CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION
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In this chapter an attempt is made to analysis Gandhian concept of conflict resolution. Gandhi discovered and practiced ‘Satyagraha’ is the one of the greatest event in the last century. It is the rarest and noblest gift to the human beings. Gandhian Satyagraha is the most effective weapon to fight against injustice, violence and to resolve human conflicts. This chapter is an analysis to how Gandhian concept of conflict resolution is possible in international, religious and social conflict situation.

5.1. International Conflicts

At the international level a lot of reasons are behind the conflict. Imperialism, racism, boundary dispute between the nations, armaments, proliferation of nuclear arsenals generated violence at international level. Inequalities of global distribution of wealth, environmental disasters, excessive energy consumption, and population growths are other existing issues at global level.
Aftermath of the many global and regional wars we understood that violence or war cannot be solved by violence. Gandhian concept of nonviolent Satyagraha is the most effective method to resolve the crisis at international level. Gandhi extended the peaceful methods of settling dispute from individuals to group and to the quarrels between each nation. Racism and imperialism are the biggest challenges in the world faced last centuries. Gandhi defeated those two evils by his own nonviolent Satyagraha. Gandhi was first man to point his finger against racism. He was one of the victims of racism. His painful experience in South Africa is generated his ever existing contribution of nonviolent Satyagraha. India’s freedom struggle movement was one of the greatest examples in the fight against imperialism. Britain was the real symbol of imperialism. India attained her independence not at the expense of other nations, nor in a manner which led to the extinction of other nations, but through her own efforts and strength and used by totally nonviolent means. India’s nonviolent war of independence has shown this way to the world. And the world must follow this new path of peace, unless it has to go in for total destruction.
War or violence are begins in the mind of men. Gandhism seeks to cleanse their mind of violence, hate, revenge, anger and all other evils and to substitute in their place love for all, nonviolence, compassion, brotherhood of man, and peace and goodwill among people and nations\(^1\). Gandhian principles like truth, nonviolence, ends and means are equally applicable in international level\(^2\). Gandhi was very strongly opposed to the use of war or violence in international arena. Gandhian Satyagraha is the pursuit of truth; he did not admit violence being inflicted on one’s opponent, but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. Patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but ones own self\(^3\).

Nations which believe in nonviolence must be ready to sacrifice every thing. Nonviolence cannot be permitting the subjugation of other countries. Nonviolence is based on the fundamentals of love and if it can be practiced by individuals, it can help relationship amongst nations. It depends upon changing the heart of the opponent. Nonviolence fundamentally believes in God, while violence is atheism where there is no scope for God.
a. Gandhi’s attitude towards war

Recently we had an experience in the events like Iraq and Afghan war. War or violence has unleashed more violence. Gandhi had a positive vision of international relations, and a practical suggestion to make for promoting peace and reducing threat of war. Gandhian Satyagraha is the effective solution of war in between countries. RR Diwakar has pointed out that, Satyagraha does not inflict suffering on others and does not involve destruction of anything essentially useful to humanity. It does not inflict pain and does not act through fear. It appears self-suffering to the heart and to the sense of fairness and justice. It calls for the highest virtue of sacrifice, love and suffering bravely4.

RR Diwakar delivered that there is some difference between war and Satyagraha. War uses physical force, Satyagraha uses moral force. Wars as an institution does not stand for compromise, Satyagraha always admit compromise. War necessarily endangers hatred, anger and the spirit of revenge, Satyagraha promotes love, compassion and pity. War is likely to support an unjust cause, Satyagraha can never do it. War envisages secrecy, distrust, falsehood
and espionage, Satyagraha is based on truth and always uses open and straight forward methods. War excites feeling of rage and fury, Satyagraha exhorts people to be calm and forbearing without any ill-will towards any body⁵.

Second World War created deeper level impact on Gandhi’s attitude towards war. During the Second World War, Gandhi requested the British people to adopt the methods of nonviolence instead of war for the settlement of disputes among nations. During that period Gandhi evolved new idea of non-military ways for national self defense. The new nonviolent method was to be operated instead of usual military defense. Thus he practiced with the idea of national self defense through ‘non-violent army’⁶.

Gandhi continuously sent out the message for nations that self defense is possible only in the bases of nonviolent means. Gandhi expressed his concern that only nonviolent army can defend India in any external attack. He added that “if India had one crores of nonviolent volunteers, no nation could conquer India. If they failed in their attempt to prevent aggression, then the fault was theirs, not the philosophy of nonviolence but in their methods of practicing it”⁷.
There have been several instances of the successful use of nonviolent resistance on different countries at different levels. In some of the instances the nonviolent resistance was by individual, in others, it took a massive or corporate form. Danilo Dency in Italy, Nelson Mandela in South Africa, and Martin Luther King Jr. in America are led by nonviolent struggles in their respective countries which have made world wide attention.

Civilian based defense is more applicable at international level. Civilian defenders would nonviolently resist the occupation of their country. Many of nonviolent techniques are used in this method. Substantial training is required for such resistances. Gandhian concept of Shanti Sena is more similar in this form of a civilian based defense. Shanti Sena is to resolve all conflicts in creative and constructive manner and to maintain peace and harmony. Shanti Sena is a compound word of ‘Shanti and Sena’. ‘Shanti’ means peace and ‘Sena’ means ‘Army’. After Gandhi’s assassination some of the Gandhian followers adhered Gandhian principles to their life. Vinobahbave and Jayaprakash Narayan were the some of the Gandhian followers in India. Vinoba organized Shanti Sena fully in
the basis of Gandhian nonviolence. There are some qualifications and principles in Shanti Sainks is that

i. To have faith in truth and nonviolence.

ii. To have a fearless, malice less and non party attitude.

iii. To equally treat all countries, creeds, races, castes and languages.

iv. To take no part in power politics and party politics, including determination not to vote in elections.

v. To hold no justification of war

vi. To be prepared to risk life in quelling disturbances\textsuperscript{10}

Shanti Sena is a peace keeping force relevant not only at international level also it is more important at religious and social conflict situations. The main principles of Shanti sena is that they should free from partisanship, hatred and fear. They have trust in each other. Shanti Sainik considers no man their enemy and their hearts will be filled with love\textsuperscript{11}. 

The real task of Shanti Sena is not only to prevent violence or war but also they work to remove the root cause of conflict and try for peaceful resolution of each conflict. The aftermath of entire action of Shanti Sena will be to clean the national mind and growth of mutual goodwill. When that takes place, the Government needs not to spend much on the army. It will strengthen the moral capacity of the nations and it will be able to make its influence felt in the international field.

b. Period of invasion

Gandhi discussed the three stages of invasion and also the various methods of combating it nonviolently. Those three stages are (i) the plan for action before the invasion take place (ii) the plan adopted during the period of armed attack. (iii) the plan for period when occupation of territory by aggressor has taken place.

Before the invasion period Gandhi advocated some forms of preventive measures. Gandhian concept of purposeful conflict resolution in international level is not only the elimination or avoidance of war but also the removal of root cause of war. A Satyagrahi never misses, can never miss, a chance of compromise on
honourable terms. He needs no previous preparation; his cards are always on the table. In the preinvasion period nonviolent countries used some methods like persuasion, negotiation, mediation and conciliation.

Thomas Weber wrote that “the first step of Satyagrahi is to send confront the aggressors and talk to them if possible, tell them that they are wrong in their actions”. Then also with the nonviolent country seek decision through arbitration or by any impartial body. They can put pressure on the aggressor by making appeal to the world public opinion. This action may create a new situation favourable to the resolution of a conflict. Nonviolent world organization has effective role in this preinvasion period.

