 20th October, 1936 Gandhi writes, “If you women only realize your dignity and privilege, and make full sense of it for mankind, you will make it much better than it is. But man has delighted in enslaving you and you have proved willing slaves till the slave and holders have become one in the crime on degrading humanity. My special function from childhood, you might say, has been to make women realize her dignity. I was once slave holder myself but Ba proved an unwilling slave and thus ‘opened my eyes to my mission’.” (Gangrade, 1997).

Gandhi further said, “I began work among women when I was not even thirty years old. There is not a woman in South Africa who does not know me. But my work was among the poorest. The intellectuals I could not draw ... you cannot blame me for not having organized the intellectuals among the women. I have not the gift... but just as I never fear coldness on the part of the poor when I approach them, I never fear it when I approach poor women. There is invisible bond between them and me.” Gandhi created an empathy with his audience through this cultural fine tuning. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur echoing this aspect of Gandhiji’s personality further stated: “We found him not a ‘Bapu’- wise father, but what is more precious, a mother, whose all embracing and understanding love all fear and restraint vanish.” (Jaitely, 1997).

Gandhi, as friend, philosopher and guide of women used to receive large number of letters wherein the women communicated about their pitiable conditions. Gandhi advised them to face them bravely and also suggested solutions.

### **Gandhiji on Women’s Contribution to Freedom Movement**

Gandhi said that women, “strengthen my belief in swadeshi and satyagraha....if I could inspire in men, devotion as pure as I find in the women, within a year, India would be raised to a height impossible to imagine.” (Bipin Kumar, 2009. p 98). Gandhi expected them to battle from their homes, while still fulfilling their traditional roles. Gandhi kept fighting the prevalent thoughts among masses that if women go to the factories, who will look after the domestic chores.

Gandhi emphasised on the superior qualities of women. He believed that women could bring about swaraj better as they were the very embodiment nonviolence. For him they were greater soldiers and beneficiaries for swaraj campaigns. He engaged women in three famous campaigns: the manufacture of salt, boycott of foreign cloth and shunning of liquor. Gandhi advocated three distinct levels of women’s participation in the national movement: First, women who had familial responsibilities such as care of children and the aged were to fulfil their primary duties which were not to be given up for the sake of the national movement; Second, group included women from whom he expected a some sacrifice of the pleasure of house keeping and child caring for the sake of the nation; Third, full time workers were expected to stay single and dedicate themselves entirely to the struggle for independence.

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Satyagraha for Gandhi was an inclusive quest to find creative solutions for all forms of oppression. He was never against any idea/s coming from any quarter/s. He said, “I do not want my house to be walled on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people’s houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave” (Jahanbelago, 2014)

Gandhi’s thought has been evolutionary and that of a continuing examination of reality, the human condition and truth. As the most towering figure in India’s freedom struggle Gandhi’s role will remain unchallenged. All over the world the imprint of his moral philosophy as a workable political ideology has been particularly indelible.

Gandhi, though is often viewed critically, Madhu Kishwar asserts that “Gandhi saw women not as objects of reforms ... but as self- conscious subjects who could, if they choose, become arbiters of their own destiny. In this way Gandhi represents a crucial break from the attitude of many of the leaders of the reform movements of the late nineteenth century. The main contributions of the Gandhi to the cause of women lay in his absolute and unequivocal insistence on their personal dignity and autonomy in the family and society.” (Patel, 1997)

It took several years for Gandhi to overcome the forms of sexism, classicism, and racism that he internalised as a young man. Given the stark contrast in Indian society between man and women’s cultures broadly speaking, men are more bellicose rigid, controlling culture and the women are more relational, egalitarian, fluid, opened peace-loving culture. It is not surprising that Gandhi chose the latter. Equity-feminism seemed foreign to women during the Indian Nationalist Movement, with the exception only of a small number of middle-to-upper class women living in cities.

Still, while giving the example of women of India, Kiran Saxena mentions that he asserted, “The women in India tore down the purdah and came forward to work for the nation. They saw that the country demanded something more than their looking after their homes. They manufactured contraband salt, they picketed foreign cloth shops and liquor shops and tried to wean both the seller and the customer from both. At late hours in the night they pursued the drunkards to their dens with courage and charity in their hearts. They marched to jails, and they sustained lathi blows as few men did. If the women of West will try to vie with men in becoming brutes, they have no lesson to learn from the women of India. They will have to cease taking delight in sending their husbands and sons to kill people and congratulating them on their valour”.(Savita Singh, 2001). Gandhi did realise that women’s entry in the national movement of India was a life-preserving and humanising force which would prevent the movement from getting dissipated by senseless and self-destructive violence.

In Harijan, October 3rd 1936 we find the reason for his faith in women, where he says, “I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she will make the same effort, and have the same hope and faith.

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Though pre-occupied with heavy responsibilities his views in this regard were clear and he tried to educate the public to accept women as equal partners. He further said, "I am uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights. In my opinion she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by man. I should treat daughters and sons on an equal footing of perfect equality." Again he said, "To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is a man's injustice to woman. If by strength it is meant moral power then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not more self-sacrificing, has she not great powers of endurance, has she not greater courage? Without her man could not be. If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with women."

Gandhiji advocated the participation of women in the political struggle. Before him coming to the scene there were instances of only few woman participating in the freedom struggle. But like everything else Gandhiji, took participation of women in politics to the masses. Right from Non Cooperation Movement to Civil Disobedience Movement and maturing during Quit India Movement, Gandhiji had put women in the centre. It was primarily because he knew that like non violence, participation of women gave Indians the moral advantage.

"His entire cleanliness, sanitisation and village development programme was centred around women. He understood that India's power lay in its villages. The participation of villages is important to get India confident, post independence. To achieve work and results in all his social programmes he aimed at villages, and in that the family and within a family at the women. Because a family is bound only by women. To educate a child educating a woman is necessary. In fact, his Khadi programme was centred around women. He wanted all women to be economically independent through making their own cloth. Gandhiji encouraged and compelled women to break their social boundaries. He advocated for widow remarriage, woman education, economic independence of women, worked against child marriages. He understood that women defined the future of any society. His camps, ashrams were all beaming with women participants working shoulder to shoulder with men". (R.K. Narayan, 1955)

He called woman as incarnation of Ahimsa, "ahimsa means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows his capacity in the largest measure? She shows it as she carries the infant and feeds it during nine months and derives joys in the suffering involved. What can beat the suffering caused by the pangs of labour. But she forgets them in the joy of creation. Who, again suffers daily so that her babe may wax from day to day? Let her transfer that love to the whole of humanity, let her forget she ever was or can be the object of a man's lust. And she will occupy her proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader. It is given to her to trade the art of peace to the warning world thirsting for nectar. She can become the leader in Satyagraha which does require the stout heart that comes from suffering and faith". (Rao, 2017)

### **Gandhi on Status of Women: Views on Patriarchy**

Gandhi believed that women as a person had her own identity. Women like men have the right to shape their own destiny. Gandhi held that fundamentally, man and

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woman are one but there are differences in their vocations and roles. Gandhi however did put great emphasis on the family, its wholesomeness and their function in human society and that women are the pillars of a family. She is the one who instills values, morals and knowledge into children. By doing all this, she does a great service to the nation.

In an issue of the Harijan in 1934, Gandhi answered to the question: ‘What would determine a woman’s varna? In his reply Gandhi analysed the prevailing social situation and went on to state an ideal objective and finally reiterated the reality embedded within the question. He says, “.....owing to the confusion of varnas today, the varna principle has ceased to operate. The present state of Hindu society may be described as that of anarchy; the four varnas exist today in name only. If we must talk in terms of varna there is only varna today for all, whether men or women; we are all shudras. In the resuscitated varna Dharma, as I conceive it, a girl after her marriage, would naturally adopt her husband’s varna and relinquish that of her parents. Nor need . . . any such change... imply a slur since...the age of resuscitation would imply absolute social equality of all four varnas”. (Gupta, 2017). Here, Gandhi does accept the secondary status of the woman vis a vis the social identity of her husband or father as he does not want any kind of conflicts to arise.

Again, in a letter to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in answer to a question about the religion of children in mixed marriages, Gandhi’s stint of his patriarchal thinking is revealed. “I am quite of opinion, the children of mixed marriages should be taught in the male parent’s religion. This seems to me to be self obvious for common happiness and interest. I am considering merely the question of choice of religion. The children cannot profess two religions. They must respect the female parent’s religion. If the female parent has not that much discretion and regard for her husband’s religion, the marriage becomes superficial.” Thus, one sees Gandhi grappling with what is just and moral at one end and with the necessity to assert the paternity rights of the father at the other.

Still, he believed equal status and work for men and women was important. He believed men and women need to be educated equally in housework because the home belongs to both. This was part of his efforts to build a wholly new society, without which he believed it was not possible to make an appreciable difference to improve the lot of mankind with the cultural discourse of society as it was, and he never shied from providing direct and practical solutions to achieve his goals. He constructively and constantly worked to bring women out of their traditional mental setups for a better and more dignified life. “Wives should not be dolls and objects of indulgence but should be treated as honoured comrades in common service. The educationally ill-disposed should be educated by their husbands. The customary and legal status of women is bad and demands radical change”. (Nandela, 1997).

On marriage, he mentioned in his autobiography, “The wife is not husband’s bond slave, but his companion and helpmate, and an equal partner in all his joys and sorrows, as free as the husband to choose her own path” (Narayan, 1968)

Women are gifted with equal mental capacities and therefore she has equal rights.

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However, due to the force of custom, ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying superiority over women. Regarding traditional rules and regulations Gandhi believed they have been mostly framed by men and have not been always fair. The Mahatma said that, “women have been suppressed under custom and law for which man was responsible and in the shaping of which she had no hand. Rules of social conduct must be framed by mutual co-operation and consultation. Women have been taught to regard themselves as slaves of men. Women must realize their full status and play their part as equals of men”. (<https://www.mkgandhi.org/indiadreams/chap54.htm>).

Gandhi’s framework for women’s position in social life however is based in her long suffering, selfless service and self-effacing one. The capacity of her silent suffering Gandhi idealised and used for her uplift which were in fact the key symptoms of her subordination.

### **Gandhi Against Gender-based Discrimination**

Gandhi was totally opposed to gender discrimination. He expressed, “I fail to see any reason for jubilation over the birth of a son and for mourning over the birth of a daughter. Both are God’s gifts. They have an equal right to live and are equally necessary to keep the world going.” Gandhi called women as the noble sex. For him women are the embodiment of sacrifice and ahimsa. He further states, “A daughter’s share must be equal to that of a son. The husband’s earnings are a joint property of husband and wife as he makes money by her assistance.” Gandhiji also firmly believed that if a husband is unjust to his wife, she has the right to live separately. According to him, “Both have equal rights over children. Each would forfeit these rights after they have grown up, and even before that if he or she is unfit for them. In short, I admit no distinction between men and women except such as has been made by nature and can be seen with human eyes.” (<https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womenempowerment.htm>).

Gandhi preached and practiced sharing of housework by both men and women of the family. He encouraged women to do intellectual work and men to help in cooking, cleaning and caring, conventionally, ‘women’s chores’. He asserted that woman is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has a right to participate in all the activities of man, and she has the right of freedom and liberty as man has.

Explaining on sexual relations, Gandhi idealised celibacy. He considered sexual union between man and woman apt only for procreation. Probably, in lack in presence of birth control measures, it was one of the remedies of the same. He said, “I consider it inhuman to impose sterilisation law on the people. I am against the use of contraceptives in case of women. I do not mind voluntary sterilisation in case of man since he is the aggressor” (Prabhu & Rao, 1960).

He was a protagonist of control of sexuality, but that control is not social, or outside control but self-control and not by social coercion. The greatest contribution of Gandhi in this regard is that he very vehemently stood for the rights of women over their own body, which the feminists of today have been crusading for. Men do not

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have a right to violate a woman. Gandhi stood for this long back and believed marriage does not, should not and cannot take away that right from her. He advocated equal sexual rights for women. At the same time he stressed on family values and wanted to protect the institution of family.

Marriage he believed was an important and sacred institution. He wrote, “Marriage is a sacrament. It is a natural thing in life”. (Harijan, 22nd March, 1942 ref. in [https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens\\_empowerment.htm](https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens_empowerment.htm)). Gandhi wished for mutual consent, mutual love, and mutual respect between husband and wife. He advocated widow remarriage and urged that widows should have the same freedom that widowers have. He wrote, “Child widows must be duly and well married and not remarried”(Young India, 5th August,1926 ref. in [https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens\\_empowerment.htm](https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens_empowerment.htm).)

The oppressive custom of dowry too came under fire from Gandhi. He preferred girls to remain unmarried all their lives than to be humiliated and dis honoured by marrying men who demanded dowry. He said, “Marriage must cease to be a matter of arrangement made by parents for money. The dowry system is a product of the caste system. The abolition of caste will lead to the abolition of dowry”. (Harijan, 23rd May, 1936 ref. in [http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens\\_empowerment.htm](http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens_empowerment.htm).)

The Mahatma was clearly against any kind of male dominance or discrimination. For him, “marriage confers no right upon one partner to demand obedience of the other. Marriage is a state of discipline. When one partner breaks discipline, the other can break the bond. The breach here is moral and not physical. It precludes divorce. Hinduism regards each as absolute equal of the other. Hinduism leaves the individual absolutely free for the sake of self-realization, for which and which alone he or she is born”. (Young India, 21st October, 1926 ref. in [https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens\\_empowerment.htm](https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/womens_empowerment.htm).)

### **Gandhi on Women Literacy and Education**

Gandhi attributed the illiteracy among women to the status of inferiority inflicted on her by the immemorial traditions. Not giving her the due status and opportunities resulted in a semi-paralysis of the society. She is called the mother of the race. But not due justice is provided to her. Therefore, in order to undo the great wrongs , women need to be uplifted by providing education and making them literate. Gandhi believed in imparting proper education for women. He was advocate of preserving the identity of women as independent women, “I do believe that women will not make her contribution to the world by mimicking or running a race with man. She can run the race, but she will not rise to the great heights she is capable of by mimicking man. She has to be complement of man”. (Harijan, 27th February, 1937)

Critiques believe that the Mahatma’s views on women’s education are based on family ideals because he assumes that man is supreme in the extra-mural activities and that woman is supreme in intra-mural activities. Hence, education imparted to both men and women should be according to their pre-ordained stations in life. The

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Mahatma's views on women's education are based on his belief in woman being independent but a complement of man and therefore may seem out of sync in the modern context. It may be critical in current context but may have been contextual according to those times. As, on the other hand, he pointed out time to time that there is no justification for men to deprive women or to deny them equal rights for their literacy.

In fact, Gandhi's unflinching confidence in women did not blind him to the real situation of women in the country. The unjust social structure, anti-women religious practices, rituals and conventions which debilitated women and made them victims of inhuman cruelty. Gandhi wanted cessation of that cruelty and wanted an end to their marginalisation. He opposed sati, child marriage, purdah system and husband's domination over his wife. He supported widow marriage and advocated women's education. He believed education is essential for enabling women to uphold the natural rights of equality, to improve them and to spread them. For him the true knowledge of self is unattainable without the right kind of education.

Though Gandhi never challenged the traditional set up, he inspired women to carve out their own destinies within it. Having realised the important role women could play in purifying public life Gandhi, a great visionary constructed feminist politics and became an embodiment of feminine virtues, he understood the plight of women in Indian society and tried to ameliorate the conditions for her. Gandhi viewed women as the better half of the humanity and believed if this better half is not well educated, free and as strong as men, the society can not develop.

### Conclusion

Gandhi has been one of the most efficient communicator, honest and divine historical figures of the modern times. His philosophy of satyagraha and non-violence, though not new, assumed revolutionary proportions under his tutelage and captured the hearts and imaginations of people all over the world because of his communication and convincing skills .

Non-violence as enunciated by the Mahatma is the strongest weapon of the strong against violence and violence is the weakest weapon of the weak. He believed humanity would move from darkness to light and from bondage to freedom with this mighty weapon of non-violence. The power of non-violence for him is located in the very spirit of the human beings. Mahatma Gandhi is undoubtedly the greatest architect and the sculptor of the spirit and spirituality called non-violence. He acknowledged the role of women as powerhouse of endurance and spirituality to exercise this weapon and use it for liberation and total emancipation.

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Gandhi's efforts to empower women, to take them out from their own selves and liberate them from social clutches attracted millions not only literate but illiterate women offering in return only sweat, toil, and pain, is an exceptional example in India's recent history. We still have miles to go to achieve our cherished goal to empower women. Let us keep believing in the words of William Ross Wallace, 'The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world !'

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## Abstract

*This paper is an attempt to evaluate Mahatma Gandhi's contributions as a journalist. This study has been done using the historical search method and the data is based primarily on secondary sources. In the life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, we can see three major turning points. First turn came when he reached London to become a barrister and entered in the field of journalism. He started writing newspaper articles on vegetarian food. He realized that communication is an important factor in shaping the public opinion and mobilizing the masses. Second turn came to his life, when he traveled to South Africa in a legal case. During his journey, he read John Ruskin's "Unto This Last" book, which changed the whole plan of his life. He has decided to dedicate his life for public service. In South Africa he experienced humiliation by white rulers. He observed that Indian people are suffering due to discriminatory laws of South African government. Gandhi decided to fight against it and started his first newspaper 'Indian Opinion' to raise the voice of Indian people. He lived in South Africa for twenty years, his unique quality of his communication and leadership enables him to get fantastic results. His name and fame spread beyond South Africa. Third turn came when he returned to India and traveled to Champaran in Bihar to witness the harassment and atrocities of White Indigo growers on Indian farmers. After learning the truth about the oppression of farmers, he started the first 'Satyagraha' at Champaran. This 'Satyagraha' was the beginning of a new chapter in India's freedom struggle. He then led the India's freedom struggle and used 'Satyagraha' as an effective tool of resistance against the British rulers. He started Young India, Navajivan and Harijan newspaper to spread his message. The only aim of his journalism was to serve the people.*

**Keywords:** Communication, Freedom Struggle, Journalism, Mahatma, Newspapers, Satyagraha, Struggle.

## Introduction:

No one has imagined that, a shy and introverted son of Porbandar in Gujarat ( India), Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi will become a great communicator in future and will be known as Mahatma Gandhi. At the age of 19, Mohandas Gandhi reached London, to become a barrister, where he recognized the power of communication and entered the field of journalism. Journalism was the only reason that transformed Mohandas Gandhi into Mahatma Gandhi. He dedicated his whole life to the service of voiceless and oppressed people. For this purpose, he achieved all the skills needed to become

*This paper is an attempt to evaluate Mahatma Gandhi's contributions as a journalist.*

good journalists. He worked for more than 40 years as journalist and editor. In those days, the newspaper was the only medium of public communication, so he used the newspapers as a tool to spread his message among the people. He started journalism 20 years prior to his participation in the field of social service and was connected to journalism for his entire life. Bhattacharya S. N. pointed out special characteristic of Gandhi's journalism as "Gandhiji undoubtedly introduced a new and noble element in the field of journalism. It was his approach - his human approach - which gave his writings a character" ( Bhattacharya,1965).

### Objectives

Objectives of this research paper are as follows-

- To identify how and why Mahatma Gandhi entered in the field of journalism.
- To know the newspapers started by Mahatma Gandhi.
- To find how Gandhi became voice of voiceless people.
- To evaluate the impact of his journalism.

### Methodology

This study has been carried out using historical research method and data is based mainly on secondary sources. Secondary sources used for this research paper are newspapers, books, journals and related websites.

### Three turns in life

In the life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi we can observe three major turning points. First turn came when he reached to London for the study of law, where he gets attracted to the journalism and started to write articles in newspapers. Second turn came when he gets inspired by John Ruskin's book 'Unto This Last' and started struggle against the rulers of South Africa, Third turn came when he came back to India and travelled to Champaran, Bihar. He witnessed the tyranny and atrocities of the White indigo planters over the peasants in Champaran and decided to start 'Satyagraha'. Later he made 'Satyagraha' the foremost instrument to fight against British rule in India.

### First Article in Newspaper

In India, during his school education, Mohandas Gandhi never read a newspaper. He reached in England at the age of 19 and started to spend nearly one hour to read English newspapers every day. He was so shy and was hesitant to speak. He faced many problems in London to get vegetarian meal. He gets inspired by some colleagues to write article in newspaper. His first article was published in the issue of February 7, 1891 under the title "Indian Vegetarian" in 'The Vegetarian' the organ of Vegetarian Society. He contributed nine articles to this magazine depicting the diet, customs and festivals etc. of India. Due to these articles in newspapers, he came in

*Gandhi first article was published in the issue of February 7, 1891 under the title "Indian Vegetarian" in 'The Vegetarian' the organ of Vegetarian Society.*

contact with editors and influential people. He recognized that communication is the key element to shape public opinion and newspaper is a best tool of communication to mobilize public support.

### First Newspaper

Mahatma Gandhi traveled to South Africa in a legal case. During this journey, he read John Ruskin's "Unto This Last" book, he has written about this book in following words 'I read book 'Unto This Last' by Ruskin and changed whole plan of my life'. Due to this he came to know about passive resistance (Satyagraha). In South Africa, he faced humiliation many times. He came to know about harassment of Indian people by white rulers in South Africa. He decided to fight against discriminatory laws of made by the South African government; He started his first newspaper 'Indian Opinion' in 1903, to unite Indian people and raise their voice against discrimination. He wrote about how 'Indian Opinion' was important for him, he stated "Indian Opinion... was a part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns and expounded the principles and practice of Satyagraha as I understood it. During 10 years, that is until 1914, excepting the intervals of my enforced rest in prison there was hardly an issue of 'Indian Opinion' without an article from me". (Gupta, 2001)

Through the publication of 'Indian Opinion' he became voice of voiceless people. He wrote about journalistic ethics "In the very first month of Indian Opinion, I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countryside's and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within." (Gandhi, 2018). He followed these principles in his entire life.

He lived in South Africa for twenty years and started struggle against the South African government through his writings in the newspaper. He succeeded in uniting Indian people and minimizing their harassment by white people. During this period, his journalism also got recognition in South Africa and abroad. Unique quality of his journalism and leadership enabled him to achieve extraordinary results. His name and fame had spread beyond the boundaries of South Africa.

### In the service of motherland

In 1915, Gandhi returned to India and travelled to rural India to know the problems of farmers and rural people. He visited Champaran in Bihar in 1917, to witness the tyranny and atrocities of the white indigo planters over the peasants. After knowing the truth about the tyranny of peasants he started first 'Satyagraha', in Champaran. This 'Satyagraha' proved as a beginning of new chapter in India's independence struggle. Thereafter he led the Indian nationalist movement and used 'Satyagraha' as a powerful tool of civilian resistance against British rulers.

In India Mahatma Gandhi started 'Young India' and 'Navjeevan' newspapers to lead a mass movement against British Rule. The Navajivan first appeared on October 7, 1919. The Young India was published from October 8, 1919. Gandhi made it

*In India Mahatma Gandhi started 'Young India' and 'Navjeevan' newspapers to lead a mass movement against British Rule. The Navajivan first appeared on October 7, 1919.*

clear in Young India, that “I have taken up journalism not for its own sake but, mainly as an aid to what I have conceived to be mission of my life. My mission is to teach by example and percept under severe restraint the use of matchless weapon of Styagraha”. (Bhattacharya, 1969)

He started ‘Harijan’ newspaper from 11 February 1933, to spread the message of removal of untouchability. Gandhi was aware that the newspapers are the most powerful medium to spread his ideas. His message has been reached to the 40 million people in India through these newspapers.

Gandhi made it clear that what should be the role of a newspaper. He wrote in his autobiography, “One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand popular feeling and give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments; and third is fearlessly to expose popular defects” (Narain, 1965).

He was a successful journalist, but he never used journalism for business purposes. For him, journalism was a service and should never be used for personal interest or money. In India, he did not carry any newspaper losses. The circulation of his newspapers was around 40 thousand. He never published any sensational news in his newspapers. He knows that if he wants to win the hearts of people through his journalistic writings, then he must use journalism differently.

Veteran journalist Ramoji Rao wrote that “He (Gandhiji) said there could be no room for untruth in his writings, because, it was his unshakeable belief that there is no religion other than truth” (Rao, 2005).

Mahatma Gandhi was arrested by the British police on March 10 in 1922 for writing three ‘politically sensitive’ articles in ‘*Young India*’. Gandhi was sentenced to a six-year jail term, but was released after two years due to illness. He started again the publication of newspapers, he believed that his newspaper might be suppressed by government, but his thoughts could not be suppressed.

Gandhi wanted to change the mindset of people through his writings. He always sought to remove the misunderstanding between the British and the Indians, He wrote many articles, to convey his views to the people in order to succeed in the India’s independence movement. He used to write his own articles in Hindi, English, Gujarati and Urdu. He never published any sensational news in his newspapers. He used to write on satyagraha, non-violence, food, natural medicine, Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability, khadi, , rural economy and many other subjects. He admitted that “My newspapers became for me a training ground in self-control and a means for studying human nature in all its shades and variations. Without the newspapers a movement like Satyagraha could not have been possible. (Balaji, 2011).

Gandhi’s newspapers never accepted advertisements. For him Journalism was not a business but it was a tool of public service. He writes about it in autobiography “From the very start I set my face against taking advertisements in these journals. I do not think that they have lost anything thereby. On the contrary, it is my belief that it has in no small measure helped them to maintain their independence” (Gandhi, 2018).

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He never surrendered to the pressure of advertisers and advertisements. He thinks that if he accepts advertisements in his newspaper, then he will not be able to maintain the freedom of his thoughts and truth. He proved that despite the absence of advertisements, newspapers can become popular and they can do business for a long time. Today's editors should accept the ideals set by him.

Printing and publishing of newspapers in those days was not easy task. Mahatma Gandhi had faced many problems due to technical shortcomings. He was unable to increase printed copies of newspapers on demand. He had to work harder for writing in newspapers. He described in 'Young India' (2nd July 1925) how many labors he has committed for this writing in these words "To be true to my faith I may not write in anger or malice. I may not write idly. I may not write merely to excite passion. The reader can have no idea of the restraint I have to exercise from week-to week in the choice of topics and my vocabulary" (Gonsalves, 2010).

Mahatma Gandhi was true journalist and he devoted his whole life for the betterment of people and nation. In his entire life he has tried to raise the voice of voiceless people. He was great communicator and journalist of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Conclusion

Journalism was the only factor that transformed Mohandas Gandhi into Mahatma Gandhi. The sole aim of his journalism was to serve the voiceless people. Gandhi played the role of a true journalist and for more than 40 years he worked as journalist and editor. He started Indian Opinion newspaper in South Africa. He started Young India, navjeevan and Harijan newspapers in India. His communication was based mainly on three principles i) Truth (Satyagraha), ii) Non-violence (Ahimsa); and iii) Welfare of all (Sarvodaya). Gandhi was a great communicator of twentieth century. He proved that pen is mightier than English empire. He fought for, exploited citizens of South Africa and India. His all newspapers were views papers. Gandhi's practice of journalism set high ethical and moral standard by practicing mass oriented and value based journalism. He changed the world through his journalism, philosophy and leadership.

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# Mahatma Gandhi's Perspective of Journalism and Present Scenario

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## Abstract

*Journalism has four reasons for it being to inform, to interpret, to guide and to entertain. However, Bond has included to advertise the function of Journalism to advertise in his definition. It is true that advertising and campaigning is not the soul motto of the Journalism. On the Contrary, moral education is the significant objective of the Journalism. Mahatma Gandhi's role as a Journalist is more significant because, he also never believed in advertising as a function of Journalism. It is interesting to note that Mahatma Gandhi published all his newspapers such as Indian Opinion, Harijan, Navajeevan and Young India without any commercial advertising. Gandhi's basic perspective of Journalism was based on moral education and character building. On the basis of all these deliberations about Gandhi's role as a journalist. It would be interesting to conclude that he was ahead of his times He was always thinking about bright future of India and Indians. What he manifested in the hind Swaraj in 1907 was reflected in his journalistic writings. He has written buniadhi shiksha or nai thalim as a manual of Indian education and he tried to connect head, heart and hand of the young people to the soil of India. He was always thinking about emancipating Bharat Matha through the clutches of british rule. Truly enough through his journalism also, he connected head, heart and hand to the soil of india. He has tackled all the problems related to agriculture, khadhi and village industry, education, eradication of untouchability and prohibition of liquor effectively through his writings. He also championed moral vlues and character building as solid base of nation building. His high magnitude of social service was based on selfless karmayog which was base of his journalism. The search of truth, respect to freedom and responsibility, objectivity, impartiality, fearlessness, fairplay where the basic principles of his moral and spiritual journalism. He had studied and practiced the ethics and morality of journalism in righteous manner. To him fact finding and truthfulness was a part of liberating Saty. He also followed principles of ahimsa through his writings and never hurt feelings of anybody by crossing the moral borders. He followed the principles of saty and never copied any part from others writings. He followed a principle of parigraha by avoiding advertising and profit making. Self restrain was his basic principles which lead down objective criticism. Thus, it would be interesting to conclude that Gandhi was stalwart Indian journalist who opened a new age of value oriented journalism. He established the via media, i.e., golden mean between political freedom and social reformation.*

*He persuaded both in a balance manner. Like other three states of democracy, press has a fourth state is a powerful means of nation building and to establish social democracy. He used language journalism in a right manner: If democracy is a government for the people, by the people, of the people. Journalism should always be mass best and it should tackle national problems and try to develop solutions to these problems. Thus Saty and seva was dharma of Gandhi's journalism. In 21st Century also Indian journalism can learn lessons for nation building from Gandhi's philosophy and action as a journalist. Press for mass awakening and press for nation building can be described as message of his role model.*

**Keywords:** Journalism, Social Service Journalism, Karma Yog, Character building.

### Introduction

Journalism has four reasons for it being to inform, to interpret, to guide and to entertain. However, Bond has included to advertise the function of Journalism to advertise in his definition. It is true that advertising and campaigning is not the soul moto of the Journalism. On the contrary, moral education is the significant objective of the Journalism. Mahatma Gandhi's role as a Journalist is more significant because, he also never believed in advertising as a function of Journalism. It is interesting to note that Mahatma Gandhi published all his newspapers such as *Indian Opinion*, *Harijan*, *Navajeevan* and *Young India* without any commercial advertising. Gandhi's basic perspective of Journalism was based on moral education and character building. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Indian Press is growing in number and not in quality. The moral and ethical role of newspapers is declining. Hence, in this context, understanding of Gandhian perspective of Journalism is highly relevant today than ever before.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was political guru of Mahatma Gandhi. He was thorough liberal and democratic. Gokhale believed that freedom of expression is the solid foundation of Swaraj. If you attack on the freedom of expression, then, every existence of Swaraj will come down.

