INTRODUCTION

We are living in an age of increasing tensions—tensions between man and man, class and class, nation and nation. The world today, as never before, stands awkwardly hovering on the edge of total destruction under the threat of nuclear weapons and guided missiles. As it was aptly pointed out by Martin Luther King, “This is an age of guided missiles and misguided men”. Science has given man almost unlimited control over nature but it has not taught him how to organize and refine his own nature. The good spirit of humanity is challenged as never before. It is now a question of existence or non-existence.

Now the problem confronting the conscientious persons all over the world is, how to resolve these polygonal tensions, conflicts, violence and wars? When physical force is used to settle a problem, it sets in motion a contradictory force of a like character. This in turn necessitates the use of greater force, that is, greater violence, and so a series of violence and counter-violence lengthens and strengthens. Gandhi, therefore, demonstrated an absolutely different technique of revolution and resolution of all conflicts. This is the non-violent technique of Satyagraha.

Satyagraha, the constructive manifestation of the virtues of non-violence, was conceived by Gandhi as a tool of transformation in all aspects of life. When applied to politics, it took the form of a technique and developed the
moral resistance of the people to injustices of all sorts. It could as well be applied as a mode of social reform prior to the capturing of political power. In fact, Satyagraha could function outside politics also. It aims at change of heart on the part of the wrongdoer by igniting in him the spark of morality and social justice. Gandhi was sure of the efficacy of his remedy for social conflicts as well as internal conflicts of individual and considered Satyagraha to be the rightful way of resistance in a democratic society having self-governance.

On a close inquiry of the practice of Satyagraha adopted by Gandhi and his arguments and explanations, it is clear that the method is not entirely original or unprecedented, but familiar in the history of great religious teachers. It is based on a simple and well-known principle, that of invoking God inside man, and making him act sincerely and openly in the best interests of both sides. The foundations of Satyagraha go deep into the philosophy of the great religions of the world.

Being thoroughly modern in his outlook, Gandhi did something more in the field of Satyagraha in accordance with the spirit of the age. He separated it from the Hindu-Jain religious complex and started using it in the context of public and personal life in the period of the national movement in India. He mastered the technique of using the newspapers through statements, interviews and public speeches. He made the utmost use of the improved facilities of transport and communication during the British regime. Perhaps for the first time in the history of the world, this method was employed on a large-scale on several occasions in non-cooperation, not only by Gandhi himself but also by
hundreds of Satyagrahis in towns and villages under his direction. As a consequence of this, a vast empire was overthrown and an enslaved nation gained its independence.

Gandhi had started experimenting with it in South Africa, slowly probing his way towards perfection through trial and error and by the time he took up the leadership of the national movement in India, he had attained such mastery in the field that he almost became a wizard performing on the world stage.

When we examine the history of resistance movements before and after Gandhi, we become convinced that the Gandhian remedy is the only option for a suffering humanity. The advancement of science and technology, propelled by greed and ambition, has brought the world to a point where we find ourselves on the brink of disaster. Compulsions in modern society drive us to destroy natural environment, damage bio-diversity and most probably commit collective suicide through nuclear and chemical warfare. This historical emergency has made the adoption of moral resistance, strongly advocated and demonstrated by Gandhi.

Gandhi’s life and work were based on loyalty to a few simple but everlasting principles - humanism as expressed in non-violence and truth, the exaltations of means over ends, and stress on duty rather than rights.
The Purpose of the Study:

There are many studies on Gandhian Satyagraha. Most of them present a kind of historical account of various Satyagraha movements and one gets the impression that these various accounts fail to do justice to Gandhi. (We do not want to undermine the importance of these studies at all; but at the same time subjective elements in these studies in so far as depicting Gandhi’s personality and his contributions in various fields, play a significant role in bringing out the objectives and second, the approach these studies adopt to study Gandhi and his contributions is not so comprehensive and holistic.)

We also claim that Satyagraha is one of the important means to achieve Gandhian objectives viz., Swaraj and Sarvodaya. Gandhi’s entire activities were directed to achieve Swaraj - Swaraj for the individual and Swaraj for the nation. If any activity of the individual does not conform to this norm, then that activity should be discarded. Therefore in the achievement of Swaraj in every sense of the term, (Swaraj for Gandhi means Self rule and Self rule is not possible without self control) Satyagraha plays a very important role to achieve this goal.

The purpose of our study is two-fold: i) To adopt a holistic and comprehensive approach in the study of Satyagraha. ii) To bring out the consequences of Satyagraha not only in the political field but also in other fields.

What do we mean by a comprehensive and holistic approach to the study of Gandhi in General and to Satyagraha in particular? A comprehensive
and holistic study of Gandhi, to be very brief, should be able to take into account all the aspects of a particular problem and bring out its relevance. This is what we have tried in the case of Satyagraha. In this study we have also tried, though in a limited manner, what these Satyagraha movements have contributed to our political, social and moral - religious life. This study also presents a logical form of techniques, tactics and strategy, which Gandhi adopted during Satyagraha Movements.