Second is during the period of armed attack, Gandhi suggested the nonviolent country should fight nonviolently the invader without any bitterness or hatred against the invader. In the year 1940 Gandhi wrote in the Harijan, “if the Czeks, the Poles, the Norwegians, the French and the English had all said to Hitler, you need not make your scientific preparation for destruction. We will meet your violence with a non violence. You will therefore, be able to destroy our
nonviolent army without tanks, battleships and airships, the history of Europe would have been written differently” 18. Gandhi’s nonviolent resistance is to weaken the moral defense of the aggressor and to upset his poise and balance by confronting him with an entirely novel and unprecedented treatment. Nonviolent resistance is morally disarming the aggressor and by appealing to his natural feelings of love and altruism through self-suffering.

Third stage is after the occupation of the invader, in this situation Satyagrahi used his methods like non-cooperation and civil disobedience. Due to this circumstance there is no submission in the part of a Satyagrahi, they refuse to obey order of invader army or occupants. Full force of non-cooperation is including refusal to work in administration, refusal to accept honors from the regime, refusal to pay fines and taxes, a boycott of courts, schools and products manufactured by the oppressor19.

Thomas Weber pointed out that territorial control is gained without difficulty, but as the local population would not cooperate, their facilities could not be used effectively, their solidarity would make a divide and rule policy impossible, and their non-cooperation
will lead them to reject economic, social, cultural and political imports. In the process of voluntary non cooperation, opponents realize their fault and arouse their moral consciousness. In fact there is an idea behind Gandhian perspective of noncooperation is that if a whole conquered nation refused to cooperate, in any way whatever, with the occupation forces, sooner they would withdraw these forces from occupied area. The Britishers in India were almost like an army of occupation, and Gandhi had ample experiences of the efficacy of nonviolent non cooperation in dealing them.

c. Disarmament

Armament industry is the greatest threat in the modern world. All countries acquired more highly harmful weapons in their defensive or for war purposes. Nuclear weapons, atom bombs, hydrogen bombs are huge menace. Nuclear weapons have the capacity to destroy the present population. The present era is the technological period. The scientific and technological development of the warfare in last century has totally changed the traditional system of war. Half of the world scientist and engineers are engaged in military research and armament production.
India established the Atomic energy commission in the year 1948. It was reorganized in 1958. India had tested nuclear bomb in Pokran in the year 1974 during the period of Indira Gandhi. India again repeated nuclear experiment in the period of Atal Bihary Vajpay in 1998. After the explosion India had faced lot of criticism from the various parts of the world. India stated that, it will not use nuclear weapons for the war purpose. Many time Gandhi expressed his disagreement in experiment and use of nuclear weapons and atom bombs. Gandhi wrote “the moral to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb is that it will not be destroyed by counter bombs even as violence cannot be by counter-violence. Mankind has to get out of violence only through nonviolence”\(^{21}\). Ravindra Kumar is the one of the Gandhian scholar, he pointed out that, one who talk of nuclear weapons, he is goes miles away from Gandhian legacy and any one keeping atom bomb or supporting it and talking of Gandhi or Gandhism will be doing a great sin to the human society as a whole\(^{22}\).

The word “Military–Industrial Complex” is well known in international level. This word is coined by former American president Eisner hover in his famous farewell address in 1961\(^{23}\). This speech has got world wide public attention. He pointed out that there is existing
unsacred relationship between those industrialists involved in production of military technology and leading members of military establishment. Those two groups have been some vested interest. Every time they are trying to build tension between countries. Those pressure groups trying to intervene the foreign policies of the nations. Each country have been compelled enhance their armament industry\textsuperscript{24}. Today the grand total of the defense budgets of all nations came in to massive scale. In some countries armament level is growing in one side and other side living condition of people in degrading. The armament race not only increases the risk of war but it leads to the diversion of resources to unproductive and meaningless purposes.

Gandhi not to argued this such armament industry, he suggested disarmament at international level. Gandhi wrote, “I feel that India’s mission is different from that of others. India is fitted for the religious supremacy of the world. India is less in need of steel weapons, it has fought with divine weapons, and it can still do so. Other nations have been votaries of brute force. The terrible war going on in Europe furnishes forcible illustration of the truth. India can will all by soul force. History supplies numerous instances to prove that brute force are as nothing before soul force\textsuperscript{25}.” Then some nations renounce war
as an instrument of national policy and resort to disarmament voluntarily, it would be generated permanent peace in the world. If all nations of the world voluntarily adopt the path of nonviolence, the world will become a better place to live in and the future generations of the mankind\textsuperscript{26}.

Gandhi contributed in another world is ‘unilateral disarmament’. It be described as voluntary abolition of weapons and voluntary decision of not to acquire nuclear weapons\textsuperscript{27}. In Gandhi’s words “some nation will have to dare to disarm herself and take large risks. The level of nonviolence in that nation, if that event happily comes to pass, will naturally have risen so high as to command universal respect. Her judgment will unerring, her decision will be firm, her capacity for heroic self-sacrifice will be great, and she will want to live as much for other nations as for herself” \textsuperscript{28}. In this such a unilateral action will reduce global tension and threat of war.

In the case of unilateral disarmament, Gandhi very strongly believed that one country should take a decision is disarm them self. At the same moment nonviolent country expected to follow the other country in this way. If it is not happened, the nonviolent country
repeats this unilateral disarmament process. Finally opposite country must be realized the need of the disarmament. Gandhi suggested that the big powers to start the process of unilateral disarmament. The main advantage of this unilateral process is that, the renunciation of arms by the big power will generates moral powers among other nations. If small countries renounce their arms, it will generate very little impact on other nations. Unilateral disarmament is the real step of Gandhian methods of peace keeping in international level. It will reduce in arms race and global tension.

d. World Government

At the international level an effective world organization can only be resolve the disputes between the countries. Gandhi not satisfied the working conditions of League of Nations and United Nations. In 1931 Gandhi criticized the League of Nations for having failed to keep peace and suggested that it should adopt his Satyagraha technique. These organizations have without moral grounding. He was aware of the weakness or limitation of United Nations and League of Nations.
Gandhi pointed out that there are many reasons behind the failure of League of Nations. The leaders of the member nations had not reformed their minds and purified their hearts. They believed in aggression, conquest and exploitation of weaker peoples. So these situation organization devices will collapse at critical movements. However, he did not relinquish his faith in the necessity of World Government.

It was during the years 1938-1942 that he began to advocate the need of World Government. He endorsed the resolution of the Congress party which he suggested a federal world state based on self determination of all people. The working of the present United Nation does not represent the Gandhian concept of World Government. The policy of U.N. is decided by big powers. They used Veto power only on their purposes. Gandhian perspective of nonviolent World Government have based on nonviolence and truth. It has no role in violence or war. A nonviolent person takes the whole world to be his family. He will not harbor any feelings of fear towards anybody and others will also behave in the same manner.
Gandhian concept of World Government is based on his spiritual ideology. He had the spiritual vision of the unity of all mankind and believed the ideal World Government. Gandhi was one of the foremost thinkers to imagined “One World- One Government”. He insisted that regardless of political boundaries and economic or commercial barriers, spiritually and morally the entire humanity is one. In several occasions Gandhi delivered his opinion about World Government or International league, he said, “There would be an international league only when all nations, big or small, composing it are fully independent. The nature of that “independence will correspond to the extend of nonviolence assimilated by the nations concerned” 34.

Meena Dutta famous peace researcher evolved some postulates for World Government in Gandhian perspective. It has the following features 35.

(i) The nations comprising the world government should be predominantly nonviolent.

(ii) All nations are truly freedom from colonial rule.
(iii) Equal representation to all nations without any discrimination of “Have” and “Have not’s

(iv) Its membership should be purely voluntary but every nation should be willing to sacrifice itself with good faith for fellow members.

(v) With regard to disarmament, it should move from ‘unilateral’ to ‘universal disarmament’, but the initiative must come from one’s own self.

(vi) It should have international police force to maintain law and order.