### Philosophy of Gandhian Journalism

Journalism of any age or vibrant journalism of any mass line communicator is based on his gospel and philosophy. Hence, it would be fitting to understand the philosophy of Gandhian Journalism in a clear cut perspective.

Like his guru Gokhale, Gandhi also strongly believed in freedom of expression, he felt that freedom of expression is significant from individual and media as an institution. IN the post-independence period, except 19 months of emergency in 1975-76. India was always enjoying freedom of press in the early period when opposition was weak, the press played the role of opposition parties and maintained the balance of power in the democratic system. Mahatma Gandhi believed that press is not a tool of publicity but it is a means to serve the people.

In the morden age, Journalism has become more commercial and market driven.

*Gandhi also strongly believed in freedom of expression, he felt that freedom of expression is significant from individual and media as an institution.*



In this age of mediated communication, the role of press should be free from profit motives and it should serve the people to attain maximum public welfare in maximum number. Freedom and morality was essence of Gandhian Journalism. Antyodaya – A rise of last man was aim of Gandhian welfare ideas and his Journalism also aimed to serve common man for his well-being and uplifting. In hind Swaraj, Gandhiji pointed that my nation and democracy will be that in which weakest of weak must get same opportunity as strongest of strong.

Thus it is interesting to note that Gandhiji wanted to serve poor oppressed and weaker section of the society. He also believed in Gender Equality. In order to take the fruits of the development in the lowest corner of Indian Villages, he developed the concept of gramaswaraj and grama sarvodhay – the rise of everybody. Acharya Vinoba bharve conceptualised this as “*Samyayog*” ie., Equality based on humanity, based on spiritual equality. Mahatama Gandhi’s journalism reflected this philosophy in the most effective manner. In total, he published press material written in 75,000 pages which is spread in his major news papers from South Africa to India. Navjeevan was in Gujarati Language and Harijan was published in 12 Indian Languages. The weekly Young India was totally in English Language and during quit Indian movement, 1942, his newspapers were on the peak point. The climax of his newspapers can be witnessed during his revolutionary phase. All the moments ideological frames and programs of his mass campaign were accelerated and geared up through his newspapers. Thus Gandhi Journalism cannot be separated from his philosophy of Social Service and public welfare.

Mahatma Gandhi believed in moral and spiritual Journalism. He called on people for spiritualisation of politics and spiritualisation of every walk of life. To him, True Journalism was also reflection of spiritual ideas. Gandhiji pointed out that Give the people what they want but give them something they want.

The cities clear that Gandhi wanted to provide information and knowledge based on moral values. He was not a filler but a philosopher who developed Journalism as a vehicle of social service and a national awakening. The attainment of freedom was a goal of Gandhi Journalism and he felt that now is time of accede test for our newspapers. They should not blindly follow congress but they can also criticise.

Thus, Gandhi was open for fair and objective criticism, Gandhi’s vision of journalism was transparent fair and just like a mirror. His ideal pathway must be followed by Indian Press for bringing a new age of awakening in the post-independence period.

According to passin, whenever there is a change in language society and science, there arises a new age in Journalism. Mahatma Gandhi promoted language journalism and is Harijan was published in major Indian languages like, Lokmanye Tilak Kesari. His gujarati paper Navjivan was a foundation of his political awakening. “One of the objects of a newspaper,” said Gandhiji, “is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it; another to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments and the third is fearlessly to express popular defects.” All these three objectives were clearly reflected in all of his newspapers which were closely connected with public feelings and mass awakening.

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## Salient Features

In Indian society, there was ignorance and stagnation. Gandhi wanted to provide new ideals and new values for the rebuilding of young India. About social perspective of Gandhi's Journalism, Sailendra Chatterjee has observed that, through his journals the Mahatma had not only propagated his views but laid down a unique standard in journalism. The base of his standard was moral and ethical which is also useful for the modern Indian press.

### Features of Gandhi's Journalism

There is a need to understand the salient features of Mahatma Gandhi's Journalism. He was ahead of his times and he was able to peep beyond century. The following snapshots can be drawn out of his newspapers and journalistic practices.

Promotion of freedom movement was solid foundation of Gandhi's Journalism. He wanted to arouse feelings of people in favour of Independence. It has been rightly noted that, he was a man of the masses and wrote about their problems, feelings and aspirations. His human approach gave his writings a unique character. His idea was to educate the people through his writings about the significance of independence political, economic and social. Through his newspaper writings, Gandhi was able to develop national perspective based on patriotism, social service and sacrifice for re-building India.

Gandhi began his career in London as a Journalist where he wrote some interesting articles to promote Indian culture. It has been observed that At the age of nineteen Gandhiji went to London and for the first time read a newspaper. "In India," he wrote in his autobiography, "I had never read a newspaper." He became ambitious to write articles and began to contribute in the Vegetarian the journal of the Vegetarian Society of England. During his three year stay in London, he contributed nine articles in that journal on diet, customs, festivals etc. of India. This gave him an opportunity to become a freelance journalist.

Gandhi also contributed on fine peace on the storm he witnessed on sea. This shows he had bend towards Journalism to describe conditions around him.

Gandhi was always burning on Indian's exploitation in Africa. He wrote series of articles in Dadhabhai Naroji's newspapers about conditions of Indian labour in South Africa. During boer war, he also played a role as War Correspondent which enhanced his confidence and with this experience he decided to launch his own newspaper "Indian Opinion, at Natal, in South Africa.

Gandhi published a newspaper with non-profit motive for social service. M. Chalapathi Rau has pointed out that According to Chalapathi Raju, himself an eminent editor, Gandhi was probably the greatest journalist of all time, and the weeklies he ran and edited were probably the greatest weeklies the world has known. He published no advertisement; at the same time he did not want his newspapers to run at a loss. Truly, Gandhi manifested first ideal example in the world by publishing newspapers without advertisement.

*Gandhi wanted to provide new ideals and new values for the rebuilding of young India.*

Right from beginning, Gandhi published his newspapers in Indian Languages. Indian Opinion was published in English, Tamil, Gujarati which was able to create awakening among masses effectively.

Gandhi's communication was easy and effective through his newspapers, he promoted heart to heart communication. V.S.Gupta has remarked that He wrote simply and clearly but forcefully, with passion and burning indignation. The success of his writing depends on his method of effective communication to involve persuade and transform public opinion.

Gandhi embraced journalism as a means of social service and not as vocation of profit making. In young India of 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1925, he has expressed his views that "I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and present under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of satyagraha which is a direct corollary of nonviolence".

This ideas rightly reflect about his mission in a clear cut manner.

Gandhi was very much clear and he vividly reflected the effects of powerful writings through journalism. In his autobiography: "The sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countryside and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this line of reasoning is correct, how many journals of the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless? and who should be the judge? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil. go on together, and man must make his choice.

His newspapers were vehicle of political philosophy of satyagraha about role played by Indian Opinion. Gandhiji himself pointed out that 'Indian Opinion... was a part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns and expounded the principles and practice of satyagraha as I understood it. During 10 years that is until 1914 accepting the intervals of my enforced rest in prison there was hardly an issue of 'Indian Opinion' without an article from me. I cannot recall a word in these articles set down without thought or deliberation or word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed the journal became for me a training in self restraint and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts.' The critics found very little to which they could object. In fact, the tone of 'Indian Opinion' compelled the critics to put a curb on his palm.

Thus the experiment of Indian opinion raised his confidence and he developed his thoughts and action with later newspapers.

Gandhiji was able to awaken millions of rural Indians through his newspapers. Gupta has observed that Thus Gandhi was focussing on Indian Language journalism to arouse public opinion of villagers. The two journals 'Young India' and 'Navjivan' were used by him to ventilate his views and to educated the public on Satyagraha

*Gandhi was very much clear and he vividly reflected the effects of powerful writings through journalism.*

. In 1933 Gandhi started ‘*Harijan*’, ‘*Harijanbandhu*’, ‘*Harijansevak*’ in English, Gujarati and Hindi, respectively. These newspapers were the vehicles of his crusade against untouchability and poverty in rural areas.

Gandhi was confident about the Ethical role of newspaper. Gandhi opined that In my humble opinion, it is wrong to use a newspaper as a means of earning a living. There are certain spheres of work which are of such consequence and have such bearing on public welfare that to undertake them for earning one’s livelihood will defeat the primary aim behind them. When, further a newspaper is treated as a means of making profits, the result is likely to be serious malpractices. It is not necessary to prove to those who have some experience of journalism that such malpractices do prevail on a large scale. He was of the opinion, ‘Newspapers are meant primarily to educate the people’.

Gandhi was able to understand the role of newspapers in the education of people about contemporary happenings. Powerful and effective ideas were soul of Gandhi’s journalism. He was able to transplant his views effectively. B. R. Nanda has observed that Gandhi’s journals were read by his political opponents and by the British officials as well as the Congress leaders because Gandhi used his journals for loud thinking.

Thus Gandhi was successful in launching his new ideas through his newspapers which he began from Indian Opinion.

Gandhi’s newspapers were forum of discussion and debate. B. R. Nanda has remarked that, this process was very useful for building public opinion against the british raj. The importance of the journals edited by Gandhi-Indian Opinion, Young India, Navajivan and Harijan—is that he used them to propagate his views through persuasion, discussion and debate. He opened up the columns of these journals even to his critics. He published their criticisms and then answered them.

This method was unique and was able to involve huge Indian population against the British raj. The right Judgement of men was a great capacity of Mahatma Gandhi. He developed a team of journalist even in Africa and India. B. R. Nanda has correctly focussed that Gandhi was a genius in spotting talent and harnessing it for the causes for which he fought. In South Africa, Chhaganlal Gandhi managed the Gujarati section of Indian Opinion. Albert West, a European journalist, switched to Indian Opinion, which drew self-sacrificing loyalties of persons like Henry Polak and his wife. In India Gandhi acquired the life-long assistance of able and devoted men like Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal. Mahadev Desai was among the select band of disciples, mostly centered in Gandhi’s ashram’s, who completely identified themselves with the Mahatma. Team of expert and loyal followers was made possible for launching a war of ideas against British raj.

*Gandhi opined that it is wrong to use a newspaper as a means of earning a living.*

Gandhi’s effective and simple language was just like a jewel of his journalism. It has been noted that the beauty of his thoughts and language made deep impression on some of the great men of our age. His language and style of presentation was quite fascinating. Gandhi was always fearless at any point of debate. It is true that A

journalist's duty is to teach people to be brave, not to instill fear into them. Gandhi was always objective and balanced in his writings. Gandhi believed in moral and spiritual value of journalism. B. P. Sanjay has rightly commented that Gandhian scholarship is replete with lessons and principles that the Father of Nation has sought to imbibe in us. Journalism is one noble profession whose power and responsibility he firmly believed.

Thus the role of Gandhi as journalist should be projected in modern India in right sense which can be model for new journalist. Now there is a need to understand the relevance of Gandhi as Journalist in 21<sup>st</sup> Century. His ideas are relevant even today for refreshing minds and souls of upcoming Indian Journalists. The model that Gandhi developed is very much useful for enlightening the young minds of India. The fragrance of Gandhi thought is still fresh and it has abilities to change the environment from negative to positive side. His selfless service as a journalist had created a breach through which many journalists have followed the track and created a role model of selfless service. Now is the high time to re-understand Gandhi's ideals of social journalism. The role relevance and affectivity of Gandhi's journalism is very much effective and igniting in the current situation. Let us treat Indian's Journalism as a prism. The basic light is moral and ethical journalism. Indian Journalism can be developed as spectrum of continuity and change. Today there is a threat of stereotype tunnel journalism. In order to overcome such a stagnating situation, Gandhi's ideals can inspire to turn the tables in favour of national reconstruction. Wiping the corruption and irregularities from the grass root can be possible only on the basis of value oriented journalism. There is a need of new deal in our national life. We have reform agriculture, recover industries and give relief from unemployment. This can be possible on the basis of vibrant and fearless journalism. We have to safe guard freedom of journalism along with moral and spiritual base of values. Navneet Anand has rightly echoed that Gandhiji's reliance on mass media to mould public opinion and aid political mobilisation shows some of his successful experiments in journalism.

The relevance of Gandhi can be rightly understood on the basis of these ideals. It has been further observed that The genesis of Gandhi's reliance on mass media and his usage of newspapers and journals to generate public opinion and political mobilisation can be traced back to his struggle in South Africa.

He further developed his experiments in a very mature way. He was always connected to masses and moments. Hence, Gandhi's journalism can be described as Mass Line Journalism. His actions during roulette act, dandi march, salt satyagraha as well as his steps at jalianwala bagh incident were clear cut examples of his vibrant journalism. He openly attacked the policies of Britishers and fought for protection of national interest. He was able to understand the pulses of public opinion. It is true that *The Indian Opinion* continuously carried a vivid portrayal of the sufferings of the Indian community. Back in India, during the Non-Cooperation movement Gandhi took on the editorship of the *Young India* and the *Navjivan*. Introducing the two journals to his readers, Gandhi wrote, "...With much striving I have formulated some principles for my life and put them into practice...it is my sincere aspiration to place these principles before India and share my happiness with her".

*The fragrance of Gandhi thought is still fresh and it has abilities to change the environment from negative to positive side.*

Thus all of his newspapers from Indian Opinion to Young India were closely connected to mass movement and mass awakening. He was able to transform his ideas to the masses through the newspapers. He fully explored the latent energy of his newspapers and followed it as a means of super conductivity. He was able to transform his ideas speedily and sharply through his newspapers. He touched minds and hearts of million of people and awakened them against the British raj. He was able to create vibrant public opinion on basis of new ideas and he was able to reflect new vision and new perspective for the bright future of Indian democracy. He knew that press and mass media should play an effective role in developing country like India which was divided in cast, communities and vernas. He was able to foster democratic values like liberty equality, fraternity and social justice. He had a strong spiritual base of vedas and upanishads. He was able to derive the principle of satyagraha from Ishawasy Upanishad. Gandhiji truly reflected the karma yog, basic principle of Gita. The cardinal principle of journalism was selfless social service. "Maa Phaleshu Kadhachan" was the principle which had driven him to publish newspapers without advertising. The editors role is of a messenger or angel of change. He believed that Editor is a light liberator and protector of democracy. One after another all the six newspapers which Gandhiji published had a strong moral and spiritual base. Truly enough spiritualisation of journalism can be described as mission of his life.

### Conclusion

On the basis of all these deliberations about Gandhi's role as a journalist. It would be interesting to conclude that he was ahead of his times He was always thinking about bright future of India and Indians. What he manifested in the hind Swaraj in 1907 was reflected in his journalistic writings. He has written buniadhi shiksha or nai thalim as a manual of Indian education and he tried to connect head, heart and hand of the young people to the soil of India. He was always thinking about imancipating Bharat Matha through the clutches of british rule. Truly enough through his journalism also, he connected head, heart and hand to the soil of india. Gandhi has tackled all the problems related to agriculture, khadhi and village industry, education, eradication of untouchability and prohibition of liquor effectively through his writings. He also championed moral vlues and character building as solid base of nation building. His high magnitude of social service was based on selfless karmayog which was base of his journalism. The search of truth, respect to freedom and responsibility, objectivity, impartiality, fearlessness, fairplay where the basic principles of his moral and spiritual journalism. He had studied and practiced the ethics and morality of journalism in righteous manner. To him fact finding and truthfulness was a part of liberating *Saty*. He also followed principles of ahimsa through his writings and never hurt feelings of anybody by crossing the moral borders. He followed the principles of saty and never copied any part from others writings. He followed a principle of parigraha by avoiding advertising and profit making. Self restrain was his basic principles which lead down objective criticism. Thus, it would be interesting to conclude that Gandhi was stalwart Indian journalist who opened a new age of value oriented journalism. He established the via media, i.e., golden mean between political freedom and social reformation. He persuaded both in a balance manner. Like other three states of democracy, press has a fourth state is a powerful means

*Gandhi has tackled all the problems related to agriculture, khadhi and village industry, education, eradication of untouchability and prohibition of liquor effectively through his writings.*

of nation building and to establish social democracy. He used language journalism in a right manner. If democracy is a government for the people, by the people, of the people. Journalism should always be mass best and it should tackle national problems and try to develop solutions to these problems. Thus Saty and seva was dharma of Gandhi's journalism. In 21st Century also Indian journalism can learn lessons for nation building from Gandhi's philosophy and action as a journalist. Press for mass awakening and press for nation building can be described as message of his role model.

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## Visualizing Gandhi in the Digital Age: A Review of Gandhi's Communication Practices

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### Abstract

*M. K. Gandhi rise to a position of tremendous social influence can be attributed to a large extent to his communication strategies, which allowed him to achieve his strategic goals. The tools of communication at his disposal were publications, public meetings and one-to-one interactions via personal meeting and correspondence. Given the technological and logistic limitations of the time, his influence was unusually widespread. This paper projects M. K. Gandhi and his communication strategies in 21st Century with the tools available in the digital age and envisages how successful they would be in present scenario. The paper also visualizes the impact of Gandhian campaigning methods for social and political revolution in the context of digital devices and tools. The success of Gandhian communication in digital age is assessed on factors such as outreach, popularity, social impact, global communication, media industry and social networking dynamics.*

**Keywords:** Gandhi, Communication Strategies, Gandhi as Communicator, Conceptual Research on Gandhi

### Introduction

To visualize someone who is known for effective communication, especially in trying times, Mohandas K. Gandhi's is undeniably one of the best and there is ample evidence to support the claim. One of the key features of Gandhi's success was his command on communication. His influence in contemporary politics of the era and the India's freedom struggle is recognized in numerous records, academic literature and journalistic output pertaining to the time. Evidence suggests that Gandhi's ability to drive masses was crucial for India's independence from colonial rule, and it was an outcome of the communications strategies applied by Gandhi in interpersonal, public and media communications.

It is important to note that the scale of Gandhi's popularity and influence existed in a time where mass media were limited to a largely regulated print media, mostly

*The paper also visualizes the impact of Gandhian campaigning methods for social and political revolution in the context of digital devices and tools.*



newspapers. The radio was completely controlled by the British colonial government and media like television were non-existent. This makes the popularity and influence of Gandhi amongst the masses even more peculiar and noteworthy.

All change, including social change is constant. And as history suggests, it is both possible and probable that we as a society might have to question our independence and sovereignty in future, and struggles for democracy could once again be necessary. We do not mean to imply that such a time would necessarily arrive in near future but in the grand scheme of things, one cannot assume.

It is also likely that leaders such as Gandhi might once again surface and lead the masses towards achieving their collective community goals. One question that is worth pondering upon is how Gandhi's communication practices would work in a time, where communication channels have an overwhelming presence, thanks to digital technologies and innovations. While we cannot project the state of communication technologies and access to them by masses in the distant future, we do have the ability to assess where they are today. With this caveat in place, we do have the ability to visualize Gandhi and his communication strategies in the current era.

Firstly, we shall identify Gandhi's communication practices via literature review. Then we shall establish conditions and assumptions under which we are to visualize M. K. Gandhi's position in present times. With the conditions and assumptions in place, we shall in position to project Gandhi's communication success in present times, with hopes that it aids future leaders to devise their own strategies, should the socio-political situations demand them.

### Literature Review

Joshi, D. P. (1996). Gandhi as a Political Communicator. Published doctoral thesis at Department of Political Science, SNDT Women's University. (URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/119528>.) The thesis explains Gandhi's communication practices in detail. In addition, it outlines that he used fasts, prayers, prayer meetings, padyatras, social and cultural symbols to communicate context to his audiences. It also outlines his fundamental moral principles being truth, non-violence, sincerity, morality, self-purification and harmony in thought and action. There is emphasis laid on Gandhi's principles of "Ahimsa" (non-violence) and satyagraha (revolution by truth). It outlines various incidents such as Chauri Chaura and Dandi march and explains in detail how Gandhi's social communication techniques magnified his impact among the masses and was able to drive people towards a common goal, which also included his ability to make news that would be newsworthy. There is an exploration of Gandhi's philosophies of communal harmony and social justice. Techniques of propaganda are further explored. Gandhi used public relations and personal contacts, tours and peaceful assemblies like sabhas, padyatra and prabhat pheris for communication. His engagement of newspapers is also explained.

*There is emphasis laid on Gandhi's principles of "Ahimsa" (non-violence) and satyagraha (revolution by truth).*

Bode, Robert. A (1995). Mahatma Gandhi's Theory of Non-Violent Communication. Annual Meeting of the Western States Communication Association. (Portland,OR, February 10-14, 1995). The paper identifies that Gandhi's theory of non-violent communication comprises of four units: nonviolent speech and action; maintenance of relationships and enrichment of personhood; openness; and flexibility. It also identifies that Gandhi's theory may be thought of useful in intra-personal and interpersonal communication contexts; in small and large group contexts, and in mass or international communication contexts; and such communication serves utility in achieving the goal of principled pacifism and harmonious society. It is outlined that Gandhi's communication theory involves one's willingness and desire to communicate, to change, co-create a social reality, or to yield if so persuaded by sound argument.

Babu, K. J. (2014). "Gandhi's Persuasive Communication and Ideal Journalism". GITAM Journal of Gandhian Studies (Vol. 3 No. 2 pp. 451-464 June-December 2014.) The paper summarizes Gandhi's practices of journalism and usage of mass media as a tool for public influence; and his ideas of ethics in journalism, with special emphasis on denial of revenue from immoral advertising. The paper also expanded on Gandhian ideas of peace journalism and development journalism.

Kakadia, D. (2016) Mahatma: A Great Communicator. The book is sequenced in the context of Gandhi's communication skills: his verbal output, his linguistic capacity, his journalistic and letter-writing style, his peace communication in conflict, his organizational ability, international repercussions of his mass-mediated messages and the somewhat inexplicable phenomenon of his non-verbal communication. The author says it's in fact quite fascinating how he used non-verbal methods as incisive tools to cut the clutter in communication. Examples abound – like his use of silence, fasting, clothing, food habits, personal presence and charisma.

Arifon, O. (2017). "Gandhi and Communication: Respecting One's Feelings and Those of the Other." (Gandhi Marg, Volume 38, Number 2, July-September, 2017.) The paper views Gandhi's three pronged approach to communication: Interpersonal; symbolic dimension of actions; and media dimension. In interpersonal dimension explores listening, persuading, assertion and non-verbal communication, where empathy and emotion are vital elements. The symbolic dimension attempts to bring out the linkage between an individual action and a collective project, in accordance with the approach dear to ethnomethodology. Also, this dimension delineates the communication capacities of political actors. Media dimension speaks of Gandhi's usage of 4 newspapers: Young India, Navjeevan, Sevak and Harijan. The paper also outlines specific practices by Gandhi towards communication.

*The paper summarizes Gandhi's practices of journalism and usage of mass media as a tool for public influence.*

Tripathi, A.C., Nagaraj, K.V. (2014). "Exploring Gandhian Communication for Sustainable Rural Development in India". (International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research, Vol.2.,Issue 4, pp:(211-219), Month: October-December 2014. ISSN 2348-3156 (P), 2348-3164 (O). The Gandhian theory of development is based on the ideologies of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi's ideas on development are embedded in his philosophy of life. The body of Gandhian thought on development is as follows: (i) the Gandhian philosophy of economic concepts that are related to

development (ii) Gandhian principles of self-sufficiency (iii) the Gandhian theory of balanced growth (iv) the Gandhian doctrine of trusteeship (v) Gandhian model of sustainable development (vi) the Gandhian sarvodaya plan (vii) Gandhian concepts of austerity and abstinence.

Patnaik, B. N. (2015). Gandhi as communicator. *Recuperado el*, 10(06), 2015. The paper presents a qualitative analysis of Gandhi's communication via idioms and symbols in the documented examples of his communication. It is highlighted that Gandhi was able to shape his communication to maximize the impact amongst the common man. Even though his talks were not populist and often incomprehensible or unacceptable by people at large. Yet Gandhi was a successful communicator and was able to influence people in his favour.. The paper argues that communications models are not concerned with the message being communicated, and Gandhi's examples prove that it is important to treat contents of the message to understand why some communicators are more successful at influencing masses than others.

### Assumptions

This exploration concerns with placing Gandhi directly in the digital era, circa 2018 A.D. The first assumption we need to make for the study of Replacement and Cascade Effect: if Gandhi exists in present time, his contributions and role in the freedom struggle in 1800s and 1900s were performed by other leaders so that the current socio-political realities remain largely the same, including India's independence from colonial rule, the adoption of the Constitution of India etc. The second assumption made is of Similar Access to Communication Technology by the Public: therefore we can assume that print, electronic and new media can used in a manner similar to the way they are done today, and our knowledge of their dynamics can be applied in the model directly. The third assumption we will need to make is the Existence of a Potential Threat to Democratic Order: which would prompt a leader like Gandhi to emerge and launch campaigns against the oppressive rule and hence Gandhi's campaign strategies can be applied in the assumed context. The fourth assumption made is about that the Heterogeneity of the society is the same as today: meaning that all demographics, political ideologies on the left-right and authoritarian-libertarian spectrum remain the same, population, levels of education and wealth distribution remain same as present time, so that social dynamics of the present time will be applicable to the model.

### Parameters Of Interest

In the exploration, we are interested in the following parameters:

- Popularity of Gandhi,
- Outreach of Gandhi's communication in the age of Information overload,
- Social impact of Gandhi's communication,
- Aspect of global communication structures,
- Role of contemporary media industry and
- Dynamics of new media communications.

*Assumptions*  
1. Replacement and Cascade Effect:  
2. Similar Access to Communication Technology by the Public:  
3. Existence of a Potential Threat to Democratic Order:  
4. Heterogeneity of the society is the same as today

Taking into consideration the assumptions made, Gandhi's influence and impact on modern society reflects an interesting dynamic. It would be necessary to consider three dimensions of his communication practice: interpersonal communication (one-to-one); group communication (one-to-many, direct) and media communication (one-to-many, indirect). For the purposes of this projection, we would need to assume that his group communication entails his coordinated new media communications and public relations effort, thereby making this dimension the most impactful of the three dimensions in achieving his objectives. However, due to the nature of communications in modern era, the lines between interpersonal communication and group communication seem to blur, as he could be addressing every individual at the same time, using social media or webinars etc. Even the distinctions between his new media/public relations wing and media communications would be often blurred, as most audio-visual based media would allow Gandhi to directly address audiences or relay his direct messages in their own programming. Due to these ambiguities, it would make more sense to speak of all three dimensions collectively, as opposed to viewing each of them as a distinct function - mainly because the effect of each dimension would overlap with the other two. The nature of media and communications in digital age seem to make all the difference in how Gandhi's communication affects the public.

### Competing in the Communication Race

For a revolutionary leader such as Gandhi to spark a revolution for democracy/democratic order, he would essentially need to compete with the communication traffic and competing communicators. It would be pertinent to consider that Gandhi's popularity rose in a society which was heterogeneous, but at the same time, was largely against the colonial rule, hence Gandhi's appeal acted as a catalyst for mobilization against a common nemesis. Should we be in a democratic or constitutional crisis in the future and the oppressors were not of foreign origins, we are likely to witness a stronger polarization in the communities with persons supporting and opposing Gandhi, his ideas and methods. This is further pushed by the fact that supporters, opposers and neutral players all have access to digital communication machinery: consisting of print media, television, radio, internet forums, online news portals, social networks, messaging platforms and media hosting services. Gandhi's communication would therefore require a dedicated coordinated team-efforts to successfully compete with other voices in the mass communication space.

*A revolutionary leader such as Gandhi to spark a revolution for democracy / democratic order, he would essentially need to compete with the communication traffic and competing communicators.*

As Chomsky indicates in Manufacturing Consent, the mass media is essentially a propaganda tool and can be used to create narratives around social phenomenon and personalities. Although Gandhi also faced smear campaigns and libel in his time, the reach and effect of such campaigns is compounded in the digital age, where there are more content creators as well as consumers. Therefore, Gandhi would need to rely on his team of dedicated communicators to tackle such situations, and play the role of a manager much more than a communicator, else he would be wound up in an endless cycle of replying to each smear and lose track of his original communication strategy.

