Gopal Krishna Gokhale was a follower of Mahadev Govind Ranade. He was one of the pioneers of the Indian national movement. He was a great moderate leader of the Indian National Congress. He gave voice to the aspirations of millions of Indians who were looking for freedom from the British rule. Gandhiji considered him as his political guru.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born on 9th May 1866 in a Maratha Brahmin family at Kolhapur. After graduation in 1884, Gokhale joined the Deccan educational Society founded by Ranade. He served the society for twenty years in various capacities as a school master, a professor and principal of Fergusson College, Poona. He also edited the quarterly journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha.

Gokhale made his first appearance at the congress platform at the Allahabad session in 1899. In 1887 he along with Mr. Wacha was selected to give evidence before the Welby commission on Indian expenditure. In 1902 he was elected to the Bombay legislative Council and later to the Imperial Legislative council. In the council Gokhale made his mark as an eloquent and persuasive speaker. He possessed the knack of saying of the hardest thing in the gentlest language. In the legislative council Gokhale greatly criticised the Indian official finance and spoke with considerable insight on the annual budgets. He attacked the salt tax and proved with facts and figures. He also exposed the hollowness of the British pretensions in the matter of
appointment of Indians to higher services. Commenting on the government’s open declaration in 1894 that “the highest posts must for all time to come be held by Europeans.” Gokhale said that “the pledges of equal treatment which England has given us have supplied us with a high and worthy ideal for our Nation, and if these pledges are repudiated, one of the strongest claims of British rule to our attachment will disappear.” He worked as joint secretary of the Indian national congress and later in 1905 presided over the Benares session. In 1906 he went to England to educate the British public about the situation created by the partition of Bengal and played a great part, officially and unofficially, in the formulation of the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909. In 1910 Gokhale was again elected to the imperial legislative council. He also served as a member of the Indian public service commission (1912-15) and urged it to increase the share of Indian in higher services. During 1910-13 Gokhale made heroic efforts in the imperial legislative council for the introduction of free and compulsory education throughout India.

In his political philosophy Gokhale was a true liberal. He was a staunch believer in moderation and sweet reasonableness. He was firmly convinced that regeneration of the country could not be achieved “amid a hurricane of political excitement.” He appealed to the better nature and sense of fair play of the English public. He believed in purity of aims and purity of actions. It
were really these principles that attracted Gandhi, who became Gokhale’s political pupil.

Gokhale played the difficult role of an intermediary between the rulers and the ruled. He interpreted popular aspirations to the viceroy and the government’s difficulties to the Congress. This, on occasions, made him unpopular with both. The extremists in the congress found fault with his moderation and dubbed him a ‘faint-hearted moderate,’ while the government on occasions charged him with holding extremist views and being ‘a seditionist in disguises.’ Gokhale put forward his views in a very candid language, “the Englishman who imagines that India can be governed much longer on the same lines as in the past, and the Indian who thinks that he must seek a destiny for his country outside this Empire, of which now, for better or worse, we are a part—both alike show an inadequate appreciation of the realities of the present situation.

In 1905 Gokhale laid the foundation of the Servants of India Society with a view to “the training of national missionaries for the service of India, and to promote, by all constitutional means, the true interests of the Indian people.” This society has trained social workers of the stature of V. Srinivasa Shastri, G.K. Devadhar, N.M. Joshi, Pandit Hirdaya Nath Kunzru and is a standing monument to the spirit of service of society whose true embodiment was Gopal Krishna Gokhale.
He served to the nation selflessly. He was a leader with broad views and spiritual outlook he was embodiment of humanity. He protected Congress party and shaped it in his own style with help of Mehatha. India is proud to have Gokhale as her son. After making his marks on sands of time, he passed away peacefully on 19th February 1915. India had lost a great leader and great man. Many leaders expressed their opinions about Gokhale. Balagangdhar Tilak said about Gokhale “This Diamond of India, this jewel of Maharashtra, the prince of workers, is laid to eternal rest on the funeral ground”. Now Indian society needs people like Gokhale. He was symbol of humanity and spiritualism Indians should learn, understand and think about selfless service motive, broad outlook about society, self control and self confidence of Gokhale. He felt that service was life. Later Gandhi followed this policy. This topic has been taken to make young Indians to recognise and recollect selfless services of Gokhale to the Nation.

**Scope**

The topic of Research “Gopal Krishna Gokhale – The Diamond of India (1866-1915 A.D)” covers about early life of Gokhale and his philosophy, moderation, leadership qualities with broad outlook and spiritual contribution to the nation from 1866 to 1915.
Objectives of the study

This study has the following objectives:

To trace out the early political life of Gokhale

To place out his role in central legislative council

To trace out his spiritual service through the servants of India society

To trace out his contribution to strengthen National Movement through Congress party.

Methodology

The method adopted in this thesis is both descriptive and analytical.

Chapterization

This thesis is structured in to five chapters excluding introduction and conclusion.

In the introduction, the importance of the topic, objectives, methodology, scope and sources of information are described.

The first chapter discusses early battle of Gokhale’s life in detailed manner.

In the second chapter Gokhale’s early political activities have been discussed.

In the third chapter role of Gokhale in the central legislative council has been analysed elaborately.
In the fourth chapter service of Gokhale as Congress president has been explained.

In the fifth chapter estimation and assessment of Gokhale’s service to the nation.

**Conclusion**

In the conclusion Gokhale’s greatness and selfless service has been assessed and estimated.