Effective world organization have major role at international level, to resolve the dispute between the countries and within the countries, and these organization is strengthening the constructive relationship between each countries. Gandhian concept of World Government should be ensuring the freedom of all countries. Such an organization is to prevent external aggression and exploitation of one nation over another nation. The protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and people are some other responsibilities of effective World Government. On the establishment
of such World Government, disarmament would be practicable in all
countries, national armies, navies and air forces would be no longer be
necessary, and a world federal defense force would keep the world
peace and prevent aggression. Gandhi always treats nationalism and
internationalism as complementary to each other. Then his concepts
internationalism is possible only when nationalism is developed, that
is when people belonging to different countries are able to act as a
man.

Not only UN and many other international and regional
organizations are working at international level. All these
organizations are trying to build cooperation between each of the
countries and them trying to strengthening the non developed
countries. Gandhi’s ideas are greatly influenced in India’s foreign
policies. After the Second World War, during the period of Cold war,
world countries are divided in two groups under the leadership of
U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. India was not joined any groups. Ever time
India is stood with world peace and expressed their ideas in “non-
alignment”. Meaning of this word is not joining any powerful groups
led by Russia and America. India’s foreign policy and her policy of
non-alignment made a positive contribution to international relation.
In the past two decades, it helped to prevent war and to ensure the survival of mankind\(^3\). Nehru is the real practitioner of ‘non-alignment’ at international level. He evolved this principle in the basis of a Gandhian philosophy. Non-alignment movement had got more importance than any other perceptions at international level.

\section*{e. U.S. Civil Rights Movements}

United State Civil Rights Movement was the one of the greatest example in Gandhian concept of conflict resolution outside India. This movement had got more attention in several parts of the world. Slavery and racism existed as a huge issue in early American society. The main intention of this movement was to obtain civil rights for black people from their civilian government. Then the focus of the movement have not only secured citizenship rights for black but have also redefined prevailing conceptions of the nature of civil rights and the role of Government protecting these rights.

The initial protests of black movements started at Montgomery. The southern city of Montgomery, Alabama, has a bus which has a large number of seats are reserved for whites. Black people are not permitted to sit these seats. On 1\textsuperscript{st} December, 1955 Rosa Parks, a
Negroe woman travelled in a bus. She refused to give up her seat to a white passenger. She was arrested very soon and put into jail\textsuperscript{37}. Early in the year 1954, United State Supreme court passed a new law against segregation in public schools, trains, planes and buses and also the court extended the order in hotels, restaurants and amusement parks etc\textsuperscript{38}. The new incident in Montgomery is the violation of the Supreme Court order.

The Montgomery news spread to other areas of Alabama. Black people decided to boycott all the buses, and they started the Civil Rights Movement. The protesters formed an organization, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). The young Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. became its president. He was one of the followers of Mahatma Gandhi. He was born on January 15\textsuperscript{th} 1929\textsuperscript{39}. He suffered racial inequalities in his school days. He was well aware of the situations the black people suffered in America. United State Civil Rights Movement was conducted in a nonviolent manner. Noncooperation or boycott are used in this entire struggle, it was the greatest contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to the world.
Mahatma Gandhi’s ideas and his teachings greatly inspired Dr. King’s life. The turning point in King’s life, he attended a lecture in Philadelphia delivered by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard University. Johnson had just returned from a trip to India and was influenced with Gandhism. Johnson had an in-depth account of the Mahatma’s teaching and his methods of nonviolent action. King described Johnson’s lecture as ‘profound and electrifying’ and he bought half dozen books on Gandhi’s life and message. Thus he raised deep faith in Gandhism and he adhered to the Gandhian principles like truth, nonviolence, love and forgiveness in his Civil Right Movement.

King’s understanding of Gandhism is not only philosophical but also in all practical aspects. He considered the Gandhian methods of nonviolence as one of the most potent weapons available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom. The study of Gandhism convinced him that true pacifism is not nonresistance to evil, but by nonviolent resistance to evil. Gandhi also reinforced King’s belief in the essential compatibility of ends and means. As in Gandhian philosophy ends cannot be justified by the means. The ‘ends’ and ‘means’ are equally important.
The nonviolent struggle against bus segregation escalated in other cities. Negroes in other cities began to experiment with nonviolence as a means of securing other rights. The Montgomery bus boycott lasted 381 days. The entire Negroes in the city not to resort to the bus, and they walked the roads to their job place. Then finally bus companies were bankrupt and when another one was organized, it announced it that would operate on a non-segregate basis\textsuperscript{43}. In the mean time Supreme Court ruling declared Montgomery bus law as unconstitutional and this verdict provided an opportunity for Negroes to travel along with white passengers.

After Montgomery Movement, a new organization was formed Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), King become its president. Martin Luther King Jr.who emerged as the boycott movement’s most effective leader, possessed unique conciliatory and oratorical skills. SCLC began to mobilize the churches to strengthen the civil rights movements. Many of whites were attracted to this movement and they actively participated with black people in these movements.
The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) protest strategy achieved its first great success in 1963 when the group launched a major movement in Birmingham, Alabama for civil rights. Birmingham was the most segregated city in the United States; it was the bastion of racist segregation. Racist segregation existed at lunch counters, rest rooms, at drinking fountains and in other public facilities. Dr. King launched Birmingham campaign on April 1, 1963; the primary intention of his movement was to end the segregation. Large number of students, youths participated in this movement, they were completely adhered to nonviolence as the basic principle. Protesters conducted demonstrations in various parts of the city. Police attacked the mob, but they didn’t retaliate. Police arrested and tried some protesters.

The final phase of the Birmingham Movement state authorities expressed their willingness to talk to the protesters and their leader Martin Luther King. On 7th May 1963, after several marathon negotiating sessions, they agreed to all demands of protesters. According to the agreement, within 90 days lunch counters, rest rooms, fitting rooms and drinking fountains in stores would be desegregated. Within 60 days, blacks were to be considered for
employment as clerk, sales peoples, and for other positions previously prohibited to them. Within two weeks, a biracial committee to improve communication between blacks and whites would be established\textsuperscript{46}. After Montgomery and Birmingham, several nonviolent civil rights movements were conducted in several parts of America, especially in Selma and Chicago. All those struggles were led by Dr. Martin Luther King.

Successes of these nonviolent struggles, many of white people were attracted to the Negroes movement. They initiated another series of demonstrations and boycotts, both in the north and the south. On 28 August, 1963, both whites and blacks are conducted a march to Washington. More than two lakh people assembled in this march, they raised their voice for equality in education, employment, housing and voting\textsuperscript{47}. After all these movements, on 2\textsuperscript{nd} July, 1964 Lindon Johnson became the American president. He signed the historic Civil Rights package. This law offered full security to all American citizens, without any racial discrimination\textsuperscript{48}. Next year United State Congress passed the voting rights to associate with Civil Rights law. United State Civil Rights Movement did not impose any embarrassment on white people. It sought liberation of entire American communities
including blacks and whites. The civil rights legislation gave more opportunity to US Congress to pass voting rights to associates with civil rights law.

5.2. Social Conflicts

Many social evils are existed not only in India but also in all over the world. Social evils or social conflicts are huge threat in progress of any society. Colonialism, slavery, racism, poverty, ignorance are massive problems faced in all part of the world. Child marriage, untouchability, cast system, degradation of women, prevention of temple entry are suffered some severe issues in early Indian society.

Gandhi realized very clearly that without a mass awakening no substantial change could come over the Indian society. He had in mind not only political freedom but he developed his own ideas regarding social, economic and cultural freedom in order to bring about a social change in Indian society. He not only evolved a technique for gaining freedom but also for bringing about an integrated society. Under pressure of Gandhian struggle the Indian social picture changed very
rapidly. Gandhi created a sense of unity amongst the disunited and respect for the indigenous culture which had been completely dominated by the alien western culture.

Gandhi himself conducted several nonviolent battles on social and economic issues. Gandhi’s first experiment in the field of nonviolent resistance was made in South Africa. It started with the Maritzburg railway station incident. Gandhi protested the colour prejudice and launched nonviolence in individual level. Subsequently, he began a large scale nonviolent struggle for the rights of Asiatic settlers in South Africa.