We would also deal with the phenomenon of Information Overload, meaning that Gandhi's communication not only competes with his opposition, but all kinds of content that would try to grab attention of masses. This has been evident in cases of Irom Sharmila and Professor G.D. Agarwal, among many others, whose protests faced significant competition from information overload.

Professor G.D. Agarwal in fact observed a Gandhi-style fast unto death for government inaction towards cleansing of the Ganges river, and managed to make more headlines after he died as a consequence. At best, information overload is an obstacle that can be overcome by coordinated strategy, which Gandhi had demonstrated in the independence struggle as well. A strong campaign can ensure that Gandhi's name is known by masses and some kind of opinion has been formed by people, whether or not it is favourable. Word-of-Mouth communication also plays a significant role in popularity even today. Gandhi in his own time had proven that he had the ability to spread the word amongst the masses.

### **Driving a People's Movement**

One of the important features of digital era is that it is much easier to organize and educate minorities and oppressed classes than it was in pre-independence era. It is not only facilitated by access to communication devices and platforms by the members of these communities, but also the ease of organizing volunteers and staffers to spread the word around and manually organize the communities, and educate them on their rights. Much in the light of how Dakota Access Pipeline protests were able to spread like wildfire in the U.S. in 2016, because of social media, Gandhi would be able to gather volunteers to organize protestors from all over the world and help local communities in their individual protests.

In the digital age, Gandhi also has the advantage of using recorded information that has accumulated on the web space since the advent of communication technologies. This means that he has the ability to tell people how other oppressed classes in the world were able to achieve their goals and fulfil their aspirations against all odds. This is consistent with Gandhi's values of truth and honesty. Ability to organize people's movements with the help of technology means that such demonstrations can happen more frequently and with greater number of participants, which can magnify the impact of such demonstrations. Likewise the sense of brotherhood and unity he inspired in people through practices like prayer meetings and peaceful assemblies can be organized with greater ease.

### **Will Gandhi be the First Leader of His Kind?**

A challenge Gandhi would face is the issue of uniqueness. If Gandhi were to exist in digital age and the assumption of Replacement and Cascade are to hold, there would be leaders like Gandhi in the past who would have used practices of Gandhi and followed the same philosophical principles as Gandhi. This would imply that Gandhi's practices in digital age would not be unique to him and he would be accused of copying other leaders. Gandhi's actions would essentially be compared

*One of the important features of digital era is that it is much easier to organize and educate minorities and oppressed classes than it was in pre-independence era.*

to leaders that preceded him in history and would be tied to the legacy and reputation of such leaders.

### Reception by Media

Dynamics of mainstream and independent media are also dependent on several factors. Due to media ownership patterns, it is likely that the mainstream media in our hypothetical scenario would also be controlled by the political and corporate elite, and would represent the status quo, more aggressively so if the objective of the status quo is to subvert the democratic order. Mainstream media is also tied to “newsworthy events”, hence it would be incumbent upon Gandhi to organize campaigns of a large scale with regularity in order to remain “relevant”. Even then, whether the coverage will be favourable and objective is not likely. There is hope of favourable coverage from independent media sources across the world who engage in coverage of grassroots issues, such as Democracy Now! or The Intercept, or similar outlets in India. The difference in mainstream media and independent media coverage is also likely to further polarize the society around Gandhi’s persona, his intentions and methods. On a global scale however, pro-democracy movements may be covered in a different light and Gandhi would be covered positively and his impact on the Indian society would be analyzed more objectively.

### Public Relations using New Media

In social media spaces, Gandhi is likely to find more success as the mode of communication with the masses is more direct and not mediated by mainstream media outlets. The spread of the communication is incumbent upon social media promotion strategies as well as influencers who can endorse Gandhi’s campaigns. Unlike the 1900s, Gandhi’s endorsements are not limited to local leaders, the influencers can come from all places, professions and backgrounds. In addition to using newspapers, Gandhi could also maintain blogs, op-eds and features on several new media platforms. Use of media such as documentary films, live broadcasts, use of photography is also likely to work in Gandhi’s favour as he would use these not only to appeal to his publics and promote his campaigns but also present unfiltered and uncensored realities of the oppressed classes and allow the world to witness the truth. Given that Gandhi’s popularity and impact were profound with only newspapers, it can be projected that his popularity would be much greater, especially among the youth.

### Values

Gandhi is likely to have significant social impact in the digital age in a manner consistent with his own lifetime. Gandhi’s principles of non-violence and pacifism would be consistent with modern liberal ideologies that in principle is against war and violence. Consensus for the same would come from studies in diplomacy, management and social work, where emphasis is on strategic means to achieve ends

*In social media spaces, Gandhi is likely to find more success as the mode of communication with the masses is more direct and not mediated by mainstream media outlets.*

instead of succumbing to violence. However the segment of the society which would be Gandhi's "satyagraha" campaigns would also get assistance from investigative journalists and activism groups. Communal harmony and equality are also values which would bode well in the society today, as they are considered ideals in our culture and society. Messages laden with positivity and moral idealism would fare well in both society as well as popular culture because they are society's own aspirations.

While we project Gandhi's communication practices finding success in the digital era and the possible challenges, it would also be interesting to point out that because the population of India has increased since 1947 (by more than 400% in 2018 A.D.) we are also likely to find greater variation in public opinion and newer perspectives due to different levels of education, exposure and perspectives. In some cases, there could be backlash on rhetoric around hunger strikes and every action taken by Gandhi would be pulled apart by people anywhere on the spectrum, even those who agree with him. Nevertheless, digital technologies would enable Gandhi to use his interpersonal communication skills for a mass audience, as he could speak directly to the camera and make a personal appeal to millions of individuals and that would be a powerful tool for a skilled negotiator like Gandhi.

### Social Impact

What would be social impact of Gandhi's communication practices in the digital age? The projections discussed outline that Gandhi's rhetoric would create ripples in the society and generate various kinds of opinions, from persons all over the spectrum, supporters and opposers alike. His communication will be analyzed in the backdrop of the knowledge available and accessible by the people due to the internet technology as well as the progress made in education and knowledge building. If his motives are clear to the public and his coordinated effort in communication is strong, we would be able to win hearts as his philosophies would be popular anyway.

There would be polarization in the society as people would support different view points and a significant segment may also be in favour of the forces that want to subvert the democratic order or disintegrate the society with their vitriolic agenda, but Gandhi's activism, emphasis on truth and empowerment of the weakest strata of the society would bring out truth to the world. His popularity and influence would still be able to demand attention from the media and the authorities, and he would be able to leverage those to get policy action in his favour (from what we know about his interpersonal communication and negotiation skills). His ability to speak to people and galvanize grassroots movement would be able to achieve many victories in public policy front and in resisting undesirable authoritarian actions of the establishment. Organization of peaceful resistance and public policy victories would be essential quantifiers of his success and social impact, and his image would be less reliant on the idealistic glorification in literature. It would be fair to say that were Gandhi to be a leader in the digital age, he would get greater credit for the nuances in his skills as a communicator and community organizer backed by verifiable data and accounts, and less on anecdotal praises over idealism and morality.

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## Conclusion

Times have changed and so is the narrative of communication. Technology and technique are prime movers to influence the process of communication. Mohandas K. Gandhi's communication practices that have been highlighted in the available literature can find success in the digital age, as communication technologies have a powerful penetration in the society. Gandhi's outreach and popularity are directly related to the success of this coordinated communications and public relations strategy and we will need to assemble a team of communicators and organizers to handle different aspects of his campaigns.

This would include his social media presence across different platforms, his press releases, statements on issues, organizing grassroots campaigns, engaging with activism groups etc. He will need to strategically optimize his communications to compete with information overload as well as communication campaigns of his opposers, and appeal to a large heterogenous population with broader range of opinions, exposure and education. Gandhi would also need to consider that due to the growth in the body of knowledge and access to it by people, his movement and his strategies will not be first of their kind, and would be tied to the legacy of past leaders who would have popularized them. Media ownership patterns as well as conflicts of interest in the media would lead to higher levels of opposition the moment Gandhi's rhetoric challenges the status quo and he would be obliged to dedicate resources in countering lot of coordinated smear campaigns against him. Social media and independent news media will be instrumental in his success. Digital communication technologies not only enable him to spread his message to the public unfiltered by the intermediaries, but will also enable him to organize grassroots movements and education campaigns to empower oppressed sects of the society. Digital technologies enable Gandhi to use multiple platforms and not just newspapers to put his opinions, and the audience will not be limited to India, but will be received by people all over the world, a caveat we are certain the Gandhi would also be able to capitalize on. It is needless to say that Gandhi's values will be received well by most people as they naturally lean towards social justice and moral idealism, which the society by its very nature aspires towards. His social impact can be gauged with better documentation of his organization of grassroots movements and also his public policy wins - so if there are naysayers and skeptics, they would be shunned. It is our understanding that a leader like Gandhi would be successful in challenging any threat to democratic order, should one arise in the digital era, not only because the technologies aid in propagation of his message, but also because the values of pacifism, equality, social justice and self-rule are still upheld by society. This makes Gandhi, or any future leader that would match his skills, a powerful agent in social change and fight for democracy.

*It is needless to say that Gandhi's values will be received well by most people as they naturally lean towards social justice and moral idealism, which the society by its very nature aspires towards.*

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# Mahatma Gandhi as a Communicator: A Discourse Analysis of Gandhi's Journalistic Writing and Speeches vis-à-vis Communication Theories

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## Abstract

*Effective Communication is not only delivery of intended message but it is also an amalgamation of factors that ensure this delivery, reception and impact. While several political leaders across the globe and timelines have been eloquent and effective communicators, but what sets Mahatma Gandhi apart, is his ability to mobilize masses and redefine the fate of a nation. In diverse roles that he took up during the course of his life, his communication prowess remains the foundation stone of his success. The present paper is thus an attempt to decode the theoretical foundations of his communication strategies with special focus on his journalistic writings and historical speeches. The paper looks at communication approaches of Aristotle, David Berlo, the concept of Persuasive Communication and the factors of Effective Communication by Wilbur Schramm and uses these approaches to understand the communication strategies used in journalistic writing and speeches of Mahatma Gandhi. The methodology used is discourse analysis and the sample chosen is his journalistic works and three historical speeches. The major findings reiterate the relevance of theoretical foundations of communication and show that elements of effective communication are neatly woven into the communication strategies of Mahatma Gandhi.*

**Keywords:** Mahatma Gandhi, Theories of Communication, Persuasive Communication, Political Communication, Discourse Analysis.

## **Mahatma Gandhi: Communicator behind the Thinker, Philosopher and Leader**

Over the centuries several political leaders across the world have established undeniable correlation between use of effective communication and moulding of public opinion, however one individual who stands apart not only as a political leader but as a thinker, philosopher, saint and more in the collective history of humanity is Mahatma Gandhi. In each role that he took up, be it social reform, advocacy of human rights, alleviating the status of downtrodden or bringing a massively heterogeneous and diverse group of people together; his excellence as a communicator remains a highlight. While tracing the life journey of the Mahatma in totality is beyond the realms of an academic work, however, the present work is an attempt to decode the communication strategies that fuelled the various roles he performed successfully. His selfless persona, extraordinary courage and excellence

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as a leader are unquestionably the factors that made him a phenomenon, but what is pertinent to mention is that the ability to communicate, connect and develop a cohesiveness amongst masses can be seen as a foundation on which success of his various initiatives seems to rest.

Mahatma Gandhi has not only influenced the thought processes of individuals across the globe but his genius as a communicator has been often quoted. His multidimensional persona and powerful presence influenced millions of individuals over the years and continues to inspire the world. Besides the extraordinary intellect and the ability to touch myriad facets of human existence; what set aside Mahatma Gandhi and put him on a higher pedestal was his unique ability to reach out to people of varied and diverse backgrounds. His messages not only transcended the geographical boundaries but also those of age, gender, cultural diversities and belief systems. His words brought the light of knowledge not only to the ignorant but also influenced and enriched the learned. Thus it becomes increasingly significant to be able to decode the communication mantra of the Mahatma who was able to change the destiny of millions with the power of his word and message.

Gandhi's genius as a communicator is also driven from the fact that it is not only his choice of subjects or treatment of content but an overall persona that added to his appeal and impact as a communicator. Gandhi's use of effective communication brought together the various elements of content and context, and everything from his body language, his demeanour, choice of attire, use of charkha became a part of the holistic communication process that laid the foundation for his mass appeal. His choice of subjects that had interests of a common man intact, selection of words and phrases that strike a chord with the audiences, use of public and mass communication devices, all became significant aspects of his leadership and communication. From his early years in South Africa to his role as the leader of freedom struggle, each phase of Gandhi's life saw a different context, a different set of audiences and challenges, yet his ability to effectively voice his opinion and persuade the audiences remained unparalleled. His public addresses and writings in press both form a perfect example of effective communication where all the elements of basic communication process are tended to and utilized optimally. Before one dwells further in a deconstruction of communication strategies of Gandhi, it is also pertinent to discuss the concept of communication with specific reference to communication theories.

### **Concept and Theory of Communication vis-à-vis Gandhi's Communication**

Communication has often been described as a process of sharing or exchanging ideas and opinions. From the ancient beginnings of human civilizations to the latest technological developments today, what has remained constant is the urge to communicate, to share and to do so effectively. While communication is understood as a process of exchange of ideas, it is also important to understand the various forms of communication. Intra personal communication is the most potent form of communication, and includes communication with self. Interpersonal communication is face to face communication between two people. Group communication can be understood as communication between more than two people and can exist in the form of small groups or large group communication. Further,

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one also understands that the form of public communication and speeches primarily fall under the same. Another form of communication is mass communication which involves sending messages to the mass society through the use of mass media. Mahatma Gandhi excelled in all the forms and went a step beyond in not only using all the forms effectively but also in his ability to persuade the masses and bring about a change in their beliefs and attitudes.

With the growth of civilizations, the purpose and process of communication has also undergone a change. As humans learnt to grow and expand their means and territories, the purpose of communication grew from mere exchange of information to building of social bonds, social integration, establishing authority and mobilizing opinion. Political communication thus assumed importance and the need to understand the nature of political communication became relevant. Political Communication in simplest terms can be understood as an interactive process that involves exchange of information among politicians, the news media and the public (Wright, 2015). Over the past decade the purpose and process of Political communication has undergone a massive change, especially with the steep rise in social media platforms that are becoming the most sort after media to reach out to masses. Mahatma Gandhi and his political communication assume a new importance in this present context as the political strategist try to churn out ways and means to woo the audiences and often turn to Gandhi's communication strategies that persuaded a nation of millions to follow his beliefs and ideals.

### Theories of Communication

Basic models and theories of communication become a strong foundation for understanding the process of communication. Be it journalistic writing or public addresses, the formulation, delivery and impact of all forms of communication can be analyzed and understood with the help of communication theories as they help in making sense of signs, symbols, meanings and concepts which enrich a message. The present paper analyses the journalistic writings and public addresses of Mahatma Gandhi on the basis of following body of work from the Communication theories

- (i) Aristotle's model of Communication and David Berlo's Model of Elements of Communication

One of the earliest models of communication proposed is the Aristotle's model of Communication which includes five elements – speaker, message, audience, occasion and effect. Aristotle's model in particular becomes significant to public communication as it lays stress on tailoring the message or speech according to the different occasions and audiences for desired effects (Narula, 2006). Berlo goes a step ahead and describes the sub components of the elements of communication and explains how these sub components become relevant in producing a desired effect. Application of the basic models of Communication to Gandhi's communications shows that Gandhi was a master strategist in not only designing his messages on relevant subjects but he also knew how to tailor them according to his audiences and for a desired impact. The sub elements of Source and Receiver (Berlo, 1960) include communication skills, attitudes knowledge and the socio-cultural systems.

*Political Communication in simplest terms can be understood as an interactive process that involves exchange of information among politicians, the news media and the public (Wright, 2015).*

These seem to be the foundation of Gandhi's communication message. Be it one of his earliest speeches made in Johannesburg in support of Indian settlers or the later addresses in Indian freedom struggle, Gandhi used symbols in his content that struck a chord with his audiences, often operating within the socio-cultural contexts of his receivers. The sub elements of message which include Structure, Content, Treatment and code again become relevant in Gandhi's communication both in his journalist writing and public discourse. Thus the basic models of communication become relevant to a discourse analysis of Gandhi's use of communication tools and strategies.

## (ii) Concept of Persuasive Communication

Persuasion in its ideal state is defined as the process of communication in which a communicator succeeds in voluntarily forming, sustaining or changing the attitudes or behaviour of one recipient or a group of recipients in accordance with his intended message (Steinberg, S. In Persuasive Communication Skills). Mahatma Gandhi's communication can also be analyzed under the concept of persuasive communication as he has been revered as one of the most successful leaders who was not only able to generate attention and interest towards his words and messages but was also able to bring about a change in the attitude, beliefs and actions of the masses. Be it his mass movements like Satyagrah, Swadeshi -use of charkha and adoption of Khadi, or his ideas on social issues like untouchability and condition of women; Gandhi was able to persuade and influence a large set of audience to adopt his ideas. A closer look at persuasive communication can thus further help understand how Gandhi was able to succeed in his efforts.

According to Miller (1980) Persuasive Communication can be defined as any message that is intended to shape, reinforce or change the responses of other(s). Gandhi, in his early years in South Africa when he championed the cause of Indian settlers against the Anti Asiatic laws or later when he mobilized the masses to fight for freedom with ahimsa and Satyagraha can be seen as a master of persuasive communication.

A further examination of Gandhi's life and work shows how he was able to imbibe and incorporate the principles of persuasive and effective communication in various initiatives. According to Miller (1980) Persuasion works through Stimulation, Convincing, and Call to Action, Increasing Consideration and Tolerance of alternative Perspectives. Each element of Persuasive Communication is found present in Gandhi's attempt to connect with the masses. While his public discourses stimulated the mind and thoughts of masses, it was his unique ability to connect his words with a Call to Action which came in the form of tangible doable acts that could be adopted by the masses. The point in case here include the boycott of foreign goods, the adoption of Charkha and Khadi, wherein after an initial stimulation that explained his ideas to the masses he was able to further reiterate his message with a call to action. This not only created a sense of involvement for the audiences but also a sense of belongingness which made Gandhi's words a part and parcel of their life. Millions of men and women across the nation began to spin the Charkha as Gandhi called for action, and as conceptualized in the theoretical framework of

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Persuasive Communication, this call for action was furthered with reinforcement of the benefits derived from the actions and improving the understanding of how their actions became a part of the larger mission towards attaining independence. Thus one can look at concept of persuasive communication as one of the theoretical frameworks for communication strategies of Gandhi.

### (iii) Concept of Effective Communication.

Schramm (1965) lists the requirements of effective communication as follows:

- The message must be so designed so as to gain attention
- The message must employ signs which refer to experience common to source and destination
- The message must arouse personality needs in the destination
- The message must suggest a way to meet those needs

All four requirements of Schramm's effective communication are clearly visible in Gandhi's Communication. An undeniable highlight of Gandhi's message was the use of slogans and phrases which made the audiences gain immediate attention to his ideas. Be it the use of words like Satyagraha, Swadeshi or slogans like 'Do or Die', Gandhi's ideas caught immediate attention. Secondly Schramm refers to the concept of 'Field of experience'; again the same becomes evident in Gandhi's use of communication. For instance during his brief visit to India while championing the cause of Indian settlers in South Africa, Gandhi authored and published 'Green Pamphlet' to gain the attention of fellow Indians towards the plight of Indian settlers in South Africa. He dwelled on the 'commonness' of their native land and built a sympathetic ground for them. Further at various occasions where he generates supports from masses, it is his ability to draw common experiences amongst the diverse audiences of the country who are undoubtedly separated by culture and tradition but are joined by their common experience of being exploited under the British rule. Thirdly Schramm describes the requirement of arousing personality needs; this is evident in Gandhi's discourses on Social Reforms. His speeches and journalistic writings on untouchability, plight of women and downtrodden creates an urge in the minds of people to work for their own betterment and lastly as Schramm suggests that an effective communicator must then suggest ways to fulfil those needs, Gandhi does the same by giving a call to action and suggesting tangible actions that can help in fulfilling these personality needs so aroused. Thus Gandhi's communication when juxtaposed on Schramm's principles of effective communication does hold true.

Another closely related concept to effective communication is the concept of public opinion and 7 Cs of effective communication as Content, Context, Channel, Clarity, Consistency, Credibility and Capacity of the audience. A closer look at the work of Gandhi as a communicator also shows that all seven elements fit the bill where Gandhian Communication is concerned. He is not only mindful of the choice of subjects to be picked for public discourse (content) but also understands the social political (context) in which the issues gain weight. His choice of language lends (clarity) as he understands the audiences (capacity) keeping in mind their economic

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standards. His implementer leadership where he leads by action lends (credibility) to his message and use of Press and public discourse become the prefect (channels) to repeat his message (consistently) to the audiences for reinforcement and action.

The above concepts of communication have been further applied to the journalistic writings and public speeches of Mahatma Gandhi to understand how the theoretical framework of the process of communication holds true to communication of Mahatma Gandhi which was not only effective in putting across an effective message but also persuaded and influenced millions of Indians and eventually changed the fate of nation.

### **Journalistic Writings of Mahatma Gandhi vis-à-vis. Theoretical Framework of Communication**

Mahatma Gandhi began his active public life as he began to champion the cause of Indian settlers in South Africa. After studying law in England, Gandhi later went to South Africa in 1893 was engaged by a Muslim firm for legal work. During his stay in South Africa, Gandhi began to support Indians' cause against Anti- Asiatic legislation in Transvaal by organizing several passive- resistance movements as he fought for the cause of Indians in South Africa. While still championing the rights of Indian Settlers in South Africa, he visited India and published the 'Green Pamphlet' to garner support for Indian settlers in South Africa. This can also be seen as one of the initial attempts in journalistic writings where Gandhi used Mass media as a tool to generate awareness and create opinion in favour of a cause.

The Green Pamphlet was authored and printed in India by Gandhi and was formally '*The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public*'. Making an appeal on behalf of 100,000 Indians in South Africa, Gandhi brought out a vivid and heart wrenching description of the plight of Indian Settlers in South Africa. In the Green Pamphlet, Gandhi quotes an 'open letter' that had written to the Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council of Natal (South Africa) to show what treatment Indians received at the hands of general Europeans in the Colony. An excerpt from the letter, published in Green Pamphlet is as follows: "The man in the street hates him, curses him, spits upon him, and often pushes him off the foot-path. The Press cannot find a sufficiently strong word in the best English dictionary to damn him with. Here are a few samples. "The real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community", "these parasites", "wily, wretched semi-barbarous Asiatic", "A thing black and lean and a long way from clean, which they call the accursed Hindu", "He is chock-full of vice and he lives upon rice. I heartily cuss the Hindu", "Squalid coolies with truth less tongues and artful ways". The Press almost unanimously refuses to call the Indian by his proper name.

**The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public (1896)**

The vivid and poignant narrative in his letter shows how words can be used effectively to draw a mental picture. One can apply numerous models and theories of communication to the following excerpt and all would stand true as the treatment of subjects' deals successfully with all the elements of effective communication.

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From credibility of source that came from the Gandhi's own experiences in South Africa to building a connect with a common field of experience wherein the fellow Indians back home could almost feel the plight of their counterparts in South Africa; Gandhi uses the tools of communication here to mobilize a opinion in favour of fellow Indians.

Further on his return to South Africa he takes over the editorship of 'Indian Opinion' in 1904 It is pertinent to mention here that the paper was bilingual and had a Gujarati section in addition to English, which made it extremely popular with the Indian settlers. Analyses of the content and treatment of subjects in 'Indian Opinion' again throw light on the communication abilities and deep understanding of journalistic writings that Gandhi possessed. According to Hofmeyer (2013) 'Indian Opinion' is one of the great intellectual archives of the world and in any given issue the paper brought meaningful content. For instance, the English section of an Issue of 'Indian Opinion' on October 21, 1911 has articles about celebration in Mozambique at the first anniversary of the Portuguese Republic, a meeting of Hindu Young Men Association and a report on Jewish Family Foundation. The idea being put across here is that Gandhi took into account the essentials of content and context, two of the most essential factors of effective communication. He brought subjects and content that would be of interest his diverse readers and thus made the publication popular. Further, Gandhi also takes into account the essentials of effective journalistic writing of objectivity and brevity and an excerpt from his autobiography shows how his skill as a communicator coupled with his deep understanding of the nature of journalistic communication.

The excerpt shows his understanding and application of the principles of journalistic writing to each issue of Indian Opinion. His success as a communicator and a journalist stems from this understanding of tailing the information not only to the preferences of the audience but also to the media.

Gandhi also made a mark in the Indian journalistic scene and contributed immensely to strengthening of Press during the freedom struggle. In 1919 he took over 'Young India' and also started a Gujarati weekly 'Navjivan'. As Gandhi describes in his own words the essence of journalism, it resonates with Schramm's ideology of effective communication and the essence of journalism as a mission. An excerpt from Gandhi's definition of objectives of a newspaper reads as follows

"One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it; another is to arouse among people certain desirable sentiments and third is to fearlessly expose popular defect."

Gandhi not only expertised in reaching out to the audiences through his publications but also kept intact the ethics of the profession which added to an important element of credibility to his communication. Parathsarthy (1997) explains the role of Gandhi as journalist and brings to light that Gandhi laid down strict standards of journalism and refused to accept advertisements. In his opinion a newspaper had to run on revenue by subscribers. Also he was opposed to government invasion on liberty of Press and contested vehemently against the restrictions on Press. Gandhi's prowess

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as a journalist is evident from the fact that his writings had the widest circulation of any single individual in the country.

Further Gandhi's genius as a communicator in the dimensions of journalistic writings is evident from the fact that he chose subjects which appealed to a diverse audience. He wrote on topics ranging from Politics to human interest and that struck a cord with him common man. The Aristotle's model of communication, Berlo's sub elements and Schramm's model of effective communication seem to be reiterated as Parathsarthy (1997) draws out the communication qualities of Gandhi as a journalist. He says

"Gandhi's style was simple but effective He used simple words and short sentences to drive his message home. He chose his words with precision and there was no ambiguity or confusion in what he wrote. He opened his heart out and shared his innermost thoughts and feelings with his readers which evoked an emotional response. He writes on a variety of topics not confined to Politics and he diligently replied to every letter"

Thus one clearly witnesses the use of 7C's of effective communication in his role as a journalist. Use of simple language brought (clarity), diversity of topics brought (content), his ability to evoke emotional response speaks of his true understanding of the (capacity) of audiences and optimum utilization of (context). Moreover, his diligence in replying to each letter and churning out relevant content in every issue brings out his (consistency) and use of mass media speaks of his correct choice of (channel). Sharing his own experiences and innermost thoughts further added to (credibility) of his writings.

In 1932 he started *Harijan* while still in prison on charges of sedition against the articles written against British. *Harijan* became the biggest news source for the newspapers and every Saturday news agencies competed with one another in flashing Gandhi's articles. Thus Gandhi proved to be master communicator when it came to journalistic writings, not only did he win the readers heart and mind but also proved to be the strength that the Indian Press needed during the freedom struggle.

### **Public Addresses of Mahatma Gandhi vis-à-vis Theoretical Framework of Communication**

Besides the journalistic writings another area of Gandhi as an ace communicator comes across as one analyses his famous speeches and looks at them vis-à-vis the models and theories of communication. For the purpose of the present paper three of his iconic speeches have been analysed. Firstly, the address given by M.K. Gandhi before Y.M.C.A Johannesburg, championing the rights of Indian Settlers, secondly the speech on Untouchability delivered at Ahmadabad in 1921 and thirdly The 'Quit India' speech at AICC meeting at Bombay in 1942. All three speeches have been analysed with respect to the subject matter, presentation, use of symbols and devices and the theoretical foundations of effective communication

*One clearly witnesses the use of 7C's of effective communication in Gandhi role as a journalist.*

1. Address given by M.K. Gandhi before Y.M.C.A Johannesburg, championing the rights of Indian Settlers

During his stay in South Africa, Gandhi began to Indians' cause against Anti-Asiatic legislation in Transvaal by organizing several passive- resistance movements as he fought for the cause of Indians in South Africa. On May 18, 1908 Gandhi gave an address as Bar-at Law, before the YMCA, Johannesburg, in moving in negative on a debate on the question, "Are Asiatic and the coloured race a menace to the Empire." Gandhi began his address directly by questioning the validity of the debate against colored races. In the very first 100 words of his address he delves on the word 'coloured races' and moves on to quickly mention Kipling's concept of 'White Man's Burden'. He breaks down the concept and argues if the white men had really acted as 'trustees for the coloured races'. In quoting Kipling and discussing the concept of white man's burden Gandhi is able to draw the attention of the audiences and also add credibility to his argument. He further moves on to quote the two maxims of western civilization, "might is right" and "survival of the fittest". Gandhi goes on to argue a different interpretation of 'might' as opposed to physical strength, he reasons 'might' to include heart- strength. In doing so he again quotes Ruskin and explains that 'might' could also refer to 'social affections'. Through the argument he is able to bring out the differences in the Eastern and western civilizations and the need for the two civilizations to meet. By using the device of analogy he is able to drive across the point of both civilizations being relevant to modern existence. Further he also uses a mention of 'Divine Providence' and concludes the speech by quoting a sacred hymn.