Scope of the Study:

The present study seeks to examine Gandhi’s Satyagraha Movements and their consequences. It is an inquiry into the nature of Gandhi’s techniques of mass mobilization and struggle. It is indeed difficult if not impossible to measure the success achieved by him in absolute terms. The scope of the present study has therefore been deliberately and carefully confined to Gandhi’s major Satyagraha movements and their consequences. Though there are three main forms of Satyagraha - Non-co-operation, Civil Disobedience and Fasting, we have considered only two forms and not fasting. Not that fasting is unimportant but it needs more space and may be a separate consideration, because of its unique nature. While considering some of the major movements, we have not discussed them step-by-step. We concentrated more on consequences rather than the details of the movement.
Plan of the Thesis:

Chapter-I: Introduction:

In this Chapter, we have mentioned the importance of selecting the topic of research and it also includes the entire plan of the thesis, its methodology, its scope and limitations.

Chapter-II: Satyagraha: Its Meaning, Purpose, Scope and Methods:

In this chapter an attempt is made to introduce basic ingredients of the Satyagraha Movements. The meaning of the term ‘Satyagraha’, its purpose, its working areas and various methods are briefly described. This chapter also reflects about qualifications of ideal Satyagrahis and their limitations.

Chapter-III: Early Life History of Mahatma Gandhi:

One may wonder, while considering Satyagraha Movements one finds a chapter on Gandhi’s early life. In this chapter we want to pinpoint how some of the qualities of Mahatma Gandhi were present in young Gandhi or would it be more correct to say that the process of making of the Mahatma could be traced even during Gandhi’s childhood. Young Gandhi was like a seed and later Gandhi was like a tree. We want to show that truth and non-violence were there in Gandhi’s blood and unlike others he adhered to these principles throughout his life. This was the basis of Satyagraha.
Chapter IV: Satyagraha in South Africa:

It was in South Africa that some of Gandhi’s important experiments were conducted and tested. Gandhi got the proper direction to his life here. What he believed, he lived. It was the right place for the birth of Satyagraha. Gandhi as a lawyer was transformed into Gandhi as a Satyagrahi. (Good of the individual is contained in the good of all and the concept of Swaraj as depicted in Hind Swaraj, confirmed Gandhi’s future programmes.) Experimenting with himself started with the vow of celibacy and experimenting with community living started with Phoenix settlement. Even while practising law his love for truth and his concern for his clients were evident. Therefore, South Africa was Gandhi’s first laboratory as it was for conducting moral – religious, political, social, educational experiments.

Chapter V: Early Satyagraha Movements in India:

This Chapter has brought out two important things, one whatever Gandhi has learnt as a Satyagrahi in South Africa is also applied practically in India. Second, these movements (Champaran, Ahmedabad Mill-Workers’ Strike, Kheda…) heralded not only the arrival of Gandhi in India but also the direction of Gandhi’s work which paved way for both individual and National Swaraj. Though some of these were targeted against local problems the consequences of these were no longer remained local and they became national. These movements inspired and initiated many other such movements
in the various parts of entire country. Gandhi through these Satyagraha movements became an inspirational force.

**Chapter VI and Chapter VIII: Non-Co-operation Movement I, II:**

In these chapters are considered the causes that led to the Non-co-operation movement and the manner in which these movements were conducted and also the consequences of these movements. Our discussion of these movements is not exhaustive. Many people, not only now, but even during Gandhi’s time, believed that Satyagraha is and was a political weapon and we want to argue that it was not so for Gandhi. As non-co-operation is one of the forms of Satyagraha, the basic principles behind non-co-operation are also considered in this chapter. These movements, on the one hand show the strength of Gandhi’s leadership and on the other, the weaknesses of the people. But the purpose of Satyagraha is to attain strength by overcoming our weaknesses.

**Chapter VII: Civil Disobedience Movement:**

In the history of our freedom struggle Salt Satyagraha has occupied a very significant place. It is one of the major movements that Gandhi himself led. The discipline it showed, the awareness it created and the success it achieved were enormous. It created a kind of self-belief, which ultimately succeeded in achieving political freedom. Gandhi learned his lessons from big
and small movements alike. But the same thing cannot be said about his followers and Indians.

This chapter brings out how Gandhi planned and executed the Salt Satyagraha movement. While selecting a band of 78 Satyagrahis Gandhi took special care so that they could end up the movement successfully no matter what may come. Perhaps Gandhi knew that this particular march is going to bring a sea change in the political scenario of the entire nation. Thus everything was planned so well that Gandhi and his band were ready to take up any challenge. Fortunately the movement went accordingly as planned and brought the result as expected, though many of the Satyagrahis had to pay a heavy price in the form of unbelievable sufferings.

**Chapter IX: Quit India Movement:**

In this chapter, we have discussed the causes that led to the last major Satyagraha movement that is, ‘Quit India’. Quit India in fact is the result of the hard work and dedication of all the Satyagrahis especially Mahatma Gandhi. Till this movement Gandhi was rather a mild Satyagrahi, though his will was strong, his approach was soft. But now probably, Gandhi understood the British people better and therefore he had no option but to throw them out of India. Even in this, he was committed to Non-violence out and out. But he was very firm in asking the British to leave the country. This Satyagraha showed the strength of Gandhi’s leadership as the entire country stood behind him.
Chapter X: Conclusion:

In this Chapter, we have made a very brief attempt of summarizing the conclusions arrived at in the prominent chapters of the thesis.