When Gandhi came back in India on January 1915, he closely monitored Indian situation as Satyagrahi’s feelings. He started his socio-economic movement in Champaran in Bihar state. He intervened in the issue of Champaran in favour of cultivators who were forced by the planters to cultivate indigo and were unjustifiably exploited by them. Gandhi conducted his nonviolent movement in that area. It is well known that violating the rulers he was produced in the court where he pleaded guilty. He tackled the problem of textile workers at Ahmadabad through the same means of nonviolent
resistance. The same year he took up the cause of peasants at Kheda district. Then he continued this movement in various parts of the India.

**a. Caste system**

Caste system is the one of the major embarrassment in early Indian society was suffered. Untouchability is the one of the by product of cast system. Several theories were formulated about the origin of caste. While some theories are occupational or racial, others are attributed to colour. The cast has permeated every quarter of the Indian society and began to have control over the individual and social behaviour affecting the institution of marriage and family ties. Hinduism has four major castes and several sub castes. Traditional Hindus practiced and observed the cast system in a hierarchical way. Gandhi opposed the idea that one cast was superior to another; he wanted them all to behave as equals towards each other.

**b. Untouchability**

Untouchability is the evil custom was practiced by early Indian society. Gandhi used his satyagraha to fight against untouchability. Some of the higher cast people are considered lower cast people is
untouchables, their life is full of suffering and miseries. They performed most of the manual and unskilled and particularly unclean occupations. They are economically, politically, religiously and socially deprived people. The difference between the untouchables and the rest of the society could be traced in every walk of life, in dress, dialect, diet and many other things. Untouchables usually lived in the crowded, poorest and most desolate quarter of a city, amid its waste and filth. Gandhi believed that untouchability was a terrible custom in the Hindu faith and that it was not a true part of Hinduism. It is perpetuated division and exclusivity. Gandhi believed that eradication of untouchability is the right way to achieving swaraj.

Gandhi was determined to remove the problem of untouchability in ‘root and branch’ and the other hand, wanted to preserve the basic unity of Hinduism. Gandhi pleaded with the untouchables to be patient and not to give up their religion. Gandhi referred to the untouchables as Harijan or children of God. Gandhi called his newspaper publication Harijan to honour them and bring more attention to their plight. Gandhi travelled in many areas of India, especially rural and urban sector. He tried to convince the upper cast Hindus untouchability, is a social evil. He also targeted the untouchables for
reform. To then Gandhi preached the importance of sanitation and cleanliness. He welcomed them as valued and equal members of his ashrams and insisted that all other members of the ashram treat them as equals. Many of Gandhian followers are supported his efforts at reforming India’s attitudes and practices.

**c. Prevention of temple entry**

Prevention of temple entry for lower cast people is the another big issue in early our social system. Higher cast people does not permitted lower cast people to entry the temple. Gandhi advocated open the temple for untouchables or lowest cast people. Many of Satyagraha movement are conducted against the prevention of temple entry for lower cast people under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He announced to undertake an indefinite fast with Kelappan till the Guruvayoor temple in Kerala was thrown open for the untouchables. Temple entry plays important role in the spiritual and social life of the people. So that Gandhi considered great importance to his temple entry movement for the eradication of untouchability.

Vaikom Satyagraha is the one of the greatest example in social Satyagraha; it was conducted in the year 1924. The main intention of
this movement was the secure the civil rights of lower cast people. Gandhi and Congress supported this movement. In fact, this movement demonstrates the success and significance of the Gandhian nonviolent technique adopted by local leaders for the cause of social change\textsuperscript{58}.

Gandhi evolved several programme for the upliftment of lower class people. For this purpose, Gandhi founded an organization is ‘Harijan Sevak Samaj’. This organization worked for temple entry and took effort to open public place like road, wells and schools for untouchables. In that circumstance British government restricted Gandhi’s freedom, and then Gandhi started twenty-one days fast from 8\textsuperscript{th} May 1933. Later on Gandhi conducted a long Harijan tour and moved from place to place where he addressed meetings and met volunteers who had been working for this effort\textsuperscript{59}. Gandhi conducted all these movement with truthful and nonviolent means.

d. Women’s inequalities

Women’s had suffered lot of inequalities in early Indian society. Child marriage, dowry, prohibition of widow remarriage are some of illegal customs practiced early Indian society. Political oppression and economic poverty characterize the life of women in India. In the male
dominated society, employment discrimination of women is very high. Women are mostly appointed in poorly paid occupations when compared with men. Generally women are denied the opportunity to use their individual talent to their work.

The main concern of Gandhi is that men and women are equal and their problem must be one and same. Both are interdependent and they cannot live without the other’s active life. Gandhi was gave more role in women’s in Indian freedom struggle movement. Gandhian Satyagraha has brought about the political awakening; women’s were largely emancipated from their bonds, and could bear their due share in the national life. Gandhi was more concerned for the welfare of women. Gandhi stood for proper education for women and believed that in proportion to the education they receive, they would become sensitive to the glaring inequalities which they are subject to it.

An education system to work as catalyst for socio-political awakening of women needs serious restructuring and reorientation of its values and ideas. Education pattern if properly sensitive to women can to a considerable extend help in redefining the role of women in the society and polity.
Women’s are suffered another big problem in prohibition of widow remarriage. Gandhi had expressed great concern is that widow remarriage. He was opposed to the system of enforced widowhood. Gandhi believed that every widow has as much right to remarry as, every widower. Gandhi every time fights against the practice of dowry system. He called it as ‘the hateful system of dowry’, ‘marriage by purchase’ ‘a degrading practice’ and so on. Gandhi is tried to awakening the public opinion to against this dowry system.

e. Economic inequality

Increasing the economic disparity in between rich and poor is another big embarrassment in our social system. Economic equality is the master key to nonviolent social conflict resolution. Working for economic equality, means abolish the central conflict between capital and labour. In many countries bulk of wealth is concentrated on few rich hands. Majority of people is living in below poverty line. The reducing the gap between rich and poor is need for vast effort. Violent and blooding revolution is cannot be solved this issue. Gandhian technique of trusteeships is only the way for the bloodless or painless extinction of capital. This doctrine is a nonviolent way in place of
state ownership for exploitation. Gandhian trusteeship is an alternative for state socialism and corporate socialism\textsuperscript{64}.

Gandhi was not against capitalists but against capitalism. The modern economics gives more importance to the capital. But for Gandhi, the labour is far superior than the capital. He held that without labour gold, silver and copper are useless burden for it is labour which extracts the precious ore from the bowel of the earth\textsuperscript{65}. Gandhi’s trusteeship did not recognize any right of private ownership of property but aimed at the provision of means of transforming the present existing capital order of the society into an egalitarian society\textsuperscript{66}.

f. Gandhian Satyagra and Social Conflicts

Gandhi’s nonviolent based Satyagraha is provided the most effective solution to handle the social conflicts. Non cooperation, breaking of the laws, long fasts and constructive work are some of the key aspects of Gandhi’s social satyagraha, which suggests some sorts of moral pressure on evil doers. Gandhi considered nonviolence as the most active force in the world. It is also the essence of social good. In a society where all cherish welfare of others, there would be naturally no room for injustice or discrimination towards any social group.
In any social satyagraha, whether against the government, a group or individual, before taking any action an individual must first convince themselves of the truthfulness of the cause. Thomas Weber pointed out that, the Satyagrahi will them “appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly before every body who wants to listen them”, and only then will be resort to Satyagraha. According to Gandhi any government have not to control any person without his consent. Noncooperation movement is the effective step in Gandhian concept of social Satyagraha. Gandhi’s non-cooperation movement is expanding the technique to encompass the whole mass of people and in making it a mass movement aimed against an organization entity, be it state, class or cast. When a noncooperation movement, nonviolent activist is not to cooperate with the evil custom or evil social order and they do not to cooperate with oppressive power system. Noncooperation Movement can be characterized as a moral action motivated towards weakening the political and economic programmes and bases of structural oppression. It is of more participatory nature than that of mobilization, because it raises the consciousness of the people and the public boycott type of action is an
action of participation to weaken the functional mechanism and process of the structure. By such type of action, people’s consciousness about participatory self-confidence of self-sustenance awakens and widen. The non-cooperation in the socio economic field resulted in a harmonious and just relationship of men with each other and with themselves.