Analyzing the speech from communication perspective one can look at the Aristotle's model for public communication and conclude that Gandhi's speech is well tailored to the occasion and audience. As he understands that his audience are from a mixed race and include immigrant population and Christians he uses the sacred hymn from Bible and also uses the concept of Divine Providence. He makes a mention of Kipling, Captain Cooke and Ruskin, again keeping in mind the occasion and audience who would connect more with their works. His content for the speech is based on the concept of differences in eastern and western civilizations and does provoke thought and also challenges the existing mind sets but effectively concludes with a solution of coexistence. Thus, the Schramm's idea of catching attention, provoking thought, generating a need and suggesting means to meet the need are all fulfilled in this speech.

2. The second speech in the discourse analysis is the 'Speech on untouchability' delivered at /suppressed Classes Conference held at Ahmadabad on April 13, 1921.

Gandhi opens his speech with a provocative statement on Hinduism and continues to explain that how his ideas of untouchability are not inspired from his struggles in South Africa or from the Bible. A powerful communication technique that he uses in his speech on untouchability is use of a number of anecdotes and personal experiences to share his ideas on untouchability. In the

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first 100 words he narrates an incident from his childhood here he was made to perform ablutions when he accidentally touched a scavenger who cleaned the toilet at his house. Gandhi's speech on untouchability further continues with his experiences as a child and his first learning of Sanskrit. He makes a mention of 'Ramaraksha', 'Vishnu Puja' and quotes the holy text, "Jale Vishnu Sthale Vishnu" (There is Lord in water and There is Lord present in earth)

He further also makes a mention of the holy scripture of Ramayana and quotes another anecdote where he shares that as a twelve year old he had often pondered that Ramayana brought home the idea of God being the purifier of polluted and gave him the conviction of untouchability being a sin. Gandhi also goes onto mention that his idea of quoting the Ramayana is specifically for the purpose of orthodox Hindus. He skilfully connects the idea of untouchability as a sin and how it was impossible to attain swaraj with such a social evil being a part and parcel of the society. He efficiently compares the treatment meted out to untouchables by Hindus of higher cast being similar to the atrocities being committed by British on the native Indians and in drawing this parallel urges people to "purge" of this "pollution".

Analysis of this speech with respect to communication theories again shows an optimum use of the Aristotle model where his speech has been carefully crafted keeping in mind the occasion and the audience. Gandhi's speech on untouchability also effectively uses the principles of persuasion where he is able to draw audience's attention by citing a number of personal anecdotes, convincing them to shun of the evil of untouchability and making a call for action as he urges the audiences to "purge" from pollution.

3. The third speech examined in the present discourse analysis is the Quit India speech delivered at the AICC in 1942 where Gandhi gives the slogan of 'Do or Die'. The speech begins again with quoting of a personal childhood incident wherein he mentions that he made special efforts to make friend with Muslims and Parsi community and believed that Hindus could live in peace if they imbibed the virtue of good neighbourliness and thus his attempts to make friend with students from different religion and communities. Gandhi draws out this anecdote as he urges the audiences for Hindu Muslim unity. After speaking at length about the Hindu Muslim unity and the need to be unified in this time of need, Gandhi moves on to addressing he audiences to take a pledge for attainment of freedom. He gives them call for action in the form of a mantra i.e. Do or Die.

"Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery."

Another unique feature of this very popular speech is that he addresses specific sections of the audiences in detail and garners their support for Congress. Different section of audiences he caters to include the Congressmen, the media

*"Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery."*

persons or journalists, ‘princes’; ‘government servants’; soldiers and also students. Excerpts from his speech are evident to show that how he chooses a unique appeal for each group and how he is able to mould public opinion by giving individual attention to the needs and interests of each community.

While he urges a call for ‘Do or Die’ to Congressmen, to the media persons he urges to declare openly their support for Congress. Addressing the journalists, Gandhi says,

“A word to the journalists, I congratulate you on the support you have hitherto given to the national demand. You may tell Sir Fredrick Puckle that he can’t expect from you a command performance, that his press notes are full of untruth and that you will refuse to publish them. You will openly declare that you are whole heartedly with Congress and if you do this you will have changed the atmosphere before the fight actually begins.”

Further he urged the Princes to renounce ownership of their properties and become their trustees in true sense of the term. Gandhi says,

“I would ask the Princes in all humility to enjoy through renunciation. I visualize God in assemblage of people and I would urge the Princes to become servants of the people...”

Gandhi also addresses the Government servants and soldiers and urges them to join the Congress.

“I have a word to say to the Government servants also. They may not, if they like, resign their posts yet...but I would ask all government servants to follow in footsteps of Ranadae and to declare their allegiance to the Congress.”

“Soldiers too are covered by the present programme. You may say to the Government, our hearts are with Congress. We are not going to leave our posts, but will refuse to fire on our own people.”

Towards the end of the speech Gandhi addresses the students as he says

“I would ask the students to say to their professors: ‘we belong to the Congress. Do you belong to the Congress or to the Government? If you belong to the Congress, you may not vacate your posts but teach us and lead us into freedom.’”

Thus he effectively caters to different sections of the audience and finally closes his speech with an emotional appeal where he shares that he has bared his heart and soul open to this fellow beings. The speech becomes a perfect example of a sender moulding a message to evoke passionate needs in his audiences and then meticulously giving the receivers a method to fulfil those needs and urges.

## Conclusion

A thorough analysis of the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi with special focus on his journalistic writings and public discourse shows that Mahatma Gandhi's communications strategies are closely linked to the theories of effective communication. Many theoretical approaches in communication which have been penned even after the era of Gandhi hold true when his works and words are analyzed vis-à-vis these theoretical approaches. The Aristotle model of communication which is believed to be the first and most ancient model of Communication is proven true in context of the Gandhi's communication where all five elements of the model are always incorporated in the analysis of Gandhi's communication. The sub elements of Berlo's SMCRE are relevant to Gandhi's work as each is planned with intricate detail keeping in mind the contexts of the message and the reviser. Further the concept of Persuasive communication resonates with the Gandhi's style of communication where he garners attention, practices conviction and then call for action thus ensuring greater involvement. Lastly Schramm's model of effective communication is again held true as one deconstructs the speeches and works of Mahatma Gandhi as a thinker, philosopher and a leader.

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*The Aristotle model of communication which is believed to be the first and most ancient model of Communication is proven true in context of the Gandhi's communication where all five elements of the model are always incorporated in the analysis of Gandhi's communication.*

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## Abstract

*Even though, Mahatma Gandhi-one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century most influential persons, had never any affinity towards the medium of moving pictures, yet Indian and foreign film industries had always strong attraction towards his life, struggle, philosophy, teaching and practices. The Indian and foreign filmmakers primarily portrayed Gandhi as an idealist and a hero of the nation, except in a few films portrayed him in negative shades. Besides his life saga, the philosophy, teaching and practices of Gandhism have been core subjects of several films released in different decades after his life. The Indian and foreign filmmakers have been playing important roles to carry the Gandhian legacy and philosophy even after the seven decades of his death. The popularity of those films, associated to Gandhi or Gandhism, even the decades after his death, indicates the significance and acceptance of the Father of the Nation among the film viewers. The films based on his life, works and philosophy received accolade in many national and international film festivals and among the people across the globe. The present study mainly concentrates on those significant films produced in Hindi and English by Indian and foreign filmmakers linked directly or indirectly to the life, struggle, philosophy, teaching and practices of Gandhi and Gandhism. The presentation of the character of Gandhi in diverse roles and his Gandhism in different context of life in films of 10 different filmmakers has been studied. The analysis and interpretation of the films based on Gandhi and Gandhism from different perspective are discussed in the current study.*

**Keywords:** Gandhi, Gandhism, film, Indian freedom struggle

## Introduction

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, one of the most influential personalities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, made the world realised the power of non-violence to overcome the suppression from any mighty force or supremely powerful nation. He became the symbol of India's freedom struggle and powerful leader to unite Indians of all classes, creeds and castes against the British rule. His principle of 'Ahimsa' and the means of 'Satyagraha' influenced the natives of the several colonised countries to fight for their independence from the powerful nations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The moving pictures, as medium of communication and entertainment, have never shied away from experimenting with the scripts and plots of historical events, lives and works of great personalities since its birth in India. One popular and historical

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figure of 20<sup>th</sup> century, whose life and struggle have been portrayed in the medium of moving pictures in Indian and foreign languages, is our Father of the Nation- Mahatma Gandhi.

Incidentally, Mahatma Gandhi considered cinema as 'social evil'. As per film historian's account Gandhi saw two films- *Mission to Moscow* (1943) and *Ram Rajya* (1943). Even though, Indian film industry played a crucial role to unite the people to fight against British colonialism, yet Gandhi refused to accept the argument that film can be useful for moral teaching and effective tool to infuse nationalism among the masses.

In the reply to his prayer meeting to a question, once he said that he was not comfortable with the idea of sitting in a 'closed theatre without ventilation'. While criticising the glamorous photographs of heroes and heroines published in newspaper, he said that he would love to open spinning theatres instead of film theatres.

In 1927-28, the Indian the Indian cinematograph committee conducted a survey on movie-viewing habits in the country. The committee sent a copy of the questionnaire to Gandhi. He replied the questionnaire with a statement 'Even if I was so minded, I should be unfit to answer your questionnaire, as I have never been to a cinema. But even to an outsider, the evil that it has done and is doing is patent. The good, if it has done any at all, remains to be proved.' On 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1942 to the newspaper called Harijan, Gandhi said "If I began to organise picketing in respect of them (the evil of cinema), I should lose my caste, my Mahatmaship...! may say that cinema films are often bad. About the radio I do not know."

Gandhi's opinion on cinema was so poor that he said, 'The cinema, the stage, the race-course, the drink-booth and the opium-den-all these enemies of society that have sprung up under the fostering influence of the present system threaten us on all sides.' on 10 March, 1929 Sunday, in a speech to labourers in Rangoon. Despite his adverse comments for films, the industry of films never disliked him. In fact, any film on India's independence struggle cannot stand without the mention of Gandhi.

Even though, the film as medium never attracted Mahatma Gandhi, yet he has been the most popular figure in Indian and foreign film industries during lifetime and even after several decades of his death. The Indian film industry and a few foreign filmmakers primarily depicted Gandhi as an idealist and hero of the nation, except in a few films with negative shades. The popularity of those films linked to Gandhi validate the significance and acceptance of the Father of the Nation in the country.

*The Indian film industry and a few foreign filmmakers primarily depicted Gandhi as an idealist and hero of the nation, except in a few films with negative shades.*

Unquestionably, the Indian film industry and attempts of foreign filmmakers have been playing important roles to carry the Gandhian legacy and philosophy even after seven decades of his death. The films based on his life, works and philosophy received accolade in many national and international film festivals and among the people across the globe. The present mainly concentrates on those significant films produced in Hindi and English by Indian and foreign filmmakers linked directly or indirectly to the life, struggle, philosophy, teaching and practices of Gandhi and Gandhism.



## Objectives of the Study

Indian film industry, including Hindi and regional language film industry, is one of the oldest and largest film industries in the world. The industry produced a number of biopics, feature films with on life, struggle, ideologies, teaching and practices of Mahatma Gandhi directly or indirectly in almost every decade in its ongoing journey of more than a century. Even, the efforts of the foreign film makers deserve high appreciation for their celluloid version of Gandhi and his philosophy. The most important figure of India's freedom struggle has been depicted in diverse roles- in the shades of him as a father, a national leader, a discriminated, etc. The objectives of the current study make an effort to encompass the following points. To

- Enlist the significant films made associated with Mahatma Gandhi.
- Study the trend of films produced on the life, struggle, philosophy and works of Gandhi.
- Examine the how films describe his teaching, philosophy and ideals of Gandhi.
- Distinguish the perspectives of the presentation of Gandhi in the films.
- Comprehend any deviation or omitting of incidents related to Gandhi in films.

## Approaches to the Study

Mahatma Gandhi, nearly after seven decades of his death, has continued to be the most popular character for Indian and foreign film industry. Starting from *Nine hours to Rama* (1963) to *Gandhi To Hitler* (2011), the ethos, life and teaching of Mahatma Gandhi have been portrayed frequently in mainstream film industry in varied manners by Hindi and English filmmakers.

The depiction of Gandhi in films can be broadly classified into two distinguished categories- (i) Films revolves around his life, times and works (ii) Films representing his ideas, ethos and teaching subtly or overtly on Mahatma Gandhi. The current study focuses on how Gandhi has been perceived and portrayed in the Hindi and English films in the above-mentioned categories.

This study also makes an attempt to list some of the prominent films, based on Mahatma Gandhi, produced from the early days of Indian cinema to present period, either portrayed him in lead character or involving him as one of the characters in context to some other prominent leader of India's the freedom struggle or any fiction film in relation to Gandhian philosophy.

## Films on Mahatma Gandhi

In 1920s, a few years after the birth of Indian film industry, two silent films- *Bhakta Vidur* (1921) and *Bhakta Prahlad* (1926) faced wrath from the British government. The film-*Bhakta Vidur*, starring Dwarkadas Sampat as Vidur and directed by Kanjibhai Rathod under the Kahinoor film Company, drew many parallels to the freedom struggle of Gandhi. The most resembling among them were Vidur's Gandhi cap and spinning the charkha, which resembled with Gandhi spinning wheel for making khadi clothes. The film was banned in many provinces by the British Raj.

*The most important figure of India's freedom struggle has been depicted in diverse roles- in the shades of him as a father, a national leader, a discriminated, etc.*

It also had a music score that was performed live with every show, including a song in praise of the spinning wheel (Rajadhyaksha and Willemen, 1999).

Dadasaheb Phalke directed *Bhakta Prahlad* (1926), under the banner of Hindustan Company, became instantly popular among the film viewers for its special effects showing the trials and tribulations of Prahlad. Phalke carefully portrayed him as a satyagrahi and the follower of Ahimsa. This film also met the similar fate to that of Vidur.

A number of documentaries were also produced on the life, works and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi in different times. The travelogue writer and journalist A. K. Chettiar has been credited by a number of film historians to be the first documentary filmmaker on Gandhi. He started to collect archival footage of Gandhi from different sources in several countries including India, UK and South Africa. With the collection of 50,000 feet film and shooting some scenes himself of Gandhi, Chettiar edited them to 12,000 feet and released a documentary film-*Life of Mahatma Gandhi* on 23 August 1940. He later made another documentary on Gandhi titled -*Mahatma Gandhi - 20th Century Prophet* in 1953.

The black and white documentary-*Mahatma: Life of Gandhi* (1968), directed by Vithalbhaji Jhaveri, gave a detailed account of the life of Gandhi using animation, news reels and still photographs. The documentary was released in both Hindi and English language. Jhaveri's documentary was well appreciated for his sound direction and script across the country and overseas.

The two significant films directly or indirectly linked to Mahatma Gandhi - *Nine Hours to Rama* (1963) and *Gandhi* (1982) were made by foreign filmmakers. The star cast of these two films included both British and Indian actors, but majority of the roles were played by British or Western actors. Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) and Mark Robson's *Nine hours to Rama*, both produced in English language, have set high standard in portraying Gandhi on celluloid. The current study included both the films to understand the perspectives foreign filmmakers on the life, struggle and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.

### 1. **Nine Hours to Rama (1963)**

*Nine Hours to Rama*, a British film, made in English language, was directed by Mark Robson. The film was based on a novel of the same name written by Stanley Wolpert. The screenplay of the film written by Nelson Gidding follows a fictionalised Nathuram Godse in the hours before he assassinated Mahatma Gandhi. The film focuses on the last 9 hours of the life of Nathuram Godse just before the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

The historical drama film-*Nine Hours to Rama* (1963), depicts the crucial hours of Nathuram Godse before he was assassinated Mahatma Gandhi on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1948. The film revolves around the fictitious romantic and criminal background of Nathuram Godse. The film depicts the vengeance of Nathuram Godse against Mahatma Gandhi for his pro-Muslim attitude during the partition of India. The

*The travelogue writer and journalist A. K. Chettiar has been credited by a number of film historians to be the first documentary filmmaker on Gandhi.*

film narrates Godse's planning for plotting to kill Gandhi by himself from point blank range on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1948.

The film also portrays Nathuram blaming Gandhi for the killings of thousands of Hindus by Muslims. It was filmed in England and India with mainly white actors in prominent roles. The film consists of several flashbacks depicting how he became a Hindu activist.

## 2. Gandhi (1982)

Surprisingly, for nearly two decades after the release of *Nine hours to Rama*, no filmmaker either from India or abroad made any attempt to make a film on Mahatma Gandhi. The epic historical drama-*Gandhi*, based on the life of Mahatma Gandhi released in 1982, was produced and directed by British filmmaker Richard Attenborough. His film on the Father of the Nation has been highly praised in the country and abroad.

In 1962, Attenborough received an invitation from a British Indian Gandhian Motilal Kothari to discuss the idea for a film on Gandhiji. Kothari presented him Louis Fischer's book-The Life of Mahatma Gandhi to work on the idea. A year later, when Attenborough met Nehru in Delhi to take permission for the project, Nehru advised him "Whatever you do, do not deify him-that is what we have done in India -and he was too great a man to be deified." (Brown & Parel, 2011)

The story and script of the film was written by John Briley. The title role of Mahatma Gandhi was played by Ben Kingsley. The film focused from his early life in South Africa, freedom struggle in India, till his assassination in 1948. This British-Indian co-production film, produced in India and in English language, had several Indian actors like Amrish Puri, Om Puri and Saeed Jaffrey. The veteran actress-Rohini Hattangadi, played the role of Kasturba Gandhi.

Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) was nominated for 55<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards in eleven categories, winning eight of them, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Screenplay, Best Art Direction, Best Cinematography, Best Costume Design and Best Film Editing. The film received 26 other prestigious awards, including BAFTA, Grammy, Golden Globe and Golden Guild awards. The scintillating performance of Ben Kingsley in the role Mahatma Gandhi was the high point of the film.

## 3. Sardar (1993)

The biopic on Vallabhbhai Patel, titled as *Sardar*, was directed by Ketan Mehta and written by noted playwright Vijay Tendulkar. Annu Kapoor played the role of Mahatma Gandhi, while Paresh Rawal and Benjamin Gilani played the role of Sardar Patel and Nehru respectively.

The film depicts the change of mind of Sardar Patel, who was born in a wealthy Gujarat-based family. Initially, he was not taking part in the freedom struggle and used to mock at Gandhi and referred him as Social worker. But the speech

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Gandhi gave in Ahmedabad in 1915 changed the perception of Patel for him. Patel decided to join the freedom struggle with Mahatma. This biographical film on Patel mainly concentrates on the last five years of Sardar's life, from 1945 to 1950 when he emerged on the national scene - an important figure in the freedom struggle and integrating the nation.

#### 4. The Making of Mahatma (1996)

The film-*The Making of the Mahatma* was produced as joint collaboration between India and South Africa. Directed by veteran filmmaker Shyam Benegal, the film depicts 21 years of the life of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. This film features the early life of Mahatma Gandhi, which was based on the book -*The Apprenticeship of a Mahatma*, authored by Fatima Meer. The film mainly depicts Gandhi adapting the non-violence against the racial discrimination. The veteran actor Rajit Kapur flawlessly portrays the role of young Gandhi in the film. The film shows the progression of Mahatma from a barrister in South Africa to become Mahatma.

#### 5. Hey Ram (2000)

The film- *Hey Ram*, Indian historical fiction and political drama film, was written, directed and produced by Kamal Haasan. Kamal Haasan played the role of the protagonist in the film. The film was simultaneously made in Tamil and Hindi and also dubbed in Telugu. The veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah played the role of Mahatma Gandhi in the film.

The film is based on a revenge saga of a victim of partition. It revolves around India's Partition and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi by Nathuram Godse. The film also depicts the influence of Mahatma Gandhi on a common man like Saketh Ram, the protagonist of the film.

When the wife of Saketh Ram is raped and killed by rioters, his life changes dramatically. He decides to personally kill as many Muslims as he finds. He joins a Hindu extremist group becomes temporarily taken with the cause himself. Upon persuasion, he marries again and settle down. Once, he meets a Maharajah, who manipulates him and asks him to leave his family to assassinate Mahatma Gandhi.

#### 6. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar (2000)

*Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar*, an English language feature film dubbed into nine Indian languages, directed by Jabbar Patel, depicts the story of the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar for the downtrodden and oppressed classes in India and also drafting the Constitution of India in the capacity of the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constituent. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Government of Maharashtra jointly funded the film. The production of the film was managed by National Film Development Corporation of India.

*The film- Hey Ram, Indian historical fiction and political drama film, was based on a revenge saga of a victim of partition.*

The film on the life and times of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is one of the first films to depict Gandhi in a negative light. The audience was understandably taken aback at the shocking portrayal of Gandhi in a different perspective. The role of Mahatma, played by Mohan Gokhale, brilliantly describes how Gandhi used his non-cooperation policy and fasting strategies to get his demand fulfilled. The film received three awards- Best Feature Film, Best Actor and Best Art Direction, in National Film Awards.

#### 7. **Maine Gandhi Ko Nahin Mara (2005)**

The film- *Maine Gandhi Ko Nahin Mara*, directed by Jahnu Barua, focuses on the life of a retired Hindi professor. The professor, who falls victim to dementia, starts getting hallucinations that he is the assassin of Mahatma Gandhi. The film is not entirely based on Mahatma Gandhi. The role of retired professor is played by Anupam Kher, whereas Urmila Matondkar plays the role of his daughter in the film. Although, the film did not perform well in the box office, but it was very much appreciated by critics. Anupam Kher received critical acclaim for his performance and won a Special Jury Award at the National Film Awards.

#### 8. **Lage Raho Munnabhai (2006)**

*Lage Raho Munnabhai* is one of the most popular and entertaining film based on Gandhi. It is the second film in Munna bhai series. The film focuses mainly on the Gandhian principle instead of Gandhi's life and times. It makes a successful attempt to break the stereotypical textual references of Gandhi and makes him more real.

The protagonist- Munnabhai, role played by Sanjay Dutt, tries to help ordinary people to solve their problems with Gandhigiri. The film makes a successful attempt to incorporate Gandhian principle in modern world.

#### 9. **Gandhi, My Father (2007)**

The story of the film-*Gandhi My Father*, directed by Feroz Abbas Khan and produced by Anil Kapoor, was based on the troubled relationship between Mahatma and his son Harilal Gandhi. Akshaye Khanna played the role of Harilal Gandhi, whereas Darshan Jariwala acted in the role of Gandhi.

The film was based on the biography of Harilal Gandhi, titled *Harilal Gandhi: A Life*, authored by Chandulal Bhagubhai Dalal. Unlike other films on Mahatma Gandhi, this film had a different take on the Father of the Nation. The film portrays a complicated and stressed relationship between Gandhi and his son Harilal.

The film depicts both having ideas and dreams in opposite direction. Harilal wants to study abroad to pursue a career of barrister like his father, while father wants to join him for the India's freedom. The film depicts a different facet of the life of Gandhi, where he despite being the 'Father of the Nation' could not be a good father to his son Harilal Gandhi. Even though, the it received mixed

*Lage Raho Munnabhai film makes a successful attempt to incorporate Gandhian principle in modern world.*

response, but the film went on to receive three National Film Awards, in the categories of Special Jury Award, Best Screenplay and Best Supporting.

### 10. *Gandhi to Hitler* (2011)

*Gandhi To Hitler*, a bilingual film based on World War-II, directed by Rakesh Ranjan Kumar, depicts the impact that letters written by Gandhi to Hitler had. The film was interesting film from the point of view that both leading characters were opposite in nature.

In a number of films- *Veer Savarkar*, *Legend of Bhagat Singh*, *Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero*, where actor Surendra Rajan played the role of Mahatma Gandhi. His role did not appear as central character. In all these films, Gandhi has been portrayed either in negative role or his philosophy has been criticised by the protagonist.

### Analysis of Films

The film-*Nine Hours to Rama* (1963), was banned soon after its release in India, owing to play fast and loose with facts. The film was blended with a little bit of history and too much of fictions. The film narrates hostility of Godse towards Muslims, his adherence to Hindu militant group, involvement with a married women Rani and a prostitute called Sheila. In fact, the film seemed like a melodramatic film consisting of romance and thriller.

The study of the portrayal of Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) with complete over view of ideologies, leadership skills, humanitarian facet, personal, public and political life, conflicts among other attributes of Mahatma Gandhi make it believe that Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) is a landmark film in the history of World Cinema. He received accolades across the world and also won 8 Academy Awards.

Although, Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) is a comprehensive biopic on Mahatma, yet he may deliberately or unknowingly exclude some important instances of Gandhi's life. If it is a deliberate move, it can be looked as not create any controversy or make any damage to the characters or to gain commercial benefit from the film. Such excluded instances include, (a) Gandhi visiting Bhagat Singh in jail, where he was undergoing death sentence (b) Gandhi and Ambedkar conflict over the removal of inequality between untouchables and other castes of Indian society (c) No mention of Subhash Chandra Bose appealing Gandhi not to extend support to British government in WW II (d) Ignoring the visual presence of the role of socialist leaders in Quit India movement.

*The film-Nine Hours to Rama* (1963), seemed like a melodramatic film consisting of romance and thriller.

Moreover, it is observed that Attenborough's *Gandhi* presented the Father of the Nation mainly from the perspective of his political career. He portrayed Gandhi as a great man, as a political saint. His film is not the description of Indian history, rather, a reflection of Gandhi as an individual and his contribution to the freedom struggle. Even though, Attenborough's *Gandhi* is best among all the films on the Father of the Nation, yet several instances of his political career were left out or omitted. The

filmmaker has also skipped sufferings of the other freedom fighters, who took bullets to their chest and suffered physical harassments.

Ben Kingsley's portrayal of Gandhi has been marked as the best among all the films based on Mahatma by several film critics of national and international repute. This film tops the chart not only because of the depiction of the truest story on India's Independence struggle but also the contribution of Gandhi to it in the best possible manner.

Shyam Benegal directed *Making of the Mahatma* (1996) mainly dealt with the life of Gandhi in South Africa. Feroz Khan directed *Gandhi, My Father* (2007) had shown the life of Mahatma in South Africa. The later half of the film was felt like a docudrama, where the eldest son Harilal involves in conflict with Mahatma-Kasturba, moving in parallel with their struggle for freedom movement.

Kamal Haasan starrer film *Hey Ram* (2000) seems like manipulated the history of India's freedom struggle to make it a melodramatic story. The film depicts the influence of modern film technology, digital imaging and melodramatic narration of the story. The film *-Hey Ram*, is not a story of Gandhi, rather, the story of the protagonist Saketh Ram, who gets involve in communal violence.

The film *Hey Ram* (2000) makes an attempt to give the audience another perspective of Mahatma Gandhi. The film portrays Gandhi in a negative light till the climax where things take in his favour. The positive image of Gandhi is re-established at the end of the film. The film portrayed the divergent side of the opinion for Mahatma Gandhi.

The films like *Sardar* (1993) and *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar* (2000), where Gandhi is presented in connection with the main character. The production of these films of freedom fighters can be seen in light of the massive response and honour received by Attenborough's *Gandhi* from the mass audience. Consequently, those organisations or political parties or sections of people following the ideology of these leaders made fervent attempts to portray their icons equal to or bigger than Gandhi on silver screen.

The film *Sardar* (1993) is not entirely based on Mahatma Gandhi, rather it describes mainly the life of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. However, it has several scenes where the life of Sardar and Mahatma intersect during the freedom struggle and after Independence of the country. The film contains some crucial references to Gandhi. It explores much into the dynamics between the two. The film essentially highlights Patel and Gandhiji work together for India's freedom. The film is a brilliant take to understand the ideologies of two of the greatest leaders of India.

In the film *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar* (2000), Mahatma Gandhi has been presented in negative shades. The protagonist of these films had often conflict with ideology of Gandhi. Although, in the film *Sardar* (1993), the protagonist had problem with the thoughts of Gandhi during his early years, but later he has been portrayed with respect for the decisions and ideology of Gandhi, even though they had often

arguments. These films have injected some scope for analysing the role, decisions and ideologies of Gandhi and his life from different perspectives and interpretation, not completely perfect as perceived normally.

The film *-Gandhi, My Father (2007)*, depicts the human side of Mahatma Gandhi, away from his struggle for India's freedom struggle. Even though, it was a maiden venture of Feroz Abbas Khan as director of the film, but director blended the costume and sets of the films to produce fervent movements of the post independent period of the county. The American weekly magazine Newsweek published about the film "as a gripping account of the stormy relationship between one of the world's greatest political icons and his rebellious eldest son." (Jessica, 2007).

The director makes a fruitful attempt to construct the film with melodrama and few sincere moments of comedy. The effort of the director to portray the clash of principle between Gandhi and his son-Harilal. The film describes Harilal carrying his Gandhi identity like a curse around his neck. The veteran actor Darshan Jariwala portrayed the role of the Father of the Nation, whose strong determination and scarification made the nation independent, but ironically failed to control his son Harilal. Shefali Shah and Bhumika Chawla, playing the roles Kasturba and Harilal's wife, made impactful performances of two women caught in the cross-fire of the father-son relationship. The film narrates Gandhi as difficult patriarch whose principles united people to fight against the British Raj but offended his own son.

The director made sincere effort to portray a balanced narrative, while not describing Gandhi or Harilal as villain. However, sticking to subject of film sincerely, the director narrated the pain the family went through in the highly conflicting relationship of father-son. The film clearly points out that Gandhi loved his son, but he loved his nation more than anything.

The film *-Legend of Bhagat Singh (2002)* portrays radical approach of Bhagat and his companion to throw away the British rule from the country. His approach depicted in the film almost threatens the Gandhi's method of non-violence for freedom struggle. The film shows Gandhi being concerned on the violence approach of Bhagat Singh, especially on the killing of Saunders and bombing of national assembly. The film also depicts the Gandhi being sacred of the growing popularity of Bhagat. In fact, the film shows Lord Irwin's preference for Gandhi than Bhagat Singh to continue as national leader. In one scene, Subhash Chandra Bose makes an attempt to call upon all the leaders, including Gandhi to appeal the British government to save Bhagat and his companions from gallows. The lives of the revolutionaries could not be saved as they were hung secretly a day before the actual schedule. Even the British government was also very much eager for the same. The film shows Gandhi in negative sheds and making no substantial effort to save the lives of Bhagat Singh and his companion.

*The film -Gandhi, My Father (2007), depicts the human side of Mahatma Gandhi, away from his struggle for India's freedom struggle.*

Rajkumar Hirani packaged his film *-On Lago Raho Munnabhai (2006)* in a typical mainstream film with dialogue songs and dance sequences in sync with the India's newly growing middle class after the globalisation of Indian economy. The film does not inherit anything from Indian freedom struggle except Gandhian philosophy,



presented as Gandhigiri with a comical flavour. The character of Mahatma Gandhi has been portrayed as a guide to work with moral conscience and guide in the film. He has been portrayed as a counsellor for the new Indian middle class to realise their dream.

*Lage Raho Munnabhai* (2006), one among those films, had a unique take on the concept and practice of Gandhi's doctrine, famously known as Gandhigiri. While practicing the Gandhigiri, the film offered variety of solutions to 'post-modern' era, which Gandhi had answered differently from 'modern-era'.

The protagonist of the film-Munnabhai sees Mahatma Gandhi's spirit that guides him to the path of non-violence and peace. The character of Gandhi appears more human in comparison to other films based directly or indirectly on Mahatma Gandhi. The film is both funny and poignant. The film had a strong cultural impact in India, popularising Gandhigiri and stirring popular imagination leading to a number of Gandhigiri style protests in India and abroad.

The story of film *Maine Gandhi ko Nahin Mara* (2005) is about a retired Hindi professor Uttam Chaudhary, who is suffering from amnesia. Chaudhary surfaces with his childhood trauma in which he recalls himself being accused of killing Mahatma. The versatile director Jahnua Barua directed the film with realistic and refreshing approach. The film is a kind of thought-provoking and non-musical film uncharacteristic Bollywood film. The script, acting and direction of the film beautifully handle issue of senile dementia and diminishing Gandhian ideologies in contemporary India. The film does not encompass Gandhi's life and struggle, rather it depicts fading away the sad state of the philosophy, teaching and Gandhism in India in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The film-*Gandhi to Hitler* (2011) does not depicts on life and struggle of Gandhi for the freedom of India. The film, rather, revolves around the letters written by Mahatma Gandhi to Hitler and Hitler's relationship with long-term lover Eva Braun. The director makes a fervent attempt to depicts the difference between the ideologies of Gandhi and Hitler. The effort to establish the superiority of Gandhism over Nazism is made in the film. Although, the filmmaker makes an ardent attempt to refresh the historical events, but the critics did not find the film up to the mark.

## Conclusion

The current study on the ranges of films, both portraying Mahatma Gandhi directly or indirectly to the stories of the films, helps to bring some interesting facts. The study of ten films, produced between 1963 to 2011, nearly a period of five decades, made to understand the trend of films produced in both English and Hindi language, shot in India either by Indian and foreign filmmakers.

Until the Hollywood director Mark Robson, who produced and directed *Nine Hours to Rama* (1963), no effort to produce and direct a film on the Father of the Nation. Even, the next film on Mahatma, titled *Gandhi* (1982), which came nearly decades later, was directed by a British filmmaker Richard Attenborough.

*The study of ten films, produced between 1963 to 2011, nearly a period of five decades, made to understand the trend of films produced in both English and Hindi language, shot in India either by Indian and foreign filmmakers.*

A number of Indian films dealt with ethos, life and teachings of the *Gandhi*, but when it comes to biopic, Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) is the only comprehensive biopic on the 'Father of the Nation'. The film of this British filmmaker is considered as the soundest version of biopic on Gandhi, despite several factually incorrect information on him. Even, the majority of the Indians know Gandhi as much as it depicted in the film of Attenborough. Above it, Feroze Abbas Khan, who directed the film *Gandhi, My Father*, also copied many scenes from the British filmmaker Attenborough, such as throwing out of Gandhi from train in South Africa and beaten up for burning the passes, etc.

Undoubtedly, Mahatma Gandhi led the most remarkable event of the historic freedom struggle for India, but Indian film industry never make an attempt to produce a complete and indigenous biopic of Mahatma. The films produced with portrayal of Gandhi in direct and indirect role in 1990s and 2000s and later reflected him both as human with larger than life image and as Mahatma. His persona is not just portrayed as Bapu or Mahatma but as solutions to the many problems of modern India.

The trend among the enthusiastic Indian filmmakers to produce and direct films on Mahatma Gandhi, either directly on him as a lead character or involving him as one of the characters, started after Attenborough's *Gandhi*. Till then, surprisingly there was no film on Gandhi from Indian side for long (Dwyer, 2011). Of the films, the majority of the films produced on Gandhi as central or side character were docudrama, rather than films of much commercial value. The films-*Sardar* (1993), the *Legend of Bhagat Singh* (2002), *Lage Raho Munnabhai* (2006) and *Gandhi My Father* (2007) had some songs and dance sequences.

Even though, the different directors of the films on Gandhi chose different perspectives and times and made careful attempts to interpret life, times, philosophy, teaching and practices of Gandhi through their moving cameras, but some of the important events related to him either deliberately dropped or by mistake. However, all the films studied have left some unforgettable memories of Gandhi's life, time and philosophies. For instance, the practices of Gandhigiri of *Lagey Raho Munnabhai* (2006) became a trend to teach people the practices of Gandhism in all spheres of their lives. The films *Hey Ram* (2000) has also very effectively pursued Gandhian ideology into practice.

The study also brought to light the successful attempts of different directors made to show the different facets of Gandhi's inner and outer conflict. In the film-*Gandhi My Father*, depicted Gandhi's principle of charity begins at home has brought his conflict with his son Harilal and displeasure to Kasturba too.

The films-*The Making of the Mahatma* (1996) and *Gandhi* (1982) have been also found to be successful in depicting inner and outer conflict. His multi-faceted persona, inner convictions, strengths and weaknesses, approach to national issues and style of traditional living and dressing have been vividly portrayed in both the films. In Shyam Benegal's *The Making of the Mahatma* (1996) presented Gandhi as the solution to the problems afflicting the world in general and the Indians in particular. However, many critiques have the opinion that Attenborough's fail to describe the inner personality of Mahatma Gandhi.

*Gandhi led the most remarkable event of the historic freedom struggle for India, but Indian film industry never make an attempt to produce a complete and indigenous biopic of Mahatma.*

The films like-*Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar* (2000) and *The Legend of Bhagat Singh* (2002) have presented Gandhi from different perspectives. His persona and leadership have been both presented positively and negatively in these films.

With times, the mainstream bollywood cinema taking a new perspective in the representation of Gandhi, based directly or indirectly on Gandhi has undergone a full circle. The early Indian cinema described during pre-independence and post-independence only on Gandhian themes or principles to eliminate untouchability. In the post liberalisation of Indian economy or the post-global cinema have presented Gandhi in a popular form as Bapu or Mahatma. His persona has been portrayed to address the problems of youth, growing corruption and crime. The current study is of the portrayal of Mahatma Gandhi in Celluloid helped to understand creative and timely presentation of Gandhi as a person and his philosophy from the need of different decades, without compromising or demeaning his values and significance.

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## Multi-Perspective Development Approach in Gandhi's Journalism Practice

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### Abstract

*Gandhi's newspaper stories are narratives where individuals are producers of change. He followed a macro sociological perspective (Dhingra, 2012) against the conventional development narrative, and linked individual, organizational and social influence on news production. This approach to journalism connected the people across the country as agents of change through information and knowledge leading to action in favour of the people. From the history of independent struggle of India, it is evident that, the strategy adopted by Gandhi was successful. His journalism continuously connected the people, to the existing system which called for a change to a the new strategies of resisting the oppressive forces and plans of the rulers, and supporting and adopting alternate strategies which are more appropriate and sustainable. The Study explores the nine characteristics of the modern development journalism and approach of Gandhi in Young India and Harijan and testing of general trend in young India from 1919-1922. The study brings evidence of macro sociological perspective and the use of nine characteristics extensively used by Gandhi and proves the use of multi development approach across his journalism practice.*

**Keywords:** development Journalism, Gandhian approach, newspaper, development

### Multifunctional Growth of Newspaper

Journalism has the enormous potential to support the social order or to oppose it by representing the human activity as intractable object and unfettered subject (Calcutt and Hammond, 2011:69). When journalism evolved as a specific form of writing from mid-1700s<sup>1</sup>, by reproducing the shortened version of a detailed reality of the society, its role also gradually ensued as a mediator. This interventions in personal and public affairs embarked waves of changes among its multi- stakeholders. Regardless of its size, newspapers contributed as sharers of information across several clusters of society and as powerful agent of mediator. This intercession also took place between state and the respective social groups they represented as political activity which was a primary mechanism for mediating (Calcutt and Hammond, 2011:63, Bonea (2016: 153) and Udupa (2016: 15).

Last century exercised journalism as whatever said by a press or broadcast station. It generally carried the language of a government propaganda, having huge gap for the free flow of information ( Sharma,2005:5). The state exercised its fundamental

*The Study explores the nine characteristics of the modern development journalism and approach of Gandhi in Young India and Harijan and testing of general trend in young India from 1919-1922.*

interest in maintaining and stabilising its power. The roles and functions of the press has been viewed as the relationship with the state and the public. One of the objectives of the earlier newspaper was to understand and give expressions to it. The four normative theories derived from the western concepts of linear development model sabotaged the function of press as to dissemination of information from a structural - functionalist perspective maintaining the power structure.

Soviet communist model served as extreme control of state power and media role as total subordination to the state. In authoritarian system press can be owned privately or by the government and both exercises the power on its subject. Libertarian model is suggested as ideal in which the function of the society is to advance the interest of its members (Siebert et al, 1956). Wright (1986), assumes that libertarian idealists kept the interest of the state while keeping the role of the media as surveillance of the state. Social responsibility model presents media with moral obligation to public providing necessary information to make informed decision (Ostini and Fung(2002). Alschull (1984/1995), Calcutt and Hammond, (2011) and Freedman (2014) ascertain media relations as market system seek to support and serve capitalism. They (newspaper and other news media) exploit human potential in building capital. Newspapers (later other news media also) extensively used the method of consolidating facts and comments to achieve it, where comments were composed by the lead writers which can also be a subjective idea (social facts).

This potential for intervention is used by the media owner or the writer for strengthening an existing social order to change it (Calcutt and Hammond, 2011). As a medium of day today communication in the public sphere, news media generally accompanied the new developmental approach initiated by the industrial growth and capital which act as active accelerators of social system, where human being to serve merely as objects to such capital. They mirrored this reality to the public, which were contradictory in aspects of use and exchange of value, social production and private appropriation (Calcutt and Hammond, 2011) and mass media professionals are part of this process (Sivaramakrishnan, 2014).

Journalism evolved as a response to the socio-political, economic and cultural response of the time. Many of the newspapers published in the nineteenth century were established with meagre resources, for the purpose of promoting social political and religious reform (Bonea (2016:275). Indian newspapers also had the same journey. Indian historians and history of Indian newspapers have coded the details of the early new papers and its focus from various dimension<sup>2</sup>. *Bengal Gazette* by James Augustus Hicky started in 1780 claimed to be as “a weekly political and commercial paper open to all parties but influenced by none’. But it regularly carried news of war between company’s forces and the Indian princes in various parts of the country and partisan campaigns<sup>3</sup> which primarily served the interest of the rulers. *Samachar Darpan* started by Raja Rammohun Roy, a weekly in Bengali and *friend of India*, a monthly in English focused to counter the attack on Indian religion by the Christian missionaries. The newspaper was also used to advocate reforms in the society, fighting superstitions and illiteracy. The Baptist missionaries of Serampore (Srirampur) in 1799 started the first missionary publication and later *Smachar Darpan* a Bengali weekly in 1818. Both focused on highlighting Christian

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faith and undermining some of the Hindu religious practices. Rammohum Roy launched three journals in and around 1821. *Sambad Kaumidi*, a weekly in Bengal edited by Bhawani Charan Banerji, *Mirat ul akhbar*, weekly in Persian, devoted to international affairs. They basically focused to educate the Indian public on their political, cultural and religious concerns. *Brahmunical* magazine was another regular one to keep the public interest.

*Bengal Hurkaru*, edited by James Sutherland in 1819 and *Mumbai- na- Samachar* in 1832 began by Fardoonji Murzban a Parsi entrepreneur are the earlier two dailies. They mostly carried government and military information. Other newspapers *Calcutta journal* started by Buckingham as weekly had its focus to admonish Governors and their duties 'Asiatic Mirror' the European owned newspaper published information on military affairs.

Both English and other language papers started by Indians favoured to awaken national impulses in the minds of the elite and they strengthened popular sentiments. The revolt of *sepoy* (army) against the foreign rulers, *Payam -e- Azadi* started in 1857 both Hindi and Urdu, *Samachar Sudhavarshan*, in Urdu and Persian, *Doorbeen* and *Sultan-ul Akhbar*, urged the people to drive the British out of India. The *Hindu* started in Madras, 1878 with national interest having its beneficiaries from prominent Christian and Muslim (Nawab Huamyoan, William Pillai) under the editorship of Subramania Iyer became the sole opinion of the nation, *Hindoo Patriot* founded in Culcutta, 1853, by a nationalist Chandra Ghosh also supported the national interest. Along with the national awakening (where significant reformers were actively involved), number of newspapers also increased from across the country. The natives who read these newspapers felt indignation against the Europeans (Rodrigues and Ranganathan 2015:177). There were a sizable number of journalists who were with political and administrative association served in significant newspapers of the time<sup>4</sup>.

### Social Reformers and Indian News Papers

Social reformers extensively used journalism to take their message to the public platform. Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842- 1901) started *Indu Prakash* in 1862, Gopal Ganesh Agrarkar (1856-95) founded national weekly *Kesari* in Marati along with Vishnu Krishna Chiplonkar and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. It stressed on the impact of continuous flow of writing form various parts of the country. He started his own paper in Bengali *Sudharak*, with the same mission.

Raghavan (1994) classified certain newspapers in early 1900s as revolutionary papers. In south *Hindu* advocated for radical social reform ending untouchability, child marriage, widow's re marriage, and women's education. The newspaper started by Lajpat Rai in Punjab *Bande Mataram* also focused on social reformation. *Indian sociologist* started by Shyamji Krishna Varma in London, *Talwar* started by Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and *Bande Mataram* by Bhikhaiji Cama from Paris, *Yugantar* started by Barindra Kumar in India, the Muslim journal *The Mohammedan Observer* had their political approaches and expressions in various sections. The British representatives in India also had their newspapers advocating their policies and controls over the Indian's national movements. Anne Besant worked in England

English and other language papers started by Indians favoured to awaken national impulses in the minds of the elite and they strengthened popular sentiments.

on the staff of the journal national Reformer began Madras Standard which later ran as *New India* from 1914, and another English daily *Swarajya* from Madras.

Gandhi started his newspaper *Young India* free form advertisements. His first venture in newspaper was *Indian opinion*, a weekly brought out in 1904 in South Africa, and published in four languages, English, Gujrati, Hindi and Tamil. The purpose was to express the grievance of the Indian's who are under the rule of white colonists (Raghavan, 1994). Gandhi started three more newspapers *Navajeevan* (1919-31) a weekly in Gujrati, *Young India* in English (1911-32) and *Harijan* in English from 1933-till 1948. There were other news dailies emerged as radical alternatives to the nationalist as major consequence of Gandhi (Raghavan, 1994). The newspaper by Motilal Nehru *Independent* in 1919 and *leader* (started in 1909) in which he was a board member; *Hindustan Times* launched Delhi in 1924 by Akali party supported the national movements. South India had two major newspapers which supported national movements *Janmabhoomi* started by Pattabhi Sitarmayya in 1919, *Swarajya* started in 1922 by T. Prakasam known as Andhara Kesari. They were also alternative to the British owned Madras *Mail* and the *Hindu* which adopted a moderate position after the time of Kasturiranga Iyengar (Raghavan, 1994).

Newspapers acquired this growth in two dimensions. One within the organization and the other, the development of the society surrounding it, building a sense of community (Guardian, n.d.:38; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). This takes place as newspaper engages a reader in multiples ways. As stated by Guardian, n.d: 38<sup>5</sup>, 'it may educate, stimulate, assist, or it may do the opposite and at the same time it may influence the life of a whole community'. However, it became difficult to separate the concept of journalism from the concept of creating the community (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). Consequently, the practice of journalism became more of a means to provide social connection along with knowledge. In another sense, newspapers uninterruptedly provided a platform for the public to relate to one another.

This power of information (both facts and comments) is eventually used for new social relations of production and productive activity. The comments of facts can present two sides. It can critically analyse a reality and identify the positive elements underlying within the system. This can be supporting progress, setting limits and configuring developmental dimensions. For a newspaper, it is a day today ongoing activity and presentation of a reality or contradiction of a reality. In this process, the authors and publishers of newspapers play as outsiders not as participants who describe what people do, and the kind of people they are. This non-participant role of the authors and publishers, eventually turned to be spectators (Calcutt and Hammond, 2011:70) and contradicted the potential role of news media as continuous recreation of human beings as interrelated subjects.

### Development Approaches and Communication

Varied approaches to development have shown its limitation to address the real development concerns across the societies. Conventional approach to development considers macrolevel measurement and State is treated as the unit of development. Subsequently, other approaches to development introduced multi- level method and

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series of effort with emphasis on the local economic and multicultural elements. Later regional inequality, ethnic mobilization and glocalization are considered as measurements of development.

The new approach to development considers, intersectional cooperation in development. This emphasizes that, development action requires the combination of state, market and society -led approach. Which includes, classical political economy, modernization, dependency, neo-liberalism and alternate development approach (Pieterse, 2010). Effective use of discourse analysis is an analytical instrument used in development, where an analysis can lead to a political position and knowledge of politics and finally in to action.

All the development approaches emphasize the need to have changes in the existing socio-political and economic structure. A shift in emphasis and perspective is a key element to bring changes in a system or a society. Perspective offers one angle on current trends in development and several trends are linked to changes (Pieterse, 2010). Hence change is an improved living condition, addressing power inequalities, and elimination of injustice. Liberation perspective to development suggests that it also should free the citizens from oppression and empower persons and communities (Melkote & Steeves, 2015).

Development model journalism has arrived as the combination of communist idea, anti-Americanism and social responsibility ideals (Hachten, 1981) Hachten defines the characteristics of this idea as individual rights be subordinated to the larger goals of nation-building and thus support authority.

Development communication emphasizes the organizing value of communication rather than mere transmission of message, participative social action communication and identifying solutions to a more just society (Mefalopulous (2008), Anand (2014), Melkote & Steeves 2015). Development journalism is an agent to change with no parameters for its exercise of content. When conventional journalism keeps its focus to report incidents and happenings of the time, this genre of reporting functions as a catalyst to social, economic and political change for the betterment of society. Modern development journalism has originated as the extension of agricultural sectors from The Philippines and India (Christine, 1980 and Anand, 2014) where they narrated the new agricultural methods during land reformation. Later this style of storytelling focused to tell several dimensions of development. Today, development journalism covers wider areas of reporting such as, a need for power supply in a community, the development plans of the government or a private sector, requirements of sanitation facilities in an urban area, the multiple infrastructure requirement of an interior village, details of a factory which pollutes the nearby river, the unhealthy waste management in a housing colony and the like.

### **Journalism and Development**

Individual journalistic values and autonomy of the person is a special requirement to enter in to journalism. The media content generated by a journalist is the interaction between the individual values, world view of the journalist and the media stance. It

*Development model journalism has arrived as the combination of communist idea, anti-Americanism and social responsibility ideals.*



can be generally classified as conservatism or liberalism. Conservatism is exercised as journalist opposing rapid change, avoiding extreme changes, maintain status quo and in favour of state policies. Liberalism is practised as journalists supporting social changes, competition, free-speech and individualism (MC Quail, 1994). Ostini and Fung (2002), classifies national and state media in to four categories of official control: democratic-conservative, democratic liberal, authoritarian-conservative, and authoritarian liberal.

Development journalism does not come under this classification. It may carry certain characteristics of liberalism and democratic values and practices multiple methods to 'communicate the organization mission and its activities. It uses advocacy communication effectively to promote key issues to raise awareness and to win support with the public or to influence relevant policy-making processes. It also explores and assesses operational situations, building wider consensus among stakeholders and multiple communication approaches, methods, and media to promote change and enhance effectiveness and sustainability of a project (Development Communication sourcebook, Broadening the boundaries of communication, World Bank, 2008)

Different scholars have defined development journalism from multiple dimensions V. Eshwar Ananad (2014), highlights the characteristics of development journalism as 'key to good governance; with the potential for influencing the decision-making process and imposing necessary checks and balances in the implementation of state and centrally sponsored schemes. It helps journalists exercise their right to know how various developmental plan programmes are being executed and how the taxpayers' money is being spent and it is expected to be critical of the government's policies and programmes.

According to Guardian (2009), Development Journalism is 'uncovering the political social and economic aspects of development in a particular country. It is intended to enlarge the area of free debate (Christine, 1978) requests for change made at the local level and to provide technical information about development problems and possibilities and about appropriate innovations' in response to these local needs (Rogers, 1976).

Development news should not be equated with government-controlled news and information handouts; rather it should be looked upon as a new form of investigative reporting It is further noted that, the journalist's job on a development newsbeat is to critically examine, evaluate and report the relevance of a development project to national and local needs, the difference between a planned scheme and its actual implementation, and the differences between its impact on people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is (Aggarwala, 1978, 1979).

According to Quebral (1975), it is used for speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfilment of human potential'. Further it strives to inform, educate, and motivate the people to participate in the growth process (Raghawan and Gopalakrishnan, 1979). It is also information, used to support development goals (Christine, 1980).

*Development journalism as key to good governance with the potential for influencing the decision-making process and imposing necessary checks and balances in the implementation of state and centrally sponsored schemes.*

Based on the above nature of development communication and development journalism, the following nine characteristics can be summarized as the traits of development journalism.

- Focus to improve the socio-economic condition of the people
- Stories from people's perspective and not equated with government-controlled news and handouts
- Stories with the potential for decision making and public participation
- Focus to improve public participation
- Brings out the corruption of the rulers and be critical of the authority:
- Help to exercise the right to know development plans
- Carry the knowledge of developmental reports and plans
- To keep track of the progress
- Offers alternate suggestions and plans/models to empower the people

### **Gandhi's Approach to Journalism**

Nineteenth century journalists included rather prominent group of elite practitioners by virtue of their association with the colonial administration (Bonea, 2016:158). When Gandhi started his newspapers, there were number of other newspapers in India, started by the European rulers and the native Indians. Gandhi had a different focus when he began newspapers. He stated in *Young India*, 1919, "I have taken up Journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life". He cleared the objects of journalism in his autography as 'to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments; and fearlessly expose popular defects'.

As a keen observer and analyst of the socio-political, economic and cultural changes of Indian society, Gandhi extensively used journalism to connect the people across the nation. He did not follow the routine and the conventional style of constructing the story, or to support the power structure or capital. Both as writer and editor, Gandhi adopted a unique style in all the newspapers he worked where he placed the struggling nation at the centre of his writings, especially their sustenance and political freedom. He instilled new thought processes in the minds of the ordinary people and the native elites, that they need to be freed from the multiple oppressive forces.

Gandhi's journalistic writings stem from a society, where there is a need to correct the information asymmetries and enhance social assistance that would lead to build trust, enhance social mobility and social inclusion which is a key element in development (Jutting and Prizzon, 2013). This can lead to building better economic policies and social stability (Narayan, 1999) and ultimately empowering the nation which politically, socially and economically devastating condition.

### **Case Study**

Content analysis of two newspapers *Young India* and *Harijan*, where Gandhi worked as writer and editor is assessed in the light of understanding the nine characteristics of development Journalism.

*Gandhi  
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nation.*

The samples used for the study are two newspapers *Young India* 1919 to 1931 and selected copies of *Harijan*, are used to test the application of nine characteristics of development journalism. In order to assess the general trend, 75 stories of *Young India* (1919-1922) by Mahatama Gandhi, from second edition published by S. Ganeshan, Triplicane, Madra, S. E. 1924 is used. Purposive sampling technique is used to select the stories to represent the author's direct view.

The contents written and edited by Gandhi reflects two specific characteristics in line with development communication: (i) the realistic images of a suppressed nation that help reflect the actual picture of the reality in the minds of the people and (ii) advocating alternative to the current oppressive condition and to dream for a better nation, where there is more justice and security with a sense of nationalism. The below writings are appeals to the public and to the government and a call for structural change.

*Hindus, Parsis, Christians, or Jews if we wish to live as one nation, surely the interest of any of us must be to the interest of all* (Young India, Vol:1. No.53, December 3, 1919), *One thing that we need is undoubtedly freedom from British control in any shape or form, but freedom from such control of any other power is equally our need in terms of independence.* (Vol, XI, Young India, Jan 3, 1929). *Our government of India will none be secure until we can convert the people of India* (Vol. 1 no. 53 November, 1919).

The titles of the stories that reflect change and social reality are: philosophy of resistance as strength, details and complexity of economic and political oppression; details of unfavourable practices and decisions of the rulers on the nation; need for awakening from the bondedness of practices like untouchability and superstition; ;need to educate all Indians especially the ordinary people and to keep the focus of education as the betterment of general public and not merely serving the needs and interests of the foreign rulers; treat women as dignified person and to support the 'outcaste' and their cause.

### **Gandhi Remained Free from the Control of the State or Any Other Ownership**

Gandhi remained as an independent thinker and kept his writings unbiased, yet with a specific emphasis to the socio- political and economic reality of the time.

### **Understanding the Social, Cultural and Economic Reality by Himself**

Gandhi travelled across the country as an ordinary person to understand their life realities. He supported movements against *sati*, started campaigns for positive change, took steps to abolish untouchability to cleanse the Indian society from the oppressive forces within and outside. He also set examples and models and called people to act up on it. These consistent messages urged the people to think differently and opt for newer perspectives in their personal choices, matters related to religion and even politics. Gandhi also made sure that sharing certain positive experience can set good examples for others to replicate. The two major Indian newspapers *Harijan* and *Young India* where he was mostly associated, carried both success and failure

stories of protests, new learnings from a political or community action, opening of educational institutions and efforts initiated to support the people. *Harijan* regularly published information such as the ‘list of temples and wells opened for the ‘untouchables, update on starting of schools and free hostels opened for the *Harijan boys*, beginning of *purohit* classes for the children of Harijans to train them as priests to officiate at *Sanskaras*, starting Hindu Ashram for the education of *Harijan boys* etc.<sup>6</sup> which were signs of positive changes.

### Reflection of Characteristics of Development Journalism in *Young India* and *Harijan*.

- Focus to improve the socio-economic condition of the people: Several of Gandhi’s writings carried this perception. He wrote in *Young India*, October 6, 1920 that:

“I do not examine the duty of the capitalist. If the labourers alone were to understand his rights and responsibilities and confine himself to the purest means both must gain. But two things are needful- both the demands and the means adopted to enforce them must be just and clear. It is unlawful demand which seeks merely to take advantages of the capitalists’ position. But it is an altogether lawful demand when the labourer asks for enough wages to enable him to maintain himself and to educate the children decently. It is a national degradation when little children are removed from schools and are employed in earning wages. It is necessary for the labourers to develop their minds by receiving education and to educate their children”.

- Stories from people’s perspective and not equated with government-controlled news and handouts:

Gandhi’s journalism style just not carried the perspective of the people alone, instead it highlighted that, information can motivate them for public action, and be useful for personal and familial needs. Writings on *Young India* below reveals the same:

“They do not feel as the others do that these wrongs show consciously that the sum total of the activity of the present Government is injurious to national growth...I feel that the nations’ children suffer degradation in the government schools.

Labour and unemployment. I am inclined to think that this needs more diligent study than it appears to have given to it” (*Young India*, January 9, 1927).