In the wake of fight against social evils, Gandhi advised people to boycott the foreign clothes and that Khadi was expected to take the place of foreign clothes. When the legislatures and courts were destroyed, the village panchayath were ready to fill the gap. When he asked the government servants to withdraw from service, he provided spinning as an alternative occupation. When schools were boycotted, it meant the establishment of national schools. Thus non-cooperation was not supposed to create vacuum, but rather meant to transform the existing system.

Civil disobedience is the utmost forms of Gandhian Satyagraha. When an oppressed social system, true Satyagrahi disobey the unjust laws. The main intention of civil disobedience movement is at alleviating the oppression of a minority group, it would include
working with that group to help them learn their right, to organize themselves etc. Civil resistance is dangerous programme in autocratic society, but it is harmless to a democracy which is will to submit to public opinion. Civil disobedience is a purest form of constitutional agitation and is the sacred duty of the people towards any such a government. Nonviolent way of law breaking is the voluntary process; there is no outside pressure in this programme. It is the supreme duty of true Satyagrahi.

g. Constructive Programme

Constructive programme is the one of the greatest contribution of Gandhi to Indian masses. Gandhi used his constructive programme to resolve the many of social conflicts existed our society. It is the main element in Gandhi’s Satyagraha movement. Constructive programme is the process for reconstruction of our society. It was necessary to bring together the different groups and classes of people and promote unity of heart based on mutual interest. Gandhi adopted constructive programme as a method of satyagraha for first time during his nonviolent Non-cooperation movement of 1920. Gandhi evolved this programme not in simple period. It took several years to give shape and form to the programme.
Ignorance of the people is the main cause in the many of social conflicts. Social change cannot be brought through military power or compulsion. It needs a consciousness among the people which Gandhi tried to bring through constructive programme. Gandhi’s constructive programme is included following items like.

a. Communal harmony
b. Removal of untouchability
c. Prohibition of drinks and drugs.
d. Khadi and village industries
e. Village sanitation, health and hygiene
f. Basic education
g. Adult education and literacy
h. Uplift of women
i. Uplift of whole village
j. Love of the mother tongue
k. Work for economic equality
l. Service of aborigines
m. Organization of students, Kisans and labourers
Gandhi gave more importance in village economy for his constructive programme. Gandhi understood that poverty is the severe problems in all over India. Without economic development poor people’s life, there was little hope of winning the political battle against the British government. Therefore he advised the people to use the spinning wheel which could give a large number of people self-employment and increase their income. Gandhi made charka and spinning as their own symbolic representation in the national movement. His plea for reconstruction included the revival of village communities. He made Khadi is the symbol of swadeshi and pleaded for complete swadeshi. Gandhian concept of swadeshi is very significant in the economic sphere.

Gandhi was given more importance in education in his own constructive programme. He considered it could have a process of social regeneration of Indian students. Gandhi would make free and compulsory education during the primary stage from the age of 7 to 14. Gandhi evolved a new plan of self supporting primary education is called the ‘Basic education’. The aim of Gandhi’s basic education was to make the individual self supporting by the sale of products of works done by vocational training. It will assured occupation which
will give the students. It aims to bring all round development and emerging new nonviolent democratic social order.

h. Sarvodaya

Sarvodaya is a Sanskrit word; means of this word is ‘welfare of all’ or ‘rising of all’. Sarva means all and udaya means welfare or rising. Sarvodaya is the title of series of nine articles, which Gandhi wrote and got published in Gujarati in the Indian opinion weekly in South Africa in 1908. The world Sarvodaya is the effective solution of all social conflicts. It is a dynamic philosophy. Sarvodaya seeks to build a new society on the foundation of old spiritual and moral values of India and attempts to meet the challenges of the contemporary problems.

Sarvodaya stands for transformations of ego-centric outlook to one of altruism. It can bring about moral regeneration of society. It consists not in advancing the good of isolates individual but the welfare of the all the classes of people irrespective of cast, colour, race, region or religion. Sarvodaya is a social philosophy, proposes to establish egalitarian social order based upon Gandhian principles of truth, nonviolence and purity of means.
Sarvodaya philosophy trying to remove suffering and poverty with the help of nonviolence and truth. In sarvodaya society, there is no scope for exploitation, discrimination, inequality and violence. Gandhi advocated that sarvodaya society should free from all evils like untouchability, cast system etc. And also Gandhi articulated his ideas of just social order in terms of removal of poverty and unemployment, providing proper food, clothes, education and creative healthy condition of living for every human being so that common masses can work and earn easily to meet their needs. Gandhi used his sarvodaya philosophy to attainment of spiritual freedom. Sarvodaya society guarantees moral freedom to every individual. In this system moral freedom is satisfied only faith in the supremacy of God. In Gandhi’s ideal society moral freedom is the means and spiritual freedom are the ends. Ends and means are equally more important in Gandhi’s sarvodaya philosophy. Gandhi does not believe that the ends justify the means as in modern ideologies like communism or Marxism. If the means are pure, the ends also become pure. To Gandhi, means and ends are inseparably connected just like seeds and trees are connected.
Village Swaraj or village economy has crucial terms in Gandhi’s ideal society. In this system every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs. Such a society every individual knows what he wants. Decentralization is a process have key role in Gandhi’s sarvodaya social order. Gandhi not agreed to the concentration of power and centralized production. Concentration of power means the denial of the concept of the sovereignty of the people. Decentralized social order will be democratic and egalitarian; it provides equal opportunity of the all people from bottom to top. Gandhian concept of decentralization is possible only in panchayath system. It will eliminate the contradictions of rural and urban structure and also eliminate the social, economic, political and religious discrimination.

i Champaran Satyagraha

Champaran Satyagraha was the first experiment in Gandhian concept of non violent conflict resolution in India. Champaran was reputed to be the kingdom of the great king Janaka. It was situated in northern Bihar along the international border with Nepal. It was the
headquarters of Motihari. Champaran was known for mango groves and indigo plantations. European planters had reaped rich harvest from indigo plantations. They had been exploiting the simple peasantry of that place. They had practically set up a super Government with the aid of legislation and usage, and some time by naked force. The planters got themselves entrenched under the Bengal Tenancy Act and similar reactionary laws and exploited the poor peasants with impunity. With certain land arrangements end lease agreements the European landlords had tightened their stranglehold over the farmers of Champaran. Tinkathia was the most hated system, which has been imposed on the village there. “Tinkathia, which literally means three sticks, had an ominous significance to the peasantry”. As per the system each riot under the Champaran planters was to cultivate indigo on the 3/20 of his holding for his European Jamindars. Sometimes this proportion was raised 5/20. It was legalized by the Bengal Tenancy Act. When cultivation of Indigo became unprofitable at that time, the planters entered into new arrangements with peasants, relieving them from the obligation to grow indigo, but on the condition that they paid enhanced rents. The Bengal Tenancy Act came to the aid of planters who
equated sections in the Act to support of their actions. It badly affected the peasants, making their life fully of suffering and misery.\(^8^2\)

Gandhi had no idea about the indigo plantation and the geographic position of Champaran. It was in 1916 when Gandhi went to Lucknow to attend the session of Indian National Congress that a person called Rajkumar Shukla, an agriculturalist, brought the problem to his attention. He narrated to Gandhiji the problems of the distressed cultivators of Champaran and wanted that the Congress should come to the rescue of the helpless peasants there. The Congress passed the resolution expressing deep sympathy for the people of Champarans.\(^8^3\)