- Stories with the potential for decision making and public participation:

Number of Gandhi’s writing focused to lead the ordinary Indian citizen to make decision in favour of a country with self-rule (*Swaraj*) and leading its people to an independent entity was the essence of all his writing approach. The following writings in *Young India* states that concepts:

*Harijan and Young India where he was mostly associated, carried both success and failure stories of protests, new learnings from a political or community action, opening of educational institutions and efforts initiated to support the people.*

“India cannot be free so long as India voluntarily encourages or tolerates the economic drain which has been going for the past century and a half. ...But we ought not to be dependent. India has the ability to manufacture all her cloth if her children will work for it. (January 19, 1921)

The depressed class problem is a vital part of the cause. Swaraj is as inconceivable without full reparation to the ‘depressed’ classes as it is impossible without real Hindu- Muslim unity. ...The one who sincerely sympathises with a starving man is presumed to share such sufferings, and is not expected to shoot him when the latter shows symptoms of becoming mad through the pangs of hunger. The responsibility of for anarchy, if it does overtake India, will therefore rest with the Indian government and with those who support it in spite of its wrongs not up on those who refuses to perform the impossible task of making people forget vital wrongs and try to direct their anger in a proper channel” (May 9, 1921).

- Focus to improve public participation

The education on non-cooperation and a nation-wide participation was the result of his consistent writing:

*“I do not consider Non-co-operation to be a rebellion, because it is free from violence, rebellion in just sense is a duty, the extent of opposition being determined by the measure of the injustice done and felt...Non cooperation will bring about cessation of all other activities”*( Young India June,2 1920).

*Gandhi explained his attitude on untouchability and the urgent need to demolish this evil to build justice and for a free India. He Wrote that ‘untouchability is against the fundamental principles of humanity’ (Harijan, February 11, 1933). Gandhi justified the non-co-operation committee and their activity is voluntary and for a just cause.*

*‘It is no fault in committee. It has been purposely restricted to those who are able to give their whole time and attention to the work of organizing Non-cooperation and in the process of ensuring obedience to instructions, other discipline and non-violence’*(Young India, June 23, 1920).

*“There is a non – violent boycott which we shall be bound to practise, if we are to make any impression. We must not compromise with what we believe to be an untruth, whether it resides in a white skin or a brown. Such boycott is a political boycott”* ( Young India, Dec 8, 1920).

- Brings out the corruption of the rulers and be critical of the authority:

The following is an example for this nature of Gandhi’s newspaper writing:

*“I must confess that I have read the Vicergal utterance with deep pain... I must respect fully call his mischievous misrepresentation of the attitude of the*

Gandhi’s writing focused to lead the ordinary Indian citizen to make decision in favour of a country with self-rule ( Swaraj)

*congress and the Khilafat organizations. In connection with visit of His Royal Highness. His Excellency does not realise what grievous wrong he is doing to his own people by confusing them with the British administrators in India” (January, 19, 1922).*

- Help to exercise the right to know development plans:

Below is an example, where Gandhi expressed his strong views on the purpose of English education and English owned mills established in India, that they are not intended to help the Indians.

*“It is my considered opinion that English education in the manner it has been given has emasculated the English- educated Indian, it has put a severe strain up on the Indian students’ nervous energy, and had made of us imitators. The process of displacing the vernacular has been one of the saddest chapters in the British connection” (Young India, April 7, 1921).*

*“I am told that there are in India English-owned mills which do not admit Indian shareholders. If this information be true, I would consider cloth manufactured in such mills to be foreign cloth. Moreover, such cloth bears the taint of ill-will. However well-made such cloth may be, it should be avoided” ( Young India, June 21, 1919).*

- Carry the knowledge of developmental reports and plans:

Both *Harijan* and *Young India* regularly carried the ongoing happenings of the time which were closely related to the public and the rulers, and also the alternate efforts taken by the opponents. Besides this *Harijan* regularly reported the updates of new development plans and other activities which would improve the social status of the community. The front page of February 11, 1933 lists one such updates:

*“Harijan is being published by and for the servants of Untouchables Society at my request.... It is being published on the assumption that. It is necessary for the people in the different provinces to know the progress of the reform from week to week in the provinces other than their own.....This is a much needed reform in which all classes should interest themselves”.*

*Temples open: Berhampur, Madras, Bengal, Gujrat, New Delhi, Baroda (15 temples)*

*Wells opened: One well in Messrs, Four in Ladpur; Newly constructed in Kings way, New Delhi*

*Schools started: Two night schools in Angul and Jajpur talikas , Orissa, Two night schools in Mody Street Bombay, On night school at Royapettah, Madra*

city, One night school at Jhansi, UP; Utkal Board started free hostel in Cuttack ten Harijan boys receive secondary education, Boarding house Kaivalys Kutir, in Cuttack for harijan students; Punjab Started purohit classes for children of Harijans to train them as priests; Hindu Ashram started as Amritsar for the education of boys. Harijan; March 4 1933 carried the update that Trichur (Cochin Municipality) has engaged three Pulayas as street sweepers, thus necessarily giving these lowest of the untouchable access to caste Hindu quarters.

- To keep track of progress:

A huge volume of Gandhi's journalism was to keep track of the progress of political situation as well as other movements that had connection with the Indian nation and to explain and interpret it to the people. Some of the titles of the writings which explains progress of Congress working committee and Swaraj are: The full details of congress working committee and its function, (June 29, 1921), On All India Congress Committee (November 10, 1920), Hind Swaraj of Indian Rule (January 26, 1921), A complete answer to Swaraj, The condition of Swaraj, explaining the challenges in details (February 23, 1921), Action oriented work - Accomplish swaraj in one year with Non- co-operation (September 22, 1920) What will kill non- cooperation (February 16, 1921). One hundred women from Barisal, that they had become members of the congress (September 15, 1921).

Other writings on tracking the progress are: details of people who were arrested at different parts of the country. Approaching non-cooperation as one of compelling co-operation as the struggle- 'The arrest of Lala Lajpatrai and Messrs. Lalkhan, Santanam and Gopichand in the Punjab, of Messrs. Phookan and Bardolai in Assam, Babu Jintendralal Banerji in Bengal, Maulana Mohiuddin and others in Ajmir, and Mr. Harkarannath Mishra ns in Others in Luknow means business. That Government is not tolerating non-cooperation (October 8, 1921).

- Offers alternate suggestions and plans to empower the people:

Gandhi presented *swaraj* as the dream of the nation and non-co-operation as away of protest and to influence the rulers. He explained the complete detail of Swaraj, and non co-operation movement through the newspaper to the public. The copies *Young India* Vol.1. No. 49, 1919, Edited by M. K. Gandhi, and *Harijan* Vol.1, February 11, 1933, Poona, establishes the same factors.

Gandhi recognized the role of women and took effort to bring them to the forefront. In *Young India* July 21, 1921 he wrote:

*"How many of the Non-Cooperators in India do not regard women as objects of enjoyment? ... I am unable to subscribe that the treatment of women is a 'disease as bad as untouchability:*

*Gandhi accomplished swaraj in one year with Non- cooperation (September 22, 1920).*

His approaches to the educational problem in (*Young India* 1919), on medium of instruction, was that:

*“The best we can make of this government is to ignore its existence and to isolate it as much as possible from our life, believing that contact with it is corrupting and degrading. The movement is intended to end or mend the system they have force up on us “(Nov. 17. 1921).*

- General Trends of the Stories in Young India

To determine general trend in Gandhi’s writing, a sample of 75 stories from *Young India* (1919- 1922) is examined.

Sl. no	Category of stories	No. of stories	%
1	Focus to improve the socio -economic condition of the people	13	17.3%
2	Stories from people’s perspective and not equated with government-controlled news and handouts	9	12%
3	Stories with the potential for decision making and public participation	7	9.3%
4	Focus to improve public participation	11	14.6%
5	Brings out the corruption of the rulers and be critical of the authority:	12	16%
6	Help to exercise the right to know development plans	4	5.3%
7	Carry the knowledge of developmental reports and plans	3	4%
8	To keep track of the progress	5	6.6%
9	Offers alternate suggestions and plans to empower the people	11	14,6%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100%</b>

A coding scheme was developed to examine the nature of stories. The important innovation is testing the nine characteristics against the message reflects in the stories. Sample is selected based on purposive sampling from a total number of 247 stories whose title reflect Gandhi’s views, reflection of facts, opinion and comments. They are Gandhi’s letter writings, appeals, alerts, response to appeals, directions, explanations, introspection, stories with titles focuses on socio- economic situations and programmes organized by Gandhi on non -corporation which is directly connected to the socio – economic and political condition of the country. The prominent single characteristic of development journalism is coded from the selected stories.

*A coding scheme was developed to examine the nature of stories.*

Table: 8. 1 Reflection of development approaches in Gandhi’s journalism practice.



One of the objectives of journalism is to understand the popular feeling and give expressions to it. Gandhian style of journalism was breaking the stereotypical journalism practices followed by the major newspapers of his time. His approach was proved to be a successful one, rich with all the nine characteristics of development journalism defined and exercised in the twenty-first century.

The Table 8.1 shows that Gandhi used a multi-development approach throughout his writings. As per the table, the focus of writing is to keep watching the society as a whole especially from the perspective of the ordinary people. This expresses the author's responsibility to serve the society as the primary role. The author does not focus on single element alone in the journalism practice. Maximum number of stories (17% ) focused to improve the socio -economic condition of the people. Another 16% of the stories focuses to bring out the corruption of the rulers and be critical of the authority. The author (and editor) give preference to improve the public participation and 14.6% of the stories emphasizes this element. Equal importance is given to alternate suggestions and plans to empower the people (14.6% of the stories), This clearly focuses that Gandhi was not a mere preacher but a practitioner. Participation in decision making (9.3% of the stories) and public participation is an important element in development which Gandhi has focused well. Similarly, empowering the ordinary people on their right to know the development plans and knowledge of development reports and plans is also a priority. Ongoing information ( 6.6% of the stories), keeping tracks ( 6.6%) of the exact situation of the public struggles, government moves, new plans and challenges and impact carries the another important part of Gandhi's journalism. Thus, it can be summarised that Gandhi's writings based on multiple approach voiced his personal conscience out loud and also allowed others to do the same. It is evident that Gandhi did not function as a mere reporter: an individual assigned to keep someone informed (Stephens, 2014), but as a communicator with a mission to understand popular feelings and give expression to it.

Gandhi's stories are narratives where individuals are producers of change. He followed a macro sociological perspective ( Dhingra (2012: 5) against the conventional development narrative, and linked individual, organizational and social influence on news production. From the history of independence struggle of India, it is evident that, the strategy adopted by Gandhi was successful which continuously connected the people, to the existing system (bad economic, educational, political and religious condition) to the strategies of the foreign powers and its impact (through appropriate interpretations and comments) and the new strategies of resisting the oppressive forces and plans of the rulers, supporting and adopting alternate strategies which are more appropriate and sustainable for the ordinary Indian.

Today, Indian press is obsessed with politics and reporters work as Public Relation officers of politicians and corporates to maintain their power. The need of the hour is creative reporting where reporters should provide adequate local coverage and appropriate interpretation of the reality. As the technology driven modern journalism ignores multiculturalism and tend to leave behind those not in the mainstream, Gandhian Journalism is a model to re-focus and make journalism relevant and engaging with a clear development perspective for all developing countries.

*One of the objectives of journalism is to understand the popular feeling and give expressions to it. Gandhian style of journalism was breaking the stereotypical journalism practices followed by the major newspapers of his time.*

**End Notes and References**

- 1 See Harrower Inside reporting: A practical guide to the craft of journalism. It considers the time line of journalism in the west.
- 2 See Raghavan G. N. S See Raghavan G. N. S , The Press In India; A New story
- 3 See Raghavan G. N. S , The Press In India; A New story, page 2- 4
- 4 See Raghavan G. N. S , The Press In India; A New story page 27-28
- 5 See Calcutt Andrew and Hammond Philip, Journalism studies, 2011, Routledge, New York, page 69
- 6 Harijan, February,11, 1933, Poona
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## Abstract

*Mahatma Gandhi through his speeches and writings was able to connect, to a common man in the street to a higher official in some foreign country, that was his skill of communication. His use of language and content of messages, particularly his newspaper writings, are studied extensively to understand his success as a communicator. But perhaps communication which has made him such a popular personality world-over was not only his letters, articles, speeches and books but his non-verbal communication/ connect which is happening even now. The non-verbal communication which can be understood even after 70 years of his death and that too even by a person who does not have much of literacy skills. His clothing, his speed, his fasting, his charkha, his walking stick and his silence have communicated and immortalised his messages like no other person. Three monkeys each representing no evil seeing, hearing and speaking popularised by him is a strong symbol communicating lot of ideas. All these symbols are being used today for successful connect with masses like Swachh Bharat Campaign (his spectacles). This paper is an attempt to understand non-verbal communication which Gandhi knowingly or unknowingly did.*

**Keywords:** Mahatma Gandhi, communication, Non-verbal communication, symbols

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, more commonly known as Mahatma Gandhi, was a popular leader not only in India, country where he was born, but in various other countries of the world (Bhatt, 2013; Natarajan, 2013). He is revered much in South Africa, the country where his thoughts and ideas for the first time took the form of a movement for equality. He mobilised oppressed people in South Africa and lead them to fight for their rights (Kripalani, 1968). Of course, his ideology was an ideal one for humankind and thus was never opposed on basis of principles but what made people connect with him was his honesty, determination and hard-work. And it is very challenging to make people show these values in a physical form i.e. to make people believe that these values are right and Gandhi is one with these values. It is his communication skills that he used to make people believe in his beliefs and he himself stood for his thoughts and ideas.

Gandhi through his speeches and writings was able to connect to ordinary man in the street to a higher official in some other foreign country that was his skill of communication. He wrote extensively in newspapers and that too, not only in English but also in regional languages as he believed that to connect with masses, he need to communicate with them in their languages. His use of language and content of messages are studied in detail to understand his success as a communicator. But

*The paper is an attempt to understand non-verbal communication which Gandhi knowingly or unknowingly did.*

perhaps communication which has made him such a popular personality world-over was not only his letters, articles, speeches and books but his non-verbal communication/connect which is happening even now. He assimilated his ideas into certain practices and things so much that even after 70 years of his death, he is understood by everyone even by ones who do not possess much of literacy skills (Nath, N. D.). Emphasising the importance of symbols in communication of Gandhi, Parel (1969) says that for comprehensive understanding of Gandhi's politics, the study of symbolism is indispensable. The author explains that Gandhi was not the first to relate virtues to political action but, "What is peculiar to Gandhi, however, is that in addition to prescribe certain virtues, he also devised certain political symbols, which were to aid, in concrete political situations, the practice of one or other of these virtues (514)." Emphasising that Gandhi had the art of using symbols which everyone can relate to Kripalani (1968) said, "He has a genius for acting through symbols which all can understand (195)." Rao & Thombre (2015) in their book *Intercultural Communication* notes, "...he was a master of using nonverbal communication skills including silence, fasting, personal presence, charisma and his deliberate clothing style as well as careful use of symbols such as salt that were at the core of his strategy to awaken the nation (154)." Nath (n.d) writes, "...Gandhi's shining bald head, Mickey mouse ears, his walking sticks, pair of round spectacles, sandals, shawl wrapped loosely around his shoulders in the cold months, the time piece tucked into his dhoti, the pet goat, etc., have become a part of Gandhian imaginary."

Pande (2018) says that Gandhi was perhaps the finest connoisseur of use of symbols and percepts in Indian politics. These certain practices and things became symbols of his ideas.

His clothing, his speed, his fasting, his charkha, his walking stick and his silence have communicated and immortalised his messages like no other person's. Three monkeys each representing no evil seeing, hearing and speaking popularised by him is a strong symbol, communicating lot of ideas, though the concept of three wise monkeys is traced back to Japan or China (Andovovska, 2018). Even today, all these symbols communicate his ideas to masses and hence, are used to promote his ideas. The recent example is use of his round spectacles in Swachh Bharat Campaign.

Laustsen and Petersen (2016) in their research on non-verbal cues in political communication conclude that non-verbal cues associated with the source/sender plays an important role in acceptability of the sender among audience.

This think piece is an attempt to understand non-verbal communication or symbols which Gandhi knowingly or unknowingly used in communicating his ideas. This understanding of non-verbal communication would be very helpful for the field of communication as verbal communication, i.e use of words, is just a part of communication. Non-verbal communication is the communication which occurs without the use of words (Rao & Thombre, 2015; Remland, 2015; Neuliep, 2017). Non-verbal communication includes communication through body movements, use of space and time, eye-contact, dress, use of touch and even smell. Non-verbal communication is many a times considered more honest as it is not much planned

*Gandhi had the art of using symbols which everyone can relate to Kripalani (1968). Rao & Thombre (2015) "...he was a master of using nonverbal communication skills including silence, fasting, personal presence, charisma and his deliberate clothing style.*

or encoded in a proper way (Neuliep, 2017). Though at the same time, it sometimes become liable to be misinterpreted as the ‘meanings’ of non-verbal cues are not widely agreed upon especially across different cultures and settings. Analysis of non-verbal communication/ symbols help in understanding that how these can be utilised to put our messages across.

### **Gandhi and Non-Verbal Communication**

The story of Gandhi’s fight against exploitation and for equality starts from a moving image when he is thrown out of a train in South Africa (Natarajan, 2013). The image became a significant one to understand the kind and extent of discrimination to which some people on basis of race were subjected to in South Africa. Goswami (2009) writes, “Gandhiji’s personal experiences of discrimination including the incident where he was thrown out of a train at Maritzburg in spite of having a valid ticket, are well recounted (394).” The expression on Gandhi’s face with his eyes fixed on exploiter’s face is telling of seeing in eye the wrong which people were subjected to in their own land.

Hereafter started the journey of a leader who remained successful in connecting with people at large and putting his messages across. Underlining the importance of simple things in life of Gandhi, Khanduri (2012), “The charkha (spinning wheel) and circular rimmed spectacles (Gandhi glasses) are among things that constitute public memory as well as archiving Gandhi’s politics (303).”

### **His Clothing**

Gandhi’s minimalist clothing (only loin-cloth on lower body and chaddar, if necessary) is symbolic and has earned him many titles including half-naked fakir (Khanduri, 2012). Gandhi experimented a lot with his sartorial sense, from his English suits when he went to study in London, to shirt and trousers with turban in South Africa and to lungi and kurta (Mishra, 2012). In childhood and youth days, Gandhi used to dress as a usual person but when he took up a mission to belong to his country, he embraced its problems whole-heartedly and the problems of the country got a reflection in his clothing as were in his thoughts (Rao & Thombre, 2015). He decided to go for minimum clothes to cover his body as he got to know of scarce resources. Even at international platforms, he never budged because of his clothing from meeting important leaders who used to come in well-dressed suits (Mishra, 2012).

His Gandhi topi (white cap) is still recognised as a part of attire of Indian politician at world level. Even giving upon on turban and going for topi was also a decision inspired by scarcity of resources he saw around as he said that the cloth of his turban was long enough to make ten caps, and hence, in covering ten heads (Dave, 2012). Many important leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru wore Gandhi topi (Whitehead, 2014). Even today, if one wants to portray a noble cause, one does it wearing Gandhi topi. Anna Hazare who started a corruption-free India campaign made Gandhi topi quite popular once again among common people and thereafter, topi became an important part of Aam Adami Party campaign which terms itself as a culmination of anti-corruption campaign (Whitehead, 2014).

*Gandhi’s minimalist clothing (only loin-cloth on lower body and chaddar, if necessary) is symbolic and has earned him many titles including half-naked fakir.*

His feet went barefoot but had sandals sometimes, which was also a call against boots and shoes.

Gonsalves (2010) says that Gandhi made sartorial choice a political choice when he gave an alternative to his people to go for Indian dress made of Indian material rather than something coming from outside and that too a product from capital-intensive industry.

### **His Charkha (Spinning Wheel) and Khadi**

His use of spinning wheel (charkha) is a symbol of self-respect which one earns oneself instead of depending on anyone else. When Gandhi gave a call to wear Khadi, he realised that everyone cannot afford Khadi, so he asked everyone to spin at home instead of buying it from anywhere else. Gandhi also saw spinning as a work opportunity for semi-starved and semi-employed especially among women. Gandhi writes in his autobiography, “My idea is to get these women to spin yarn, and to clothe the people of India with Khadi woven out of it (Mahadev, 2018, 440).” Brown (2010) says that spinning became such a popular economic and political activity that it brought the diverse population of South Asia together, and allowed the national movement for freedom struggle especially in India to become movement which connected with masses on a much broader scale. Crediting Khadi and the spinning wheel as the most powerful Gandhian political symbol, Parel (1969) says that Khadi realised four values; firstly economic self-sufficiency, secondly mastery over machinery, thirdly social and political harmony between the rich and the poor and fourthly the values of Swaraj or national independence. The twin activities of wearing Khadi and spinning, when were combined with the burning of foreign clothes created quite a kind of political as well as economic movement. Joshi (2002) notes that for Gandhi, Khadi was a symbol of self-reliance, nationalism and equality.

Gonsalves (2010) says in Khadi, “... Gandhi understood the importance of a symbol to define his people’s socio-political identity; to maintain unity in their complex diversity; to provide a vision towards which all could orientate their physical, psychological and spiritual energies; to build unswerving commitment and daily perseverance in the face of temptations to look back or to stray(88).”

### **His Walking, Speed and Padyatras**

Gandhi travelled a lot on his feet to know his country and to know people. Attributing the popularisation of padyatras (walks on foot) to Gandhi, Kumar (2017) says that he was probably the first one to use padyatras to mobilise people for various social and political causes which were also part of Indian freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi used his padyatras as a non-violent means of showing determination, solidarity and struggle for justice (Gonsalves, 2010). Tracing the roots of padyatras in spiritual and religious moorings, Kumar (2017) says, “Gandhi’s use of the padayatra symbolized the use of a traditional means to achieve modern ends (33).”

His speed symbolises his focus and determination to achieve his goals. It shows how distractions and obstacles were not paid any heed by him. Neither there was any lookout for support after a decision to make something is achieved.

*Gonsalves (2010)  
says in Khadi,  
“(... Gandhi  
understood the  
importance of a  
symbol to define  
his people’s  
socio-political  
identity; to  
maintain unity  
in their complex  
diversity;).*



Photographs of his walking stick held up by a child and walking ahead of him is reminiscent of his connect with children as well. When he used to walk with his walking stick in hand, hundreds of people including children would join him (Dave, 2012).

### His fasts

His fasting has become a well-known non-violent and persuasive tool used by him (Gonsalves, 2010). Rao & Thombre (2015) said, “Gandhi can be credited to be the first leader who used fasting as a means of nonviolent, nonverbal persuasion, a symbolic tactic that evoked sympathy and (this) support for his cause (155).” It is not just a method for external visibility but Gandhi believed that fasting is necessary for self-purification. “... if physical fasting is not accompanied by mental fasting, it is bound to end in hypocrisy and disaster ( Mahadev, 2018, 299).” Sharma (2014) says that for Gandhi, fasting symbolised physical and moral cleansing and overcoming the self and hence, had to be used cautiously, selflessly and non-coercively. Fasting is one of the means to the end of self-restraint (Mahadev, 2018). Parel (1969) says that fasting of Gandhi symbolised vicarious suffering in political action and purification and enlightenment. It is quite widely used till today by people as a method of non-violent protest.

### His Silence

His silence has communicated and immortalised his messages like no other person. Gonsalves (2010) says that silence affected communication of Gandhi qualitatively as an end as well as a means. He explains that as an end, the practitioner of silence encounters the truth by going into self while as a means, silence gives an opportunity to encode the desired message. Silence can also be interpreted as the first level of communication which is intrapersonal communication. In this level, one connects with oneself and this level forms the basis of every other higher level of communication. Emphasising on the importance of intra-personal communication, McQuail (2010) says that until the encoder of a message is clear about one’s message, the encoder would not be able to communicate effectively. In other words, till the time the encoder is clear or has not thought about the message enough, the encoder cannot share one’s message with outside world. While as a means, it is used to give a signal to other person as a sign of protest sometimes. Rao & Thombre (2015) writes that for Gandhi, silence was a source from which action emanated and also through which he accomplished personal and public goals.

Both silence and fasting test the inner strength and determination of a practitioner and adds value to the demand of the practitioner. However, both are also considered by some as a tool of emotional blackmail especially in fasting as the health of the person concerned comes into question.

Anna Hazare, social activist based in Maharashtra and Arvind Kejriwal, present Chief Minister, New Delhi have employed the peaceful method of fasting to not only force the government to take steps towards their demands but also for mobilising lot of people if not exactly starting a new phase in Indian political history. After the use of fasting by these two leaders, *Anshan* has become quite a vogue.

*“Gandhi can be credited to be the first leader who used fasting as a means of nonviolent, nonverbal persuasion.”*

## His Other Means of Protest

His act of going to jail time and again brings out his message vividly when he tries to emphasise that the ruler would try to suppress you in every possible way to the extent that your freedom would be curbed in every way but this should be no deterrence to one's goal. Bhatt (2013) writes that for Gandhi, prison was more of a luxury than punishment as he could devote more time to prayer and study.

His act of burning foreign clothes too found popularity among people as they could easily connect to the idea that things which are draining on their country's resource, they need to give up them wholly.

His flouting of norms like civil disobedience and salt satyagraha became symbolic of not abiding by oppressive rules. Satyagraha became synonymous with courage, self-discipline and humility under Gandhi (Bhatt, 2013).

Applying the study of space around Gandhi, which is called proxemics, would tell that Gandhi's space was a public space which otherwise is categorised as intimate, personal, social and public. Gandhi's ashrams were open places for everybody and when he used to visit different places, he used to stay with friends where everybody willing to meet him was welcome.

### Analysis

The acceptability of Gandhi perhaps is also evident from various attempts of present-day governments to use Gandhi's symbols including charkha for various campaigns (Nair, 2017).

Most of the symbols which came to be associated with Gandhi find a connect not only with people but also with past. Rather it can be said that Gandhi did not leave aside the past or traditions of the country. Parel (1969) says that Gandhi's choice of symbols show that if politics wants to modernise ancient and well-established society, then perhaps the past should remain the reference point as for instance he picked spinning wheel which is considered an ancient Indian machine.

His symbols were not something external or adopted but were internalised and his body was an integral part of his messages starting right from his clothing to fasting. Sharma (2014) says, "Gandhi's bodily experiments were not privatised. His body, after all, was an interface between the inner and the outer, the personal and the political, and a medium that carried social messages. Gandhi wanted to make his bio-moral practices socially contagious and he used the mass media as a critical tool (377)." Concluding that Gandhi was able to assimilate extremes, Jordens (1998) writes, "Gandhi combined in his frail body the ideals of total renunciation and of total dedication; the ideal of Shiva, Lord of ascetics in the harsh Himalayas and the ideal of the Bodhisattva, who postponed his own liberation in order to devote himself to the removal of all suffering in the world (276)."

*Satyagraha became synonymous with courage, self-discipline and humility under Gandhi (Bhatt, 2013).*

One of the main feature that made Gandhi acceptable to masses was his principle of doing what he used to say. Rao (2017) says that Gandhi became a mahatma as there was a complete consonance between what he professed and what he practiced. Gonsalves (2010) notes, "... his heightened self-awareness and self-discipline constantly purified the integrity of his performances so that they emanated from his fidelity to truth (115)."

Aptly commenting on his persona where perhaps his verbal voice helped a little role, Nanda (1969) says, "With his loin cloth, steel-rimmed glasses, rough sandals, a toothless smile and a voice which rarely rose above a whisper, he had a disarming humility (3)."

### Conclusion

In 2019, when India is celebrating Gandhi's 150 years of birth anniversary, his symbols of walking stick, rimmed glasses and charkha find immediate connect with the popular leader and his widely accepted ideas.

Though Gandhi must have done everything with a clear purpose in mind which largely translated to welfare of people, he might not have thought that his strategy, of doing or practicing oneself would become immortalised, the things he used would even after nearly 70 years of his death would find meaning with people.

The success of these symbols/non- verbal cues finding connect with people irrespective of most physical, social and economic boundaries is a good lesson in communication.

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*In 2019, when India is celebrating Gandhi's 150 years of birth anniversary, his symbols of walking stick, rimmed glasses and charkha find immediate connect with the popular leader and his widely accepted ideas.*

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## Advocacy to Activism: The journalist in Gandhi

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### Abstract

*Mahatma Gandhi has often been dubbed as a man wearing several hats and there is not a single aspect of Gandhi that has not been covered by research papers or articles all over the world. However with the changing definition of journalism and the onset of activism, the role of Gandhi surely fits into the definition of an activist. Whether activism and journalism can co-exist is debatable, yet the way in which his journalistic calibre has been utilised can be interpreted as that of advocate to an activist is noteworthy. Activism as a term itself has myriad aspects. A common ground that many agree upon is that it should pass on information, build a community as well as motivate others. Gandhi's role in passing information pertaining to freedom and rights of common people were expounded throughout. His willingness to foster community feeling as well as reporting community centric information through his journalistic endeavours has been a matter of study always. Most importantly, what is evident is Gandhi's ability to motivate thinkers during his times as well as posthumously, reaffirming his role as an activist and the article particularly deals with that.*

**Keywords:** Gandhi as journalist, Gandhi as activist, Activism through journalism, Journalistic activism

### Journalism as an echo of the leader's vision:

*'Journalism should never be prostituted for selfish ends or for the sake of merely earning livelihood or, worse still, for amassing money'- Mahatma Gandhi. One of the most vibrant communicator ever in the globe, with the ability to drive mass emotion through bold, courageous and fluent thoughts, Gandhi has been able to reach out to millions of people and convinced them to aspire for their rights -the Indian Freedom. Freedom for not a country or a nation, but for individual growth too that engulfs existentialism. According to an eminent journalist, Chalapathi Raju, Gandhi was the greatest journalist of all time, and the weeklies he ran and edited were probably the greatest publication the world has known. He brought out the paper without advertisement though he did realize that sustainability of newspapers are essential, on revenue run newspapers, he opined that, 'advertisements are inserted by people who are impatient to get rich. For him, this was one of the sorriest features of modern civilization, and he wished fervently to be rid of it' (Gupta, 2001).*

*Gandhi's role  
in passing  
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people were  
expounded  
throughout.*

Gandhi entered journalism in his early teens. Even without being an avid reader of newspaper, till he went to London, his stint with writing began at the age of 21. He first wrote nine articles for 'The Vegetarian', an English weekly on vegetarianism, Indian food habits, customs and religious festivals. His writing style was bold and accurate and had a natural appeal.

### Genesis of His Career Amplifying journalistic activism: An overview

His initial documentation of his insult upon his immediate arrival at South Africa in the court earned him rave reviews. This marked the beginning of his career. After 10 years of persistent campaign, Gandhi realized the twin tasks- mobilizing public opinion and influencing official decisions, which was nothing short of activism and propelled the need of a regular newspaper.

"I believe that a struggle which chiefly relies upon internal strength cannot be wholly carried on without a newspaper'," he stated.

To give strength to his activity, a Gujarati edition of *Indian Opinion* was simultaneously printed at Phoenix having biographies of great men and women. Contributing articles to this weekly in every issue, Gandhi focused on educating the public, dispelling doubts between the whites and the Indians and raising consciousness on the drawbacks of his countrymen through his strong words. This mirrored the actual situation of South Africa and for ten years Gandhi worked hard for this weekly working on stories that his countrymen.

'My mission is to teach by example and percept under serve, restraint the use of the matchless weapon of *Satyagraha*'-he put forward his opinion in the Indian Opinion. Indian Opinion played an important role in rousing among the Indians in South Africa a new consciousness of dignity and honour. *Young India* and *Navajivan* were other great contributions towards the society from his end. He brought out *Navajivan*, the Hindi and Gujarati version of Young India, and wrote many articles regularly. He was proud to say that many readers of *Navajivan* were the farmers and workers who really were the real makers of India.

*The Harijan* was mainly devoted to serve the untouchables. It was devoid of article on politics and was first brought out in Hindi. Even while in jail, Gandhi was permitted to write thrice a week. Regarding the proposal for an English edition, he wrote to a friend: "I would warn you against issuing the English edition unless it is properly got up, contains readable material and translations are accurate." Gandhi was conscious of quality and wouldn't compromise with its contents irrespective of the situations.

He untiringly wrote on constructive work, Satyagraha, nonviolence, diet, nature-cure, Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability, spinning, Khadi, Swadeshi, village industries and prohibition. He always advocated for a free media in India and stated that 'freedom of the press is a precious privilege that no country can forgo'.

It can be concluded with his view on journalism, "in the very first month of *Indian Opinion*, I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service."

*Gandhi focused on educating the public, dispelling doubts between the whites and the Indians and raising consciousness on the drawbacks of his countrymen through his strong words.*

A double edged sword, newspapers had the power to kill and create he believed and opined that the path of contemporary media world was bristled with thorns of turmoil like investigative journalism, sting operation, ethics, impending market forces on the media, glamour and projecting icons of modern society through media. Hence to come out of it, he delved on his own principles and philosophy used both advocacy and activism throughout his journalistic endeavours.

### **Advocacy and Journalism**

Even today in India, media works as a pressure group in a democratic polity and often impinges on the way policies are made and opinions formed, motivations created and emotions trampled upon.

The major function of communication is connectivity and to create awareness, disseminate information, and change attitudes and behaviour through such connectivity is the primary task of the media. This in turn has turned the world to a global village and created an interconnected environment of increased dependability.

Despite a lot of agreement and disagreement advocacy and activism propels action and it clearly creates a ground where the members of a social community are made to feel like a part of a community, motivated to act as well to fulfil a common interest.

### **Gandhi as a Peace Advocate**

In a letter to the Editor of *The Times of India* he wrote, “Publicity is our best and perhaps the only weapons of defence”. This agenda off course was what Gandhi considered as a primary task while remaining true to journalism and this he used it extensively to promote his ideas on non-violence and subtle protest.

The ultimate purpose for Gandhi was to achieve ‘Sarvodaya’ (moral, spiritual, economic.) and it is through journalism that he took baby steps towards achieving it. He talked to the people in their own language to communicate the message of non-violence both in South Africa and later in undivided India. Gandhian Journalism was in absolute conformity with his ideology of peace and his content did little to incite disturbance into the reader’s mind. He advocated peace through his preaching through beautifully woven words to generate awareness, brace the readers for change and independence and motivate them to protest against unlawful act of the state. The content despite its pressure would not inspire violent aggression rather instilled a resolution that needed to be clearly communicated to the rulers (Bhuiyan, 2016)

### **Advocacy Through Newspapers**

*The Harijan* was not a newspaper in the usual sense of the term. It was more a views paper, conveying to an eager world what the Mahatma thought on a wide range of subjects (Sharma, 1994).

That the Mahatma was a crusader par excellence is unquestionable. He vehemently crusaded for morality in politics and in public life of all Congressmen – he delivered exactly what he preached. His writes up in his own newspapers which are the major contribution for journalism practice in India and holds its relevance forever.

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mind.*



His previous stint led him to divert his energies purely on *Indian Opinion* in June 1903. At the age of 35, he took charge of this paper. Despite financial loss, he was clear about the objectives of the newspaper. The objectives of the *Indian Opinion* were: a) to provide news to all the sections of society in their own language. b) to advocate their cause. c) to provide the information of the events happening in India. d) to contain contributions from competent writers, Indians as well as Europeans. e) to cover all the aspects on social, moral, intellectual issues (Bhuiyan, 2016).

*Young India* became powerful vehicles of his views on all subjects. One of the objects of a newspaper was to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments, and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects. Gandhi was first jailed in India for his bold articles printed in *Young India* never having submitted to any gagging order issued by the Government. He was confident that he could any-day persuade his readers to copy his editorials for him and circulate the news. He believed that a newspaper's suppression was not impediment to its spreading of message, so long as he lived. Even the absence of a printing room left him with a pen and that really worked. 'There are occasions when a journalist serves his profession best by his silence,' he would add.

### **Community Building Through Navjivan and The Harijan**

The *Navjivan* Newspapers appointed reporters in remote pockets of villages. 'Many of his followers were moved to write and publish in the Indian languages, in imitation of his own direct style. On March 11, 1922, Gandhi was sentenced to six years imprisonment for writing rebellious articles like, 'Tampering with Loyalty', 'The puzzle and its solution' and 'Shaking the move'.

Gandhi's sole purpose of journalism was to inform, educate and bind the community together through moral and ethical issues. The sole purpose of *The Harijan* was to serve the society and it is in this context that there was a complete black-out of important political news in Harijan.

### **Raising Awareness on Issues of Mutual Interest**

There was no surprise that the paper didn't mention about the all important news such as, Congress or the Gandhi's retirement from politics or the Government Act of 1935. On the other hand, we find more and more articles on development issues, such as village cleanliness, nutritious food, waste management, village reconstruction work, scientific facts were made on importance of honey, fresh vegetables etc. Researchers published on nutrition and balanced diet. Village sanitation was the other important aspect, Gandhi wrote consistently. Rural development programmes of other countries were published to enlighten the rural people. Gandhi promoted the indigenous industries.

### **Message That Motivated People to Act**

While fighting incessantly against all disabilities imposed on Indians, through representation, petition, memorandum, etc., he did not, for a moment, minimize the

important role of newspapers. Offcourse the Indian Freedom struggle was one of the most pertinent example of activism driven revolt and the role that newspapers have in this regard especially the role of *Navjivan* and *The Harijan* was remarkable.

### **Mahatma the Motivator**

Martin Luther King (Jr.) learned about Gandhi through his writing and a trip to India in 1959. He drew heavily on Gandhian principle of nonviolence in his own civil rights activism, writing that “while the Montgomery boycott was going on, India’s Gandhi was the guiding light of our technique of nonviolent social change.”

“I came to see for the first time that the Christian doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of nonviolence was one of the most potent weapons available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom,” King later wrote. He affirmed that it is possible to resist evil without resorting to violence and to oppose evil itself without opposing the people committing evil. He also wrote that people who practice nonviolence must be willing to suffer without retaliation, internal or external: “The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent but also refuses to hate him” (Little, 2019).

### **Mahatma: Activated a New Wave and a Ripple Effect**

Gandhi was every bit an activist and his role in the freedom struggle reiterates just that. He spread information though his writings on freedom, independence and dignity as well as on statehood. He generated awareness on pertinent issues and fostered a community feeling through his relentless publication of non-political issues in *The Harijan*. His work inspired and he himself was involved in signing petitions as well demanding change in regressive policies. A motivator in the truest sense of term Gandhi laid down strong principles which would set the base for all future journalists in the long run.

Despite changes in the current media scenario, what remains apparent is that the mannerism in which Gandhi used media to plant, nurture and secure the interest of common ideas. While his writings planted seeds of dissent among the people, his preaching taught them the ways of non-violence, non-cooperation and Satyagraha set the movement for Independence and demanding human rights justice in pace.

He advocated for silent protest through his meetings and remained obstinate about his ways and his objectives.

The major function of communication is connectivity and to create awareness, disseminate information, and change attitudes and behaviour through such connectivity and motivate change. This modern definition is quite succinctly applicable to the activity of Gandhi. He realised the power of communication and for the reading class stuck to his journalistic writing as evident through his work in *Navjivan* and *Indian Opinion*. His other objectivity was upliftment of the Harijans and his newspaper *The Harijan* was not political but a community based newspaper that brought the community and its needs to limelight. He inspired a number of global leaders including Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela who even credited to have learnt a lot from Gandhi when he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994. A

*A motivator in the truest sense of term Gandhi laid down strong principles which would set the base for all future journalists in the long run.*

global motivator in the truest sense and yet what makes it even more powerful is his journalistic application of ideas in his writings which could set a bench mark for all future advocacy campaigns adopted by media

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# Mahatma Gandhi and His Communication Strategies: An Analysis

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## Abstract

*While India recognizes and remembers Mahatma Gandhi as the torch bearer of national movement which led the country achieve freedom from the clutches of British rule, the key to the success of Gandhi remains in his communication skills. He succeeded to master mass uprisings through his strong communication skill. Gandhi had a very coherent method of communication which was reflected not only through his works but also the way he presented himself. He communicated in a language that masses spoke. He used simple dialect while drawing reference from common man's idioms. The basis of his messages was taken from original folk culture and traditional religious lore which struck an instant chord with one and all, who were receivers of his communication. Not limiting to just oral communication, Gandhi also resorted to padyaatras. Masses used to be electrified by simply his presence and he was able to impress people with his ideologies of self reliance and non-violence. The paper will try to analyze how Gandhi communicated his message with various tools of communication such as his speeches, satyagrahas, padyaatras and his ideas as published in newspapers.*

**Keywords:** Mahatma Gandhi, Communication tools, satyagraha, padyaatras

## Introduction

*The paper tries to analyze how Gandhi communicated his message various tools of communication such as his speeches, satyagrahas, padyaatras and his ideas as published in newspapers.*

While India recognises and remembers Mahatma Gandhi as the torchbearer of the national movement which led the country to achieve freedom from the clutches of British rule, the key to his success remains in his communication skills. Gandhi had an arduous task of communicating with illiterate and poverty-stricken class. He enjoyed tremendous popularity much before the use of mass media was habitual among the grassroots. He succeeded to master mass uprisings through his strong communication skills (Ghosh, 2018, p. 84). Gandhi had a very coherent method of communication which was reflected not only through his works but also the way he presented himself. He preached simplicity not just through the contents of his messages but also through his appearance. Gandhi believed in minimal clothing, it mirrored the inner reflections of him who believed that considering the true picture of the masses of the country, he couldn't have claimed for great comforts. The personality was marked by a bare body, clad in a loincloth, donning a nickel-

framed spectacle with wooden sandals, (Ghosh, 2018, p.46). His moderate lifestyle gave him easy access to paths unravelled. He could smoothly gain acceptability among the poor, destitute and most importantly untouchables. His very appearance was relatable amongst the have-nots despite his foreign education. Gandhi espoused empathy with those denied the basic rights and naturally won hearts. He had the ability to cut across classes and other social barriers. The basic minimal clothing not only projected his principle but created an instant bond with those deprived. He communicated in a language that masses spoke. He used simple dialect while drawing reference from common man's idioms. In fact, it was Gandhi who made this class realise that they were exploited under foreign rule.

In an era marked by no audiovisual communication, Gandhi made a blend of interpersonal communication and newspaper journalism to address the commoners as well as the elites. Gandhi transmitted his messages primarily through the following methods: (1) Adoption of simplistic lifestyle to connect to grassroots; (2) Oral communication; (3) Utilising interpersonal networks through Padayatras and (4) Newspaper Journalism to reach the elites. Gandhi revived the traditional approach of communication deep-rooted in the socio-cultural milieu of people. The basis of his messages was taken from original folk culture and traditional religious lore which struck an instant chord with one and all, which were receipts of his communication. Not limiting to just oral communication, Gandhi also resorted to padayatras. Masses used to be electrified by simply his presence and he was able to impress people with his ideologies of self-reliance and non-violence.

### His messages

- **Non-violence:** Since Gandhi was immensely influenced by Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, 'Ahimsa' was one of the basic principles of his life and naturally his preaching reflected the same. Gandhi propagated ahimsa or non-violence for all masses and not for a select few. Non-violence to him was a way to attain truth and hence he wanted the same to be followed by all in every sphere of life. In his saying: "*Non-violence to be creed must be all pervasive. I cannot be non-violent about one activity of mine and violent about others. That would be a policy and not a life force*" (MK Gandhi in 'Non-Violence in Peace and War', 1942). Gandhi believed that the path of Ahimsa would never fail and ensure success in the long run. He wanted this policy to be adopted and followed universally. In Gandhi's word, the world had been unaware of the potentiality of Ahimsa or non-violence as a tool to register change.
- **Satyagraha:** Literally the term Satyagraha describes the passion for truth. It is a resolve to have firmness in truth. The idea of Satyagraha is inseparable from the practice of Gandhism. James Luther Adams describes the same as a universal force which is non-violent in nature, having the potentiality to yield a sense of justice in a civil society, marked by cooperation among equals, (Adams, 1970, p. 294). According to Erickson (1970, p. 98), "Satyagrah was the Sanskrit combination Gandhi later chose a name for his way of life and of action... 'Truth' and 'Force' in literal translation."

*Non-violence to be creed must be all pervasive. I cannot be non-violent about one activity of mine and violent about others. That would be a policy and not a life force*  
*Satyagraha: 'Truth' and 'Force' in literal translation." It is pursuance of truth.*

Satyagraha is pursuance of truth and for Gandhi, it has been deep-rooted in all his teachings and communication. The practice is staunch disapproval of violence but does not ask one to leave the path of fighting for the rights. Many scholars believe that Satyagraha was Gandhi's supreme creation and invention. Gandhi believed that this technique could be adopted by men and women in their journey to become more progressive. Gandhi felt that Satyagraha was the doctrine of self-suffering having an appeal to the heart of the human race. As per him the accumulation of energies is a resultant of the force of soul and love rather than a brute force which creates hatred, (Singh, 2018). Since Gandhi stood for the cause of common people throughout his life, therefore he employed the weapon of Satyagraha for the same. Gandhi made Satyagraha a legitimate alternative movement which was politically, morally and religiously motivated, Singh observed, while mentioning that the measure was collective in action.

- **Dharma:** Dharma, according to Gandhi, is a duty that should be followed by one and all. He believed that Dharma is the quality of soul and persists in every human. The existence of Dharma is absolutely necessary for individuals to attain true self-knowledge. Entitlement of rights comes only after the performance of duty. For Gandhi, duty comes before rights.
- **Sarvodaya:** Gandhi believed that all-inclusive development should happen to all sections irrespective of distinction to be made based on caste, creed, religion or class. His ideas of development were for all human races as to him if everyone takes enough for themselves, nothing would be left for the collective betterment. Therefore, in his view, the concept of Sarvodaya is all-around development and rise for all.

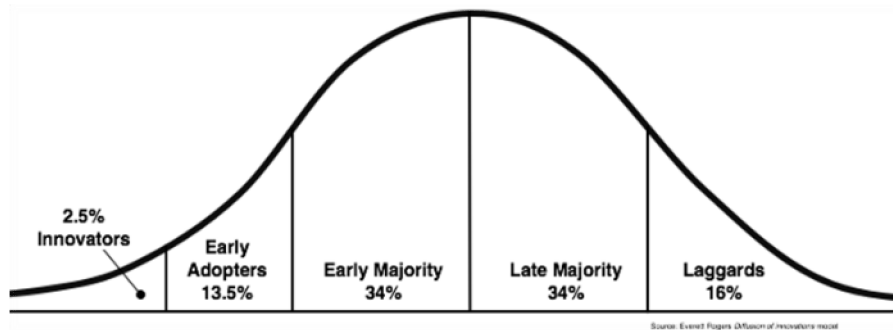
### Gandhi's style of communication

Mahatma Gandhi remains a stalwart in communication with masses. His communication method is an excellent example of message transmission from one individual to many. He excelled in communicating with both the educated as well as the illiterate people. His communication method employed simple tools, in which Gandhi's personality played a major role. Gandhi depended on his oral preaching, padayatras, prayer meetings, fasts mostly for interpersonal and group communication while he used newspaper journalism for mass communication.

Participatory approach of communication was used by Gandhi, which would be open to all classes, caste and creed. According to him, the opinion of each class mattered in a democratic setup and everyone had a right to contribute in the development of a state. Gandhi believed in democratising of information which would enable all tiers to remain empowered and hence participate in nation-building. Gandhi had the ability to recognise the innate capacity of individuals which would culminate into a collective strong force. Hence his communication techniques incorporated ways to ensure maximum participation so that even grassroots would also understand his views.

*Dharma: It is a duty that should be followed by one and all. Dharma is the quality of soul and persists in every human. Sarvodaya: It is all-around development and rise for all.*

In fact, the Diffusion of Innovation theory, proposed by Everett M Rogers in 1962 to understand the influence of new ideas in the society, can be referenced here to understand the Gandhian style of communication and its impact.



Everett M Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory: The Adoption Curve adapted from "Diffusion of Innovation Theory" by Wayne W. LaMorte, 2018. (<http://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/MPH-Modules/SB/BehavioralChangeTheories/BehavioralChangeTheories4.html>. Copyright 2018 by Boston University School of Public Health.)

As per the theory, innovators are venturesome and risk takers, who invent new ideas or practices for the first time and comprise a very small percentage of the population. Here we can consider Mahatma Gandhi as an "Innovator" owing to his new ideas and practices such as Non-Violence, Satyagraha, Civil Disobedience Movement, Non-Cooperation and Sarvodaya, which were certainly novel to the masses during that time. Since every society has some opinion leaders, who are ahead of others in embracing change and adopting new ideas, Gandhi too had some disciples for his ideas. These disciples not only belonged to that percentage of "Early Adopters" who comfortably adopted the ideas fast but also aided in transmitting the same to other sections of the population- the not be so active bunch in accessing first-hand messages. Gandhi was way ahead of his contemporaries in recognising the need to generate strong public opinion for his ideas to spread and hence would call for public meetings. The meetings he addressed had huge turnouts and given that Gandhi possessed the freshness of ideas, we can surely consider that about one-third population were "Early Majority" who could be persuaded with pieces of evidence of innovation ahead of the average persons. It has been a common experience that some people in any society remain sceptical to adapt to new ideas and depend on a lot of success stories to be convinced about the utility of the innovation. Gandhi had followers, but he faced challenges too, in reaching those sections and this is where his Padayatras to far off places accompanied with inter-personal communication helped. This was his way to connect with the passive and less empowered people in remote locations who remained untouched by the communicative messages in the first instance and comprised the "Late Majority." As the theory suggests, even with Gandhi's great power of communication, there had to be some who under any circumstance wouldn't be influenced by his teachings due to their own perceptions and comprised the "Laggards". The theory, therefore, has been employed to understand Gandhi's unique way of reaching the grassroots with his unconventional messages. There was not much technical support to his communication

*The theory, therefore, has been employed to understand Gandhi's unique way of reaching the grassroots with his unconventional messages.*

system, yet he was able to reach a huge number of people relying on his oral addresses and strong interpersonal network.

### Oral Communication

Gandhi spoke the common man's language and even in the absence of any sound public address system during that time, thousands of people used to assemble to listen to him speaking. He knew the key to bind them all and often used religious idioms to connect at once. Gandhi himself was under the effect of Hindu theory of Karma, which got reflected in all his messages, (Singh, 2018). Scholarly studies found that Gandhi believed there is a direct causal relationship between the degree of moral purity and the individuals' effectiveness in promoting the same. Gandhi was equally influenced by the Vedas and would incorporate teachings from Bhagwat Geeta and Upanishads to transmit a message having ideals of life. To make his disciples understand freedom, justice and equality, Gandhi would use elements of 'Ram Rajya'. His ideals of non-violence drew influence from Buddhism and Jainism. He crafted well in the art of amalgamating spiritualism with rationalism to create ripples among the masses with his messages. These oral speeches were of great attraction not only to common people but several foreign journalists used to assemble as well. In fact, the interactions with foreign correspondents were very much a part of his oral communication strategy. He would never deny any journalist an interview with just one and only condition of not disturbing his routine work. These interviews would not only be reported across the country but would reach beyond the transnational borders. It was Gandhi, who perhaps pioneered in walk-the-talk as these foreign journalists had to practically walk with him to take interviews so that his regular schedule would not get hampered. His approach was quite apolitical and spoke on issues pertaining to the lives of the impoverished.

### Padayatraas

As the literal meaning suggests, Gandhi used to take walking trips to several villages to connect and engage with people of different backgrounds. He would walk barefoot to the remotest corners of the country and raise native issues. As he banked on simplicity, he lived on fruits and vegetables setting examples of self-suffering. This not only achieved him immense acceptability among the masses but also created a positive environment for collective action through opinion generation. Religion remained to be a key element of his communication and Gandhi his first Padayatra was for "purging the Hindu heart of the taint of untouchability," (Singh, 2018). The purposes of these tours were mainly village reconstruction, uplift of the deprived class and motivation for self-reliance.

### Prayer Meetings

As a part of his interpersonal communication network, Gandhi held simple prayer meetings to create a stir among his followers. He used to conduct a silent prayer, which would be followed by the singing of hymns and participants would chant God's name. The meetings used to be concluded with a statement by Gandhi on some vital issues impacting the majority. These statements were of great attraction

*Gandhi first Padayatra was for "purging the Hindu heart of the taint of untouchability."*



to both the national as well as international media. Hence it once again proved to be an important manner of dissemination of message from one to many. His statements were generally made on politics, economics, religion, village development, Ahimsa, Swadeshi movement and Satyagraha among others. Participants connected with each other spiritually and the reflection of the same would be sent out to the world through the media coverage.

## Fasting

A believer of non-violence, Gandhian principle resorted to fast, which he considered ‘*self-suffering*’ to achieve betterment for maximum people. This was employed to yield faster results and accelerated decision making. An instance of the same was the Poona Pact of 1932, which was a result of his fast in the same year.

## Newspapers

**Indian Opinion:** A far-sighted personality, Gandhi realised the power of newspapers during his stay in South Africa itself. He used the columns of newspapers to mould public opinion and the Indian Opinion, his first newspaper from Durban in South Africa, was commenced to help the fellow Indians living there. The Indian Opinion provided a voice to the concerns of the Indians living in South Africa under the worst conditions of apartheid, (Chatterjee, 2018). The first issue of the Indian Opinion was dated June 4, 1903. However, it came out in the public arena on June 6. The Indian Opinion had publications in four languages-English, Gujarati, Tamil and Hindi. The Indian Opinion was more of a weekly newsletter initially serving to disseminate essential information among the Indians. Gandhi was the editor as well as the owner of the newspaper as the ends for running a publication were met from his pocket. The newspaper was not a commercial venture. The motive of Gandhi in bringing out the Indian Opinion was to serve the Indian community in South Africa. He used the newspaper as a ventilation ground of the grievances of the Indians residing over there. The newspaper fostered the idea of a united Indian identity which had the potential to cut across language, religion, caste and class, (Aram, 2018). The journal covered the dilapidated conditions of the indentured labourers who worked there. The newspaper espoused the cause and concerns of British Indians. The journal in its editorial declared: “*We are not, and ought not to be, Tamils or Calcutta men, and Mohamedans or Hindus, Brahmans or Banyas, but simply and solely British Indians,*” (Mesthrie, 1997, p.112). According to Gandhi, Indian Opinion was a mirror of part of his life. It was from the columns of Indian Opinion that Satyagraha was started. The Satyagraha movement continued from 1906-14 and throughout its journey, the Indian Opinion played an inseparable role. It was through this newspaper, that Gandhi issued his views on Satyagraha. In fact, the number of subscribers was at its peak during the movement of Satyagraha. Besides, Gandhi also used it as a vehicle to educate people about the importance of sanitation, self-discipline and good citizenship, (Gupta, 2018.) The Indian opinion shifted its concentration on other human rights issues as well in the 1950s under the editorship of Manilal Gandhi, Gandhi’s second son.

*“We are not, and ought not to be, Tamils or Calcutta men, and Mohamedans or Hindus, Brahmans or Banyas, but simply and solely British Indians.”*

**Young India:** Gandhi started Young India publication in the year 1919 and continued it till 1931. He deployed the columns of Young India to diffuse among the literate sections his unique ideology and thoughts pertaining to the application of non-violence in organising movements. He also urged readers to mobilise forces to fight the British rule and earn themselves independence from the colonial rule. The newspaper played a vital role to awaken the educated class to realise their potentiality in organising and planning to obtain freedom for the country. In Young India's 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1925 issue, Gandhi wrote: "*I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and present under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of satyagraha which is a direct corollary of nonviolence and truth.*"

**Harijan:** Since Gandhi felt for the untouchables, he published the Harijan to provide a voice to this marginalised section. The newspaper, which commenced its operation on February 11, 1933, was published under the auspices of the Servants of Untouchables Society. The newspaper was known as '*Harijan*' in English, '*Harijanbandhu*' in Gujarati and '*Harijansevak*' in Hindi. The organisation was formed by Gandhi himself. Harijan had a different take on journalism and hence was distinct in content from his other newspapers. This journal was purely dedicated to raising the issues of the Harijans and thereby an attempt was made through the columns of the same to uplift their status in the society. The newspaper concentrated on details about various developmental and village reconstruction work undertaken by Gandhi. The other issues which found the place in the newspaper were village sanitation, proper drinking water supply, concerns on health and hygiene. The newspaper also attempted to empower villagers with knowledge about cottage industries and means to accumulate economic resources. Unlike Gandhi's other newspapers, the Harijan was more of a 'views' paper, which propagated his own opinion about various issues related to the untouchables. The journal tried to instruct the villagers on how to conduct themselves. It was like a platform for weekly lessons for the villagers. The newspaper was Gandhi's weapon to fight against untouchability and poverty in rural areas, (Gupta, 2018). Harijan was also one of the spearheading forces of mobilising India's freedom movement during its publication, (Sur, 2018). The newspaper contained a vivid description of the overall political situation of the country during that period. The decisions, resolutions and directions adopted by the Indian National Congress found space in the newspaper, which helped the literates analyse the developments politically.

*"I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and present under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of satyagraha which is a direct corollary of nonviolence and truth."*  
M. K. Gandhi

**Navjivan:** Besides these, Gandhi also published a Gujarati weekly newspaper '*Navjivan*' (from 1919) to ventilate his views on society and motivate the people to follow the path of Satyagraha. Navjivan witnessed steady growth during the editorship of Gandhi. Besides propagating his views on Satyagraha and Swadeshi movement among common people, the newspaper had strong articles on inter-caste marriage and Hindu-Muslim unity. Along with Young India, Navjivan also protested against all forms of social evil. Gandhi became immensely popular for his straightforward advocacy of social movements and for also criticising the age-old taboos so directly, (Sur, 2018).

Gandhi eyed newspapers as tools to educate the public and used simple as well as lucid language to disseminate his views through them. In his autobiography, Gandhi said he looked upon journalism as a medium to serve the people. Gandhi felt journalism was no mean responsibility and more than informing people, it was a way to empower souls with more knowledge. He was not in favour of publishing advertisements in his newspapers as a mechanism to earn revenue. According to him, if a newspaper banks on the advertisement, it will write against a drunken evil while at the same time publish advertisements praising the drinks. Gandhi believed that if newspapers become a source of earning profits, gross malpractices are bound to creep in as a result.