A worker from Bihar, Kishore Babu, after acquainting Gandhi about the local conditions, invited him to visit the place, which he did on April 1917. Then Gandhiji decided that he would go to Champaran at the earliest and would enquire into the disputes between indigo planters and peasants. Gandhiji reached Motihari, the headquarters of Champaran district on 17\(^{th}\) April 1917. Then he enquired into the conditions of peasants. He quickly and sympathetically understood their grievances. In this regard, he also met the Commissioner of the Tirhut division and secretary of the Planters Association, but they told
Gandhi that he should not visit Champaran. But Gandhiji was not bothered by such observations; he visited several places of Champaran. For that purpose Gandhiji had to meet thousands of peasants as well as landlords.84

There a police inspector came to Mahatma Gandhi and informed him that the district Magistrate wanted to see him. Gandhi gave the necessary instructions to his followers and said that we should proceed further while he himself accompanied the inspector in a bullock cart back to Motihari. On the way he got a notice from the district Magistrate under section 144 under which he had been ordered to leave Champaran at the earliest. The notice had been issued as per the orders of the Commissioner of the Tirhut division. After receiving the notice, Gandhiji sent forth with a reply to the district Magistrate saying that he cannot leave without completing the objective for which he had come over there and he was prepared whatever sentence was awarded to him for disregarding the order. For disobeying the order Gandhiji was to stand on trial the next day.85

The incident spread like wild fire and Motihari witnessed unprecedented scenes. The coworkers of Gandhiji followed him
wherever he went. All people in Champaran joined Gandhi’s movement. They were all ignorant people who had not even heard of Indian National Congress. No political work was done in that area. The people did not know the world beyond Champaran. It was a new event for there, the Congress and its members entered the land under the leadership of Gandhi.  

Gandhi’s nonviolent conflict resolution was combined with active, dynamic and militant action against social evils. This involved the use of new techniques, refinement of old ones and the use of social strategy and tactics. With these additions the effect of the weapon of moral power was multiplied. Gandhi’s philosophy of satyagraha and concept of conflict resolution was fighting against Champaran land owners, individually and collectively. Gandhi believed that the practice of love and self suffering will bring about a change of heart in the opponents. The satyagraha must have the courage and love to be able to face violence and still love the opponents and seek to change them.

Gandhi had to appeal in the court of the Magistrate for violating section 144. He presented himself there, admitted his guilt and
expressed his readiness to suffer whatever penalty was imposed. After hearing the statement of Gandhi, the Magistrate found himself at his wits end and without giving any order at that time he asked for the comments of the state government. Then the Governor of Bihar Sir. Edward Gait asked the Magistrate to withdraw the case and ordered him to help in the inquiry which Gandhi wanted to carry out in Champaran\textsuperscript{89}.

In the early stages of enquiry the planters were hostile and the government backed them. But Gandhi’s readiness to disobey the Magistrate’s order and his persistence in following his own course to find the truth surprised them and to great extent confounded them. No occasion arose for the peasant to resort to satyagraha. The satyagraha of a single individual was sufficient to rouse the consciences of India and to open the eyes of the provisional government to the inequities involved. The peasants, it must be said to his credit, kept peace, came up boldly and gave evidence, and above all prepared themselves to follow Gandhi whenever he chose to lead them\textsuperscript{90}.

This time Gandhiji engaged in some constructive work. A satyagrahi should work on this constructive programme when he is not
engaged in direct action of satyagraha. This aim of the constructive programme is to build new social order by voluntary constructive work\textsuperscript{91}.

Gandhi in Champaran for 6 months and recorded the statements of about 10,000 riots. Later the Government constituted an enquiry committee of which Gandhi was also a member. The Commission came to the unanimous conclusion that ‘Tinkathia’ and all other illegal levies should be abolished and recommended a partial refund of exactions of peasants. On the basis of a report of the enquiry committee, a new law ‘Champaran Agrarian Act’ came into force according to which, peasants there got all the benefits. The Champaran satyagraha came to an end\textsuperscript{92}.

This Champaran Satyagraha is the best example of Gandhian concept of nonviolent social conflict resolutions. It was the first direct objective lesson in willful resistance against various types of inequalities which existed in India. Also at the same time it was a first triumph of ahimsa and truth.
j Vaikom Satyagraha

Vaikom temple is one of the famous pilgrim centres of Kerala state. It was a part of the Travancore state. Vaikom satyagraha took place in the year 1924. Many inequalities existed in Travancore at that period. The temple is situated in the centre of village. Priests and Brahmins did not permit the untouchables to travel on the road near the temple. The main argument of upper cast people was that if the untouchables walked on the roads around or converging on the sacred temple, it would be polluted. The prohibition upon the use of those roads passing the temple caused huge inconvenience to the untouchables. The objective of the Vaikom satyagraha was to obtain permission for untouchables to use certain road ways close to the temple.

Such illegal customs generated more feeling in the mind of the people against the authorities. Some of the reformers joined together and they are decided to fight against this illegal custom. T. K Madahavan, K. Kelappan, Krishanswami and George Joseph started their campaigning in the year 1924. The immediate goal of the movement was the use of the road to the temple by untouchables. But
in the spirit of the goal was to win the basic human rights of a section of the community who were subjected to injustice and indignity because of the blind tradition and ignorant custom accepted by the Hindu society based on the birth and occupation\textsuperscript{94}. The ‘Savarna Jatha’ organized by cast Hindus supported the Satyagraha which became the highlight of the movement. They submitted their demands to the Regent, Satu Lakshmi Bai\textsuperscript{95}. In the beginning of the movement Gandhi gave guidance and encouragement to satyagrahis, Gandhi exhorted that satyagrahi should never use violence at any circumstance.

The first batch of satyagrahis tried to pass the road near the temple. Many of untouchables also followed. They were severely beaten by the Priests and Brahmins. Police captured and imprisoned many of the satyagrahis. The participants in the movement were upholding the principles underlying the satyagraha. They tried to understand the viewpoint of opponents and wanted to win them over through persuasion\textsuperscript{96}.

In the second stage of the satyagraha, Travancore state authorities stopped the arrest of the satyagrahis. Police laid barricades
across the roads to prevent the satyagrahis to reach the forbidden area. Gandhi then instructed the volunteers not to destroy the barricades and to stand in front of them in a prayerful attitude and to keep vigil day and night. They should not use any violence against police, priests or Brahmins. They maintained nonviolence in these movements.

In the meantime, satyagrahis started constructive programmes. Hand spinning, khadi wearing, building schools were the positive efforts were taken by the satyagrahis. Such programmes ensured the public support of all classes of the society. For this strike, satyagrahis should not accept any outside aide. Mahatma Gandhi visited Travancore on April 1925 and he watched the situation. He tried to persuade the Travancore authorities to remove the barricades.

Final phase of the satyagraha movement in the year 1925, Brahmins declared they were willing to accept the untouchables. All barricades were removed and all police forces were withdrawn. All roads to the temple were opened for all sections of the people. But the satyagrahis did not immediately enter the road. They actually wanted to bring about the conversion of their opponents whose religious sensitivity was scrupulously respected. This campaign made a turning
point in the fight against untouchability. Finally the Travancore assembly passed a resolution in favour of reformers. The satyagrahis achieved their immediate goal of the right of use of the roads to and near the temple. Vaikom satyagraha movement was a great triumph to fight against untouchability and prevention of temple entry. This movement ended in Vaikom and it escalated in several parts of India.

5.3. Religious Conflict

Hundreds and crores of people living in India believe in several religions. Many religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism originated in India. People all over India live together without any religious discrimination. On several occasions some narrow minded people create disturbances between various religions. Religious conflicts are occurred not only in India but also in several areas of the world. Such as between Shias and Sunnis in the Middle East, Tamils and Simhalas in SriLanka, Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, Hinduism and Muslims in India, Judaism and Muslims in Arab world.
a. Gandhi and Religion

Gandhi was a highly religious man. He was a firm believer in essential unity of all religions, which he knew from a careful and close study of the main religious scriptures of the world. According to him, though religions are many but God is one. Gandhi visualized himself as instrument of God and communal harmony and peace constituted the highest mission of life. Gandhi said “I could not live for a single second without religion I go further and say that for every activity of a man must be derived from his religion, because religion means being bound to God, that is to say God rules your every breath”

Gandhian concept of religious conflict resolution is based on his nonviolent philosophy. Various religions are like the leaves on a tree. No two were alike, yet there was no antagonism between them or between the branches on which they grow. Gandhi was born into a Hindu family but he assimilated all other religious faiths. He strove throughout his life to show the common factors in all religions. Gandhi advocated his famous religious doctrine in “Sarvadharma Samabhava’. The meaning of this word is indicated as reverence for all religions. And it provided equal rights and opportunities to their
followers without any discrimination. Here one has to understand that being religious does not mean being anti-secular. This point is often missed by many secularists who equate secularism to being either non-believer or indifferent to religions. Mahatma Gandhi was an orthodox Hindu and took pride in being so. Yet his secularism cannot be doubted.

Gandhi’s ashram was the real symbol of this unity of all religions. Any image or other religious symbols were not be used in prayer meetings of Gandhi’s ashrams. ‘To avoid hurting any one’s feelings’ is the main principle of Gandhi’s ashrams. This matter was much discussed as a point of contention between the members of ashrams. In a Gandhian point of view, religion is a true path to reach God. Nonviolence is the basic principle to achieve God. Gandhi believed in the fundamental truth that all great religions of the world is one and were all helpful to one another. Each religion desires upliftment of human beings. Gandhi said “religion should pervade every one of our actions. Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It is not less than real because it is unseen. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity etc. It does not supersede them. It
harmonizes them and gives them reality.” Religion is not an end itself, but a means of attaining the highest moral and spiritual development. Different religions nourish, cherish and provide every opportunity to the cultivation of the spiritual life by their respective followers.

b. Hindu- Muslim Unity

In Gandhi’s life, he pleaded for interaction of various religious faiths, especially in Hindus and Muslims. ‘Hindu-Muslim unity’ is one of the important programmes in Gandhi’s constructive programme. Gandhi placed communal peace and harmony at the highest level of his priority. Religious conflict had always been generated because of misunderstandings of religious teachings. The Gandhian approach to religion as ‘treating all religions are equal’ and ‘leaving up to this ideal’ could lead to the problem of communal disharmony and religious conflict.

Gandhi understood and explained communal violence as a matter of family quarrels. Family disputes are never settled through recourse to violence. Gandhi was strictly against any kind of force whether physical or legal. Gandhi recognized the communal tension
that existed between Hindus and Muslims, and constantly preached Hindu–Muslim unity wherever he went\textsuperscript{103}. Gandhi had never missed a chance for compromising in between Hindus and Muslims. During his satyagraha in South Africa he succeeded to a great extent in bringing the two communities together on a common platform. He gave more importance in Hindu-Muslim unity. His experience in South Africa revealed that religious diversity was not any obstacle to the unity between the two communities since both of them had common heritage.

Gandhi was committed to communal harmony as an imperative for freedom. During India’s freedom struggle, Gandhi himself on repeated occasion had called the goal of a ‘heart unity’ between Hindus and Muslims in India. He focused not only on India’s freedom from British rule but also he was trying to preserve the multi-faith legacy of various religions\textsuperscript{104}.

Khilafat movement was the biggest example of Gandhi’s intervention in Hindu-Muslim unity. The result and Khilafat-Non cooperation Movement turned into an unprecedented demonstration
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of Hindu-Muslim unity. It brought Indian Muslims for the first time in a big way into the mainstream of Indian nationalism. Also he very strongly intervened in communal issues in Bihar, Bengal and Delhi. Gandhi conducted several satyagraha to resolve the communal conflict. The purpose of satyagraha was to generate the process of introspection and thinking which would make it possible to arrive at a readjustment of relationship between contending parties. For communal harmony, he went on foot from place to place, village to village spreading the message of nonviolence, love and friendship, brotherhood and mankind. He believed and was convinced that communal fanaticism could be eliminated from the ignorance of the people only through love, compassion, nonviolence and service of men irrespective of their caste, colour and creed.

Gandhian contribution of ‘Shanti Sena’ is the effective suggestion of religious conflict between various communities. Shanti Sainik had some qualifications. Shanti Sena is a peace keeping organization formed on the basis of communal clashes which occurred in some areas of India before the independence. In the year 1938, a communal riot occurred at Allahabad, this provincial assembly
was ruled by the Congress ministry. The Congress ministry used police and military force against the rioters. A volunteer Pashupathinath Gupta sacrificed his life in an attempt to secure peace and religions harmony. Gandhi openly criticized such a repression. So he asked the Congress to take necessary changes in their attitude towards nonviolent satyagraha\(^\text{105}\). And Gandhi insisted that a true satyagrahi should be keep nonviolence as his creed.

On several occasions, Gandhi openly criticized the forcible conversion of one religion to other. Mahatma Gandhi pointed out that every man is born into a particular religion. No religion is wholly false; every human being should be able to work out his destiny in and through it. And if he feels attracted to some aspects of other religions, he should be at liberty to borrow them. No other leader had devoted so much time and attention to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity as Gandhi. In a Gandhian perspective swaraj is impossible without ‘Hindu –Muslim unity’\(^\text{106}\).

No religion profound hatred and ill-will. The word Islam originated from the word ‘slim’, the meaning of this word is ‘Peace’.
Some western scholars misinterpreted the meaning of this word as Mohammedanism or religion of Muhammad. Muslim scholars clarified it is not only a semantic mistake; it is a mistake which is much more basic and substantial. Meaning of the word Muslim does not explain the depth and intensity of Islam or its message of love. All religions preach identical values of compassion, love, truth, nonviolence and mutual goodwill. Any religion will not give a place for violence, repression and suppression. A Muslim is never allowed to initiate a war; he can only fight in self defense or to defend his freedom of belief and worship\textsuperscript{107}.

Some of the religious fundamentalists stated that Hinduism is antithetical to Islam, Gandhi very strongly contempt this. The establishment of Hindu religion was for the betterment of society. There is no place for confrontation in Hinduism. Gandhi believed that Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his faith. Gandhi rejected the notion that any one could defend his religion by hurting others. Religion could be defended only by the purity of its adherents and their good deeds, never by the quarrels with other faiths\textsuperscript{108}. 

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After this first war of independence, Britisher’s advocated a new policy “divide and rule”. The feelings and interests of the Muslims and Hindus are different. Britisher’s exploited this situation; it generated a lot of conflict among Hindus and Muslims. D.R. Goyal stated that Gandhi evolved three fold strategy\(^{109}\) (i) total opposition to imperialist government which he characterized as satanic. (ii) building bonds of mutual trust between various communities and (iii) changing character of the national freedom movement from elitism and giving it a mass character by focusing rural India.

An enormous amount of energy is wasted in religious fundamentalism and bigotry. Gandhi felt that some religious fundamentalists had gone the wrong way and they had failed to realize. According to him I’swara’ and ‘Alla’ are same but people call them by different names. To Gandhi, Hindus and Muslims have common purpose, common goals and common sorrows. Both of them by cooperating with each other can reach the common goal\(^{110}\). Gandhi rejected the idea that Hinduism and Islam represented two antagonistic cultures and doctrines and he insisted that mutual toleration and respect is necessity for all times and for all races.
Gandhi wanted to eradicate hatred and suspicion from the minds of Hindus and Muslims. He called upon nationalists to promote harmony and renounce passion and prejudice. There could be no alternative other than that of creating harmony among the communities\textsuperscript{111}.

\textbf{c. Inter-religious dialogue}

Dialogue is essential for progress and unity of different religions. Inter-religious dialogue is the key aspect for Gandhian concept of religious conflict resolution. It provides more opportunity to all religious groups to know each other and to foster mutual understandings. Religious dialogues give us access to the great treasures of other religions; deepen our understandings of God and human life. It also enables us to breakout the narrow framework of organized religions and to rise to a higher level of religious consciousness. This dialogue helps to grasp unity in diversity as well as forge unity out of diversity\textsuperscript{112}. Dialogue is exchange for each group’s perception, and is based on mutual respect and acceptance of other’s different views. It has no compulsion or competition but a
search for understanding with a view to accommodation and coexistences.