Gandhian style of journalism primarily laid stress on four different criteria of news-culture, probity in public life, peace and development, (Babu, 2018). These were the news values he worked upon although no explicit explanation has been provided on them. He emphasised on these news values because of his personal experience, which has been derived from his philosophy of non-violence (ahimsa), self-reliance (swadeshi), self-rule (Swaraj) and truth force (satyagraha), (Vilani, 2005: 80). His newspapers were means to transform individuals from wrongdoings and not to transmit mere facts. Gandhi's journalism was erected on the premise of ethics, where objectivity and fairness played the lead roles. Gandhi (1947) said: "*The press is called the fourth estate. It is definitely a power but to misuse the power is criminal. I am a journalist myself and would appeal to fellow journalists to realise their responsibility and to carry on their work with no idea other than that of upholding the truth.*" Gandhi reproached the act of involving in journalism to earn living as he saw the same to purely serve the public by educating them with elements of peace, truth and non-violence. He used the columns of his newspaper to resolve the crisis through non-violent measures. Gandhi (1936) said: "*Non-violence 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. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life, it must pervade the whole being and must be applied to isolated acts.*"

Gandhi was one of the stalwart contributors to developmental journalism. He wrote on contemporary issues and advocated strongly for the removal of untouchability and prohibition. He tried to remove the issue of untouchability which caused paralysis to development. He promoted Khadi and other village industries as a mean for self-employment for peasants, (Krishna Murthy, 1966, p. 79-80). He also used his pen to stand against the oppression meted out to women under the aegis of religion, traditions or law. He slammed those who admonished women. In *Young India* (1930, p. 121), Gandhi said: "*To call woman the weaker sex is a libel. It's a man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then indeed is women in less brute than men.*" Gandhi deployed his articles to empower women and advised them not to depend on men for their protection. Gandhi advised women (1946) "*not to look for men for protection. They must rely on their own strength and purity of character and on God.*" Gandhi also played a crucial role in the development of language in journalism. He used clear, simple style free from all flourishes. His expressions were vivid which provided a valuable contribution to journalistic language, Natarajan (2000, p.183).

*Gandhian style of journalism primarily laid stress on four different criteria of news-culture, probity in public life, peace and development.*

## Conclusion

A visionary personality like Mahatma Gandhi can truly qualify as a master communicator who employed all the techniques of communication to mobilise the mass struggle for achieving the nation's freedom. His communication style was a blend of interpersonal, group and mass communication which enabled him to reach all corners of the country. Since his personality was a major unit of his communication strategy, Gandhi stood with the destitute clad as one of them and speaking in a language used by this section, Ghosh (2018). As India is a country marked by its diversity and a very limited number of population was touched by literacy during his time, Gandhi banked on interpersonal networks to liaison with people. Through his Padyatraas, Gandhi epitomised interpersonal communication in which he would hold individualistic discussions with certain families of a village, if he deemed necessary. The deprived and marginalised masses were able to gain his distinct attention when they were in dire need of the same. Thus it strengthened the participatory approach of his communication. Gandhi always provided them with a patient hearing so he would understand their problems and come up with noteworthy resolutions. Again, the same method was used to carry group communication where he addressed the entire village over issues pertaining to development. His oral speeches and prayer meetings exemplify how effective group communication can obtain fast transmission of ideas with direct and speedy feedback. The groups he addressed were never comprised of equals yet his powerful messages were able to persuade all uniformly. Gandhi did not lag behind in incorporating mass communication as well for reaching the literates. Newspapers became Gandhi's greatest weapons to articulate his views on various social and political topics to a larger and wider audience. They acted as the window to his inner soul and were plethora of novel ideas. He has been probably looked upon as one of the greatest journalists who used his writing skills to lead a mass movement against the British rule. In fact, in this age of crass commercialisation, Gandhi's ideas on journalism can be introspected upon by media practitioners for greater relevance to society. His powerful yet simple messages and communication techniques not only appealed to the masses during his active years but keep inspiring later generations as well.

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*Newspapers became Gandhi's greatest weapons to articulate his views on various social and political topics to a larger and wider audience.*

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# **BOOK REVIEWS**

## Mahatma Gandhi: As a Journalist and Editor

**Edited Book by: Dr Mrinal Chatterjee and Snehasis Sur**

Published by: Press Club, Kolkata

Year of Publication: 2018

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Mahatma Gandhi, as perceived impressionistically, is a mega-phenomenon across generations. His thoughts on the various vital dimensions of society bear contemporary relevance. Gandhi was not only a thinker but also a crusader as far as his journalistic self is concerned. As a journalist, Gandhi's values and visions are centred on social sensitivity, receptivity and connectivity as central to the endeavours for a positive social change. In the 'Young India', Mahatma Gandhi wrote: 'I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and present under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of satyagraha which is a direct corollary of non-violence' (Gandhi, 1925). According to him, 'it is wrong to use a newspaper as a means of earning a living. There are certain spheres of work which are of such consequence and have such bearing on public welfare that to undertake them for earning one's livelihood will defeat the primary aim behind them. When, further a newspaper is treated as a means of making profits, the result is likely to be serious malpractices. It is not necessary to prove to those who have some experience of journalism that such malpractices do prevail on a large scale. Newspapers are meant primarily to educate the people. They make the latter familiar with contemporary history. This is a work of no mean responsibility. It is a fact, however, that readers cannot always trust newspapers. Often facts are found to be quite the opposite of what has been reported. If newspapers realized that it was their duty to educate the people, they could not but wait to check a report before publishing it. It is true that often they have to work under difficult conditions. They have to sift the true from the false in a short time and can only guess at the truth. Even then, I am of the opinion that it is better not to publish a report at all if it has not been found possible to verify it (Gandhi, 1925).'

*As a journalist, Gandhi's values and visions are centred on social sensitivity, receptivity and connectivity as central to the endeavours for a positive social change.*

Gandhi was in favour of the journalism that aims at inducing social change through participation in public consciousness and developing a positive environment thereby. The positive environment is constituted of the social duties, responsibilities and the constant efforts towards the development goals. The positive media is always pro-people and pro-society. The communication from the media should affect the consciousness of its audience leading to the creation of an ideal change-culture. As the American sociologist C. Wright Mills has put it : 'between consciousness and existence stand communications, which influence such consciousness as men have of their existence.' Mahatma Gandhi, in his autobiography, has said that the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countryside and devastates crops, even



so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. This is how he has emphasized the role of self-regulation in positive journalism. He further asks a question: 'if this line of reasoning is correct, how many journals of the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless? And who should be the judge? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil, go on together, and man must make his choice' (Gandhi, 1925).

The entire evolutionary culture of journalism, as journeyed through the times in India as well as the world, can be emphatically brought under two broader categories-- Truth and Bias. The Truth journalism has three major facets- Honest Journalism, Service Journalism and Conscience Journalism. And the Bias journalism too has three distinct shadows-- Judgment Journalism, Image Journalism and Profit Journalism. Mahatma Gandhi was always a radical advocate and practitioner of the Truth journalism. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi (1925), 'it is more about self-restraint, editorial independence and adherence to truth.'

The book has as many as twenty articles written by many eminent writers, educators and researchers of the country. The opening note has been written by Dr Mrinal Chatterjee, one of the two editors of the book. In his note he primarily dwells upon the contributions of Gandhi in the field of journalism and his journalistic sensibility. In the article Mahatma Gandhi- as an editor and journalist, drawn from a speech by Tushar Arun Gandhi, the various noble sides of Gandhi's personality as a journalist and communicator for the masses have been highlighted. Nikhil Chakravarty in his article has meaningfully emphasized the greatness of Gandhi as a communicator. Sailen Chatterjee has addressed the journalist in Gandhi in a very effective manner. Ramachandra Guha has subtly deconstructed the journalistic self of Gandhi.

The same theme has been explored by Barun Das Gupta from a different perspective. Subir Ghosh sees in Gandhi a man who could communicate with masses without mass media. Prof V S Gupta has accentuated the association of Mahatma Gandhi with Mass Media. Snehasis Sur has brought before us the early days of Gandhiji's journalism with the clarity of the reflections. B P Sanjay has focused on the goals of Gandhi's journalism with relation to mission and service. Prof. D V R Murthy has explored Gandhi's efforts for peace through journalism. B N Patnaik has dealt with Gandhi's Communication strategies in a larger social interest. Prof. Charu Lata Singh has stressed the inclusive communication of Gandhi. Dr K. John Babu has tried to understand Gandhi's communication and journalism in Aristotelian Rhetoric, thus providing the readers with another perspective to perceive Gandhi. Dr I. Arul Aram has highlighted the contributions of Indian Opinion as the first step in reaching out to the public.

Dr Uma Shankar Pandey has also focused on Mahatma Gandhi's Indian Opinion as regards the construction of an imagined Indian identity in South Africa. Swapan Mukhopadhyay has considered Hind Swaraj to be the Bible of Mahatma Gandhi. Snehasis sur in his second article in the book has dealt with Gandhiji's involvement with Satyagraha, Young India, Navjivan and Harijan. Shyamal Roy believes in the

*The entire evolutionary culture of journalism, as journeyed through the times in India as well as the world, can be emphatically brought under two broader categories-- Truth and Bias.*

imprint of Non-violence in Gandhiji's Journalism. Smarajit Roychowdhury has very interestingly brought out Gandhi's skirmishes with Law as a journalist. Amit Pathak has described Gandhi as the sentinel of ethical journalism.

The book, in all its creative and intellectual essence, demystifies the journalistic personality of Gandhi and can be seen as a befitting tribute to the Gandhian ways of journalism. The readers will find it truly useful to understand the real basics of journalism as well as the ineffaceable contributions of Gandhi as a journalist with a broader human sensibility.

*The book, in all its creative and intellectual essence, demystifies the journalistic personality of Gandhi and can be seen as a befitting tribute to the Gandhian ways of journalism.*

# The Untold Story of India's First Newspaper

**Authored by: Andrew Otis**

Publisher: Tranquebar

Year of publication: 2018

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Many of us as academicians taught history of journalism in which James Augustus Hicky was considered a principle beginner of journalism in India. Yet, most of the details about Hickey was available to us were sketchy and incomplete though some historians of Indian journalism tried to depict him as a scandal-monger who opposed the administration of the East India Company in the 1770s. However, after long years of endeavours, Andrew Otis made all-out efforts to provide more details on Hicky in his book, *'The Untold story of India's First Newspaper'*. The author in his relentless efforts of eight-and-half years could delve deep into the origins of Hicky's *Bengal Gazette* by visiting four countries - India, USA, Germany and UK for purpose of collecting data to reconstruct the history of the Gazette. One interesting fact that emerged in the study was Hicky's name which was wrongly written as Hickey. In fact, the lawyer who defended Hicky in the court case was William Hickey. The popular book, *Indian Journalism* in 1966 authored by Nadig Krishna Murthy had only five pages on Hicky with few details.

Nevertheless, Otis detailed that Hicky who landed in Calcutta in 1770s was born in Ireland in 1730s, and started his career as an apprentice with a Scottish printer. Hicky kept on changing his career. Later, he found himself as an assistant to a surgeon. Otis, chronicled the life of Hicky in India and said that Hicky came to Calcutta on February 1, 1773. Otis described the life in Calcutta, rather the conditions in Calcutta. "Scams were a serious concern. Touts at the docks would lead travelers to taverns, where they would be told that anyone they knew was out of town, but they were welcome to stay a few days. After, which, they would be presented with huge and unannounced bills for their food, entertainment and lodging. New arrivals sometimes never recovered from these scams, floundering in impossible debt until they died in Calcutta's notorious jails" (p12).

Also, the author explained his painstaking journey in collecting data from different sources. One experience of the author was his visit to Victoria Memorial, Calcutta which "held note books written by one of the first Supreme Court Justices of Bengal, John Hyde. These notebooks, written over a twenty-year span, and comprising over 20,000 pages was the best legal records from eighteenth century Bengal ". Thus, the author made efforts to reveal more about Hicky and his life in Calcutta prison. Also, Otis recorded the journey of Hicky and the corruption indulged in the British offices including Warren Hastings in looting India. However, the specific view in the book is the details of the demise of Hicky on way to London. He was not recognized in the ship in which he was travelling at the time of his death. The body was disposed of

*After long years of endeavours, Andrew Otis made all-out efforts to provide more details on Hicky in his book, 'The Untold story of India's First Newspaper'.*

by the crew. Back in Calcutta, the East India Company auctioned his little things that were there in his house. Only his daughter survived him. The author concludes:” In those two years (1780-82), he had uncovered corruption in the East India Company, challenged the tyranny of a despotic government, and exposed embezzlement in the Christian Church. He had fought for the freedom of the press against a company eager to eliminate dissent, and against a missionary eager to profit under the facade of faith. He had defied the church and the State, and had demonstrated the power of the press to protect the people and to expose tyranny, injustice and corruption”.

Further, the author discussed about the growth of Bengal Gazette with more details. In specific, the teachers need to read the book to explain in the classroom by discussing the details of the origin of Indian journalism and the investigations done by Hicky. More so, the book contributes immensely to little known area of Indian journalism.

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# Can Journalism Be Saved? Rediscovering America's Appetite for News

**Authored by: Rachel Davis Mersey**  
Published by: Praeger, California, USA  
Year of Publication: 2010

**Reviewed by: Dr. M. R. Dua**  
Former Professor, Indian Institute of Mass Communication

Is Journalism really in danger of disappearing from our midst in the near future? And becoming extinct? Will journalism, in its totality, survive the relentless onslaught of the ubiquitous digital-era- abundant information that internet bombards on us intermittently, day in and day out? Can or will rapidly growing, daily multiplying news-sites, blogs, social media channels, such as Facebook, You Tube, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and the umpteen rest of them, replace and substitute the physical presence of journalism: the printed daily newspaper, television channel of or a radio station, from our lives? Will such an environment in the 21st century indeed be dreaded? And, will all journalism, as we've it today, cease to exist any time soon?

A quick plausible answer in one word: No.

Journalism will not disappear, and would be saved, come what may. Rest assured. But be as it may, here's what a veteran editor of a reputed British daily newspaper, *The Guardian*, Alan Rusbridger, has said in his recent book, "Breaking News: The Remaking of Journalism and Why It Matters Now." "Trust me", he says, 'we do not want a world without news,' adding, 'the ultimate defence of journalism is that it remains a public good.'

This is but one authoritative assertion about the relevance and usefulness of mass media that has fiercely upheld the continuing relevance of journalism in our lives today. And, it definitely has been ever since journalism appeared on the world stage nearly 300 years ago. It will also certainly be there for years to come: This looks so today at least in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Author Rachel Davis Mersey's book-title —Can Journalism be Saved? -- rings rather a scary alarm - that there can be a point in our lifetime when the journalism - that we have today – print or electronic – can vanish in thin air, or can fade away, if it doesn't meet the individual's interest. Right now, such a view, appears inconceivable. And, therefore, the author's averment lacks conviction.

Author Rachel Mersey expresses her doubt about journalism's survival because, she opines, the news media have excessively tended to cultivate "too much coverage of pop icon Michael Jackson..." (Incidentally, in India too, we're witnessing pages and pages, shows and shows, being turned in and devoted to such news coverages of the Priyanka Chopras, Bhats, Bachchans, SRK and the other Khans.) "Fascinating," she concedes, though all this may seem to be so. But her contention is that *news is not just about content*. The old concept of news of 'man biting dog' is 'gone'. Today, it's also about 'how people use and interact with media products.'

*Can or will rapidly growing, daily multiplying news-sites, blogs, social media channels, such as Facebook, You Tube, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and the umpteen rest of them, replace and substitute the physical presence of journalism.*

The author also adheres to the view that the “audiences’ relationships with the news are now more complex than ever.” Therefore, she warns of the ‘survival threat’ to current journalism if those ‘relationships’ become stronger. For, she perceives, the threat is due to the fears that today’s journalism (in the US) is rapidly losing its relevance in grappling with present day social issues, and, therefore, 21st century journalism’s ‘social identity’ is in danger of its shrinking (in other words) its soon disappearing relevance in our life today. And, hence, its survival being in danger.

In the author’s words, therefore, this book helps in constructing a new ‘survival’ model to establish ‘a future for serious reporting in the journalism story of our time.’ The aim, she points out, is to figure out how to preserve the journalism’s community-service function under the social responsibility model that has consumed the industry’s attention. In some cases, the media audiences’ expectations could be that the journalism companies pay for the community-based work that they do. But the author opines that ‘journalists today can’t evolve to serve the people.’ This book vehemently avers that as ‘journalists do indeed perform useful work, and that it merits to be respected for its impact on the society.’

Spanned in three parts: journalism and democracy are dead; individual is very much alive; and, a new model of journalism is born. Actually, the book’s thesis originates and is elaborated from the researches of Chicago’s Medill School of Journalism’s reputed faculty (where Rachel Mersey is associate professor) on the deeper and fuller ‘understanding and definition of news’ in the context of modern news media’s lack of apposite interpretation of news. She defines her main assignment in this research as ‘developing a new audience-oriented or identity-based model of journalism ... based on *uses and gratifications*. This is addressed as the ‘media use-sense of community’ which the journalists can get by comprehending the ‘people’s motivation’ in consuming the media output. This would help journalists ‘craft products that fit into ‘media-use-sense of community’. This she identifies as the ‘social identity theory’ (SIT). This is the theory that’s crucial in determining the media’s uses and gratifications in the times to come.

However, the current understanding of news is totally different and entirely dependent upon the ‘market model of journalism.’ The author presents a fresh new alternative perspective to save that journalism which serves ‘core communities’ needs. For, the old product has no relation the today’s consumers’ daily needs. Adding, ‘the concept of social responsibility is at the heart of journalism, its scholarship, its practitioners, and as teacher of this disciplines knows, its students.’

How far is this view justified about the journalism today; only time will tell. But this publication is most likely a ground-breaking research in the media scenario research today. It’s indeed a deeply delightfully unique and scholarly treat that the budding media researchers and teachers will enormously brood over. But as the author concludes: ‘serving dinner based on the identity-based model, is about individual taste... The identity-based model of journalism is not about dumbing the news. It’s about serving individuals so well that they are getting what they *want* and what you-the journalist think they need.

*This book helps in constructing a new ‘survival’ model to establish ‘a future for serious reporting in the journalism story of our time.’*

Finally, the book set out an altogether a novel road for the journalism of the future. Follow it, support it if you want journalism to survive. Ignore it at your peril. The choice is wide open. It's the practitioners, journalism proprietors and the audiences who will have to sketch how to do it. This task while quite interesting, is indeed grandiloquent, but not impossible.

## An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research

**Edited by: Don W. Stacks, Michael B. Salwen and Kristen C. Eichhorn**

Published by: Routledge, New Delhi,  
Year of Publication: 2019

**Reviewed by: Dr. Suman Kumar Kasturi**  
Former Senior Non-Commissioned Officer at IAF  
and Former Senior Sub-Editor, The Hans India

Communication theory enlightens the very nature of human communication and the arrays that come to light in social connection. What makes humans different from other beings is the ability of humans to communicate with each other, thereby paving a way, always, to get engaged in dealings with others. Such dealings can be premeditated to appreciate the cataleptic and conscious predispositions that occur throughout the course of action. Indubitably, studying human communication is an extensive and complex matter. For this reason, communication theory becomes the *canopy* for many theories that hunt for understanding verbal and nonverbal cues. Communication theory itself cannot explain human connection and interaction as one simple theory. So, there are a set of theories of communication that aim to understand all perspectives of communication.

The third edition of the book - *An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research* is an edited volume by Dr Don W. Stacks, Dr Michael B. Salwen, and Kristen C. Eichhorn. Among these three editors, Dr Don W. Stacks and Dr Michael B. Salwen have vast academic experience — associated with School of Communication at the University of Miami as professors. Dr Don W Stacks is an author of several books on communication topics and has received numerous awards. On the other hand, Dr Michael B. Salwen's research focused on the social effects of mass communication and international communication. He was a prolific scholar, who authored and edited several books. It is unfortunate to note that by the time of the release of the second edition of this book, Dr Michael B. Salwen had already breathed his last. Kristen C. Eichhorn has substituted the loss of Dr Michael B. Salwen and worked for the third edition. She is Dean of the Division of Graduate Studies and Professor of Communication Studies in the School of Communication, Media and the Arts at the State University of New York at Oswego.

The reviewer feels that the book, "An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research", is of great interest as it is on a topical and relevant subject. This book covers a vast canvas on integrated approaches to communication theory and research that is categorically divided into five parts: Part One-Studying "Theory": doing "Research"; Part Two-Mass Communication: Approaches and Concerns; Part Three-Human Communication Approaches and Concerns; Part Four-Integrated Approaches to Communication; Part Five — Future of Theory and Research in Communication.

*Communication theory becomes the canopy for many theories that hunt for understanding verbal and non-verbal cues.*



In this setting, it is very pertinent to relate the definition of communication given by Berger & Chaffee (1987). According to them:

*Communication is a process of expression, interaction, and influence, in which the behaviour of humans or other complex organisms expresses psychological mechanisms, states, and traits and, through interaction with the similar expressions of other individuals, produces a range of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural effects (Robert T. Craig & Heidi L. Muller, 2007: 82).*

Further, according to Robert T. Craig, Communication Theory is a field comprising of seven traditions: rhetoric, semiotics, phenomenology, cybernetics, socio-psychology, socio cultural theory, and the critical approach (Ibid).

This edited volume provides an overview of communication theory and research, presenting theoretical coverage of the broad scope of communication study as well as integrating theory with research. To expound the incorporation, the expert contributors from various specialised areas have offered samples in the form of hypothetical studies, published studies, or unpublished research. It clearly brings out how theory and research are integrated into the specialised fields.

There is no second thought that this book is a complete book on communication theory and research, having many renowned academicians across the world, specialised in their areas of interest, as the contributors of chapters. The book is well structured and divided into five parts and forty chapters. Particularly, the third edition of this book focuses mainly on the three areas: rapidly changing technology, the 2016 US presidential election and the current political climate, and lastly, the blurring of mass communication and human communication.

One of the most interesting discussions of this book is that it examines the effect of such traditional theories as uses and gratifications and has readers' evaluation of their expectations in the age of dual screen usage. Besides, this book challenges our thought patterns around the fear of isolation and public opinion. Of the many topics that the book has covered, identity management in digital media environments has a special entreaty. One appealing aspect of this book is that, throughout this edition, authors discuss the sophistication of research methodologies and the challenges that future scholars may face surrounding measurement in a world of virtual reality and interactive media.

This edited volume interestingly presents new perspectives and research interests in examining agenda-setting theory by using the current political environment and the 2016 presidential election as the contextual elements. Also, the first amendment to media credibility, privacy issues, and social movements such as #MeToo are thoroughly conversed. In this comprehensive volume, issues surrounding privacy, credibility, and developing interpersonal relationships are given due importance for the reason that social media platforms, mobile devices, and artificial intelligence are challenging our silos and push us toward a more integrated approach of understanding. Among various significant chapters such as *International Communication*, *Communication Ethics*, and *Feminist Theory*, at the heart of this book, *Diffusion of Innovations*, a vast topic in its brief version is offered in a separate chapter.

*Communication Theory is a field comprising of seven traditions: rhetoric, semiotics, phenomenology, cybernetics, socio-psychology, sociocultural theory, and the critical approach.*

It is tough to envisage which domains within communication will attract greater attention from researchers, which ones will be de-emphasised, and what new research topics will emerge. It depends merely on such aspects as technological development in future, economic trends, world events, and funding trends in education. It is a matter of fact that addressing practical problems effectively will require more powerful theories than currently available to address practical communication-related problems. For this, theories that accurately account for the ways in which people construct, use, and respond to messages are very much required. Without a doubt, this volume set alight conversation about these issues.

This edited volume, unquestionably, includes all the seven traditions of communication theory viz. rhetoric, semiotics, phenomenology, cybernetics, socio-psychology, sociocultural theory, and the critical approach. Nonetheless, though I understand that it is always very easy to critique books for what they leave out, the reviewer felt, in this case, the inclusion of environmental communication as a special chapter would have made this edited volume thorough in all respects.

Communication theory and research mutually influence each other and are reciprocally interwoven. The editors have definitely achieved the objective they set when compiling the volume in the first place. Overall, the purpose of the editors in editing this volume is achieved — to provide both seasoned scholars and beginning students unfamiliar with the state of theory and research in various areas of communication study to provide a taste of current theory and research in communication. This book will definitely appeal to graduate students and faculty members who want a thorough overview of not only the field but also sample research stemming from its various component parts.

To this end, this excellent publication, by all means, paves a way for theorists to work together in framing a truly grounded approach to Communication Theory and Research, making it a more serious academic discipline in the future. This book, for sure, will serve as a comprehensive textbook/reference book in the field of communication theory and research.

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**Authored by: Rachana Sharma**  
Published by: Cambridge Scholars  
Year of Publication: 2018

**Reviewed by: Pushplata**  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Journalism, Lady Shri Ram College  
for Women, University of Delhi.

With the convergence of technology and globalisation the world has witnessed many countries transforming into liberal economies and democratic systems, similarly media is also observing a structural change not just in terms of technology, but also in content, style, representation, language and even ethics. Since communication has become an integral part of governance and the media cannot afford to overlook its fundamental role as a bridge between the subjugated and marginalised sections of society and those as the helm of power. There is also a growing concern over the polarisation of the media on political and socio-political outlines. The growth of media and its involvement in the area of information and communication technologies, their mass usage and spread, includes numerous and diverse cultural, political, economic, ethical and social implications. Rachna Sharma, the editor of the publication also states following in the publication: "Today, while observing 'movements' on social issues at an increased frequency, with increased participation of the public, the claimed media interventions and the changing role of governments in this triangular relationship, one is compelled to locate the issues of marginalised sections in society."

With social media taking up issues of marginalised sections of society and individuals, the state as well as the mainstream media is also compelled to bring changes to the blurring structure. The incorporation of more interactivity and participation of audiences due to this social media platform bring under the scrutiny the nature of this interactivity and the participation of the public with media.

Since social media is known for its high degree of civic activism and individual freedom in manufacturing and presentation of the content, whereas on the other hand, the international media conglomerates are reaching out and spreading their power and economic strength on regional and global scale. The need has arisen to discuss the undeniable contribution of the media in building a democratic society and also to find out answers to the questions related to the clarification of relationship between media, the state and marginalised groups as it has also become the subject of an academic debate.

A National seminar on the topic Media, the state and the Marginalised: Tackling Challenges took place in March 2016, at the Department of Journalism, Kalindi College, University of Delhi in India. This reviewed publication consists of selected papers presented at the seminar, edited by Rachna Sharma, Assistant professor in the

*The incorporation of more interactivity and participation of audiences due to the social media platform bring under the scrutiny the nature of this interactivity and the participation of the public with media.*

Department of Journalism, Lady Shri Ram College for Women at University of Delhi, India. This Publication included 21 chapters which has discussed the five major areas, as follows: Part I: Media and Political Communication, which throws light on the role of media in encouraging national debates and also on the influence of social media on Indian Politics. Where as in Part II: Representation of Representation of the Marginalised and Media Ethics, major issues related to ideology of the representation of marginalised women and the portrayal of LGBT Identity in National Press has been discussed. Part III: New Media, Social Media and Digital Activism, this section discuss the patterns of communication emerging with the advent of new media and their implications, on the lives of marginalised groups. This section very appropriately discussed the social media engagement within the marginalised groups and their transformations in self- help groups. Part IV: Alternative and Community Media: The Media of the Marginalised? This section addresses the need to revive traditional forms of communication for the betterment of communities and marginalised groups and it also includes discourse around the nitty and gritty of social media to transform it into a true alternative media, in the light of what Rosi Braidolli (2010) calls “positive alternatives”. Part V: Critical Theory, Media Criticism and Media Reforms. This section takes up media criticism and critical media theories as well as media reforms and also encompasses the positive stories of the media along with the criticism as it includes chapters particularly related to women, Internally Displaced Persons, the North East region of India and science communication.

The book consists of 331 pages which also contains a glossary of words in which the readers can find definitions of key terms which are related to the solved issues and an index of concepts and names which will help in orientation in the content.

This book has discussed media’s relationship with socio-cultural and political systems in today’s society and highlighted various challenges associated with inequality and, at the same time, creating a nexus with the elite classes of society to keep the marginalised away from the mainstream. This books deals with the Indian perspective in relation to the media, the state and the marginalised sections of society and its effort to comprehensively understand current social-political and social-cultural processes, which the contributors also managed to accomplish. I particularly appreciate the fact that the findings published in the book *Media, the State and Marginalisation: Tackling Challenges* may well serve as the base for academic debate aimed at addressing the problematic position of the marginalized sections, the way they are reported in media and the kind of issues they are facing due to the changing nature of media in the Indian society.

The composition of the authors’ team included leading experts from different areas, such as media and cultural studies, sociology, journalism, Public Relations as well media practitioners. This amalgamation of the interdisciplinary approach of the author to explore the reach of media in present socio-political-economic structures and how they are reported by mainstream media can be considered as a significant contribution to academia. Thus I considered the reviewed publication is an extraordinary impressive contribution to the discussion on tackling the issues and challenges of marginalised groups in current modern society. This extraordinary effort of the author to bring all

*This books deals with the Indian perspective in relation to the media, the state and the marginalised sections of society and its effort to comprehensively understand current social-political and social-cultural processes.*

the issues related to marginalised group under one table for discussion and highlighting the possible solutions to certain issues related to representation of marginalised sections in media is indeed noticeable. It can aid not only to academics and research scholars, but also to the student of media studies, journalism, political science, and sociology. This book will also be useful for media industry specialist who are interested in reporting the issue of marginalized groups in Indian society.

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