Gandhi was very familiar with religious dialogue from the early years of his life. Gandhi’s father had many friends in various religious sectors, especially as Hindus, Muslims, Parsee and Jains. All of them gathered in Gandhi’s house and they engaged in religious discussions. The young Gandhi carefully listened to their conversations and he grasped their good ideas. This experience impressed on his mind and the problems of religious diversity and the need to forge unity among the followers of different religions.

K.L. Sashagiri Rao is stated to have said that Gandhian view of inter-religious dialogue is two ways, that is theoretical and practical\textsuperscript{113}. Theoretical dialogue is a process for studying the philosophy of world religions. Ignorance about the other faith is the main cause of the many of religious conflicts. The proper understanding of various faiths will promote religious harmony and pluralism. K.L. Sashagiri Rao mentioned that religious study is not only a legitimate intellectual pursuit but vital aspect of human culture.
and civilization. It relates wellsprings of individual and social life, and deals with the central questions of human life and destiny. One neglects the study of religion at the risk of failing to understand humanity and history. In several occasions of Gandhi’s political life, he tried to convince the necessity of the understandings the various religions doctrines.

Gandhi gave more importance to practical aspects of dialogue. In the freedom struggle movement, Gandhi showed the world, how practical dialogue can be used in a purposeful manner. Members of different races and faiths worked and struggled together in his movement for freedom and justice on behalf of the oppressed sections of society in South Africa and in India. Gandhi’s ashrams both in South Africa and in India were examples of this kind of harmonious cooperation.

Gandhi’s purpose in dialogue was not elimination of religious differences, but recognition of various faiths and practice, leading to cooperation of the moral and social sphere. He sought to understand both the similarities and difference. He was impressed by the fact
that moral and spiritual values are stressed by all religions. In the process of inter-religious dialogue there is no winner or loser, all religious groups are win by this method.

**Religions terrorism**

In recent period terrorism is a biggest threat on international community. Some religious fundamentalists and extreme groups are evolved their ideas in the form of terrorism. India is the one of the victims in terrorist activities. Terrorists are using religion, religious institutions and religious symbols for their inhuman and immoral activities. Our nearest neighbours like Pakistan and Afghanistan are the major epicenter of international terrorism. Attacks of World Trade Centre, Indian Parliament attack, Mumbai attack are some example of terrorist’s inhuman activities.

Terrorism is not simply violence; it is specific kind of violence. It is more dangerous than any other violence. Most highly sophisticated weapons are acquired many terrorist groups. Terrorism will generate extreme fear and anxiety in the mind of human beings, terrorism breeds more terrorism. Many people in recent times live under daily
conditions of terror; they experience humiliation, domination and hopelessness.\textsuperscript{115}

Mahatma Gandhi has been expressed his innovative approach to solve the terrorism, through his method of nonviolent based satyagraha. Gandhi had proved the futility of using traditional methods of violence, war and terrorism for solving human problems of co-existence. Several occasions Gandhi stated that religious bigotry is the main reason of the religious terrorism. Gandhian concept of ‘Sarvadharma Samabhava’ is more applicable in this situation. Nonviolence is the only remedy for the religious terrorism. Also with Gandhi pointed, to engage in dialogue with terrorists in order to understand their positions and attempt to persuade them of the greater morality and effectiveness of nonviolence.\textsuperscript{116} Inter religions dialogue more relevant in these circumstances.

In the wake of India’s freedom struggle movement, some of the freedom fighters tried to use terrorism to fight against British rulers. At that occasions Gandhi intervened very strongly and he discouraged their attempt. Then his argument is that terrorism is not resolved any
issue and it arises more terrorism and also it is the violation of fundamental principles of his satyagraha.

**Calcutta Riot**

At the peak of Indian freedom struggle movement many communal clashes occurred in several parts of India. Britisher’s ‘divide and rule’ policy was the cause of growing tension between Hindus and Muslims. In the same era All India Muslim League demanded separate nation for Muslims. Lot of communal clashes occurred in Calcutta, from August 1946 to September 1947. By the end of July, the council of the All India Muslim League met in Bombay and revoked their earlier acceptance of the Cabinet Mission plan. The provocation of this declaration had been the decision of the Viceroy Lord Wavell, to form an Interim Government with the representatives of Congress, even though the Muslim League was not prepared to join it. On August 16, Muslim League decided to conduct ‘Direct Action Day’ throughout India. Many public meetings and demonstrations were conducted

A massive communal riot broke out between Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta. On the Direct Action Day Calcutta witnessed...
unprecedented incidents. The riot lasted on August 16th to 20th, approximately 4000 people had lost their lives, and around 11,000 of them were injured\textsuperscript{118}. Bengal was at this time ruled by Muslim League Ministry headed by H.S. Suhrawardy\textsuperscript{119}. He tried to overcome this crisis by declaring August 16th a public holiday. He hoped that it would minimize the chances of conflicts. But it did not happen.

Gandhi became extremely restless when he heard this news. He decided to visit Noakhali after the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. It was one of the worst affected areas in Bengal. He visited all the riot affected areas and consoled all. He appealed to both the communities like Hindus and Muslims to come forward to protect their own interests mutually. Prayer meetings were arranged during his visits to various places. Gandhi’s prayer meetings were influenced in changing the hearts of the people. His presence was effective in bringing the Hindus and Muslims closer. Both communities conducted processions in several parts of the cities, more than 5000 had participated it. He congratulated the citizens of Calcutta on the unity they had achieved\textsuperscript{120}. 

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Slowly the situation came into under control, it did not last long. Sporadic violence happened in some parts of the city. In that situation, Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, had induced both Gandhi and Jinnah to sign, on April 15th, 1947, a joint appeal for peace. They requested all communities to refrain from any form of violence. This appeal had very little effect on the minds of the people\textsuperscript{121}. Gandhi understood that satyagraha is the only way to resolve the communal issues among the various religions.

A week before Independence Day Gandhi arrived at Calcutta. On 9th August Calcutta witnessed another Hindu-Muslim riot. Hundreds of people gathered together and stopped a train. They captured about twelve passengers and slaughtered them\textsuperscript{122}. This incident shocked Gandhi. Gandhi had announced that he would spend Independence Day in the Noakhali district of Bengal. He did not consider Calcutta riot simply a goondaism, but a massive violence. All citizens in Calcutta were responsible for entire incident. He decides to stay in Calcutta and postponed his departure. Gandhi promised that he would make an extensive tour of the riot affected areas, and this brought huge crowds next day to Gandhi’s residence, especially Hindus and Muslims. Each of them expressed their grievances to
Gandhi advised them not to use any violence. Nonviolence is the only way to resolve communal violence.

Another communal violence broke out in Noakhali on September 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1947. This was a serious setback to Gandhi’s effort for peace. After he heard this news, Gandhi reached there. He decided to go on fast for restoring communal peace in the city. Fasting is the most potent weapon in the armoury of satyagraha. It is sacred thing. It was the last resort when all other avenues had failed.

The Calcutta slowly came into peace. The Calcutta Bar Association offered all assistance for communal harmony and they conducted a large mixed procession of Hindus and Muslims, they promised Gandhi to reconcile their differences. And also conducted peace demonstration of students, political workers and government officials of both communities. In the mean time, people of both communities had commenced a twenty-four hour fast in favour of religious harmony. Last day of his fast, all rioters surrendered before Gandhi with their arsenals. On the same day all Congress leaders visited Gandhi and they promised Gandhi, not to violence in the city. Gandhi accepted their promise and soon broke his fast, it lasted...
seventy three hours\textsuperscript{125}. Gandhi’s Calcutta fast was universally acclaimed as a miracle. After Gandhi’s satyagraha Calcutta remained calm without any communal clashes.
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