Chapter VI
Summery and Findings

6.0 Introduction:

The present study is based on literature review and observations regarding Gandhian practices as visible in the ashrams and behaviour of persons following Gandhian philosophy. Attempt has also been made to carry out comparative study of Gandhian way of life and various protocols, policies, adopted by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Government of India and other environmental institutions. The study has reached to conclude that such environmental policies show their roots in Gandhian principles. Mahatma Gandhi may not be known as environmentalist as the term used in contemporary literature but his principles can be considered as ethics of environment in the present context. Moreover, it may be stated here that ethical values observed in philosophy and practices can be used to achieve sustainability at local and international level in years to come. Briefly the present study has identified those philosophical principles and practices which are associated with liveable future for all sections of society facing problems due to environmental stress caused by life style of some sections of world society. This chapter attempts to summarise such points which are given below.

6.1 Summery:

During the life time of Mahatma Gandhi, there were no wide ranging debates on environment and development. But still he was much ahead of his time on account to his being deeply conscious of the very environmental concerns we perceive today. It shows his foresight and vision. This is abundantly clear from his statements and writings and all above from his simple and sustainable lifestyle. Time and again Gandhi and his philosophy have been resurveyed, rediscovered and re-institutionalised by majority of leader and public figures in most of the countries across globe. Gandhi carved his philosophy which nurtured and upheld through out his life. It is later known as Gandhian philosophy. The three cardinals of Gandhian Philosophy are satya (truth), ahimsa (non-violence) and love. These are so coherent, cohesive and co-focal that the absence of even one breaches the wholesomeness of the structure. However, it is to be understood across a much wider plane and in a much deeper sense beyond the threshold of their common meanings. Gandhian
environmentalism was mainly based on ethical principles truth and non-violence. Other principles followed by him are celibacy, non-coveting, contentment self-reliance, trusteeship, Decentralisation, emancipation and empowerment of women, welfare of poor section of society etc.

6.2 Characteristics of Gandhian Philosophy and Strategies:

The study observed that there is high feasibility to adopt Gandhian way of life even in the modern world. This is due to the characteristic features of the philosophy. These are summarised below:

1. Gandhian philosophy is candid and transparent. Gandhian strategic movement were open and within the set of rules and standards and nothing is concealed.
2. Adopting or abandoning a policy or move in the light of a new truth is admissible well within the scope of ethicality. He was avowed lover of non-violence and staunch believer of peace. Hence wherever there is slight violence he did not hesitate and suspend his campaign
3. ‘What I say is what I do.’ (WISIWID) Gandhi was firm on his decision and act accordingly. He used to act on what he says. So there is no difference in his say and application. It is because he was clear in his thought and act.
4. Vigorous campaigns or drives against wrongs do not mean violence.
5. A common factor in all his strategic operation is ethicality. All his principles and strategies were clear and operative within the ethical norms and still have potential to outwit and subdue a competitor. Humanistic element and moral courage added to intrinsic values of his approach.

6.3 Findings:

Findings are mainly based on literature review and field visits to Gandhian ashrams and other places. These could be useful in solving present and future environmental problems to some extent. Some of the important findings are as follow:

6.3.1 Truth:

The truth and non-violence are practiced by Gandhi throughout his life. The truth is the eternal truth. Human being must know that natural recources are finite and not infinite. The natural resources are properly conserved and used sparingly. Gandhi has emphasised the importance of natural resources and its conservation. This has
direct bearing on man and environment relationship.

6.3.2 Science:

Science is nothing but search of truth. Truth is science because it is to be practiced. So, in Satyagraha Ashram truth is put to practice. The ashrams are places for experiments. The virtue of a truly scientific frame of mind is the readiness to reject what is false and untrue.

6.3.3 Education:

Gandhi developed innovative idea about education. It is integrated education and called as Nai Talim. It includes basic, vocational and skilled education for boys and girls to improve their quality of life and make them self reliant.

6.3.4 Non-violence:

Gandhian idea of non-violence is total non-violence if adopted at various levels from international politics to local level it can be useful to reduce carbon footprints caused due to wars and production of missiles.

6.3.5 Mass production:

Gandhian idea of production by masses instead of mass production is quite applicable to development of economic system which can minimise environmental degradation and to achieve sustainable development. This also prevents expulsion of labour.

6.3.6 Self-Reliant Village:

The concept of self-sufficient village is good to develop closed economic system of rural economy which allows very small share of benefits to go out of the village. This can be useful to strengthen the rural economy leading to reducing rural urban migration and making the cities more comfortable.

6.3.7 Decentralisation:

Gandhian concept of decentralisation can be feasible in modern socio-economic set up and it can be a good strategy of development of inclusive type. This can reduce deprivation of livelihood resources in some parts of world as expected in Agenda-21

6.3.8 Trusteeship:

Gandhiji had advocated that owners of any property should be treated as trustee. This may lead to ensure that the benefits can reach right up to the last person and to achieve inclusive growth which is more sustainable. In the modern time Corporate Social Responsibility and its philosophy of “beyond philanthropy” show
high degree of similarity with the idea of trusteeship.

6.3.9 Corporate world:

The present study revealed that corporate world has taken cognisance of Gandhian cardinal principles of truth and non-violence which can be compared with organisational tools such as SWOT, PEST and SMART. The absence of truth on any pretext and presence of violence in any form would interfere with SWOT analysis and Jeopardise setting of PEST and SMART. It is paradigm shift that Gandhi actuated in human resource management. It is basis of modern corporate management.

6.3.10 Sarvodaya:

The concept of sarvodaya is similar to sustainable development and form part of environmental ethics.

6.3.11 Conservation of Resources:

Gandhi emphasised the conservation of scares natural resources as it has direct bearing on environment and man relationship. Thus, Gandhian Philosophy and Practices have been found suitable to reduce threats to environment on which quality of life of present as well as future generation is dependent.

The Millennium World Peace Summit held at the UN Headquarters, New York, unequivocally affirmed the dire need to establish peace and harmony in the world. They condemned violence and issued vigorous statement on ‘Towards a world movement for Non-violence.’ Barrey willams, the Nobel Peace Laureate, Northern Ireland, stresses in her speech that practicing non-violence requires exemplary courage. Ela Gandhi South African congress reiterated the Non-violence is not passive concept but an active one. It demands courage and love, not hatred. Sarvodaya means affluence for all. It is the model of ‘Moral education for environmental protection’ is based on traditional Asian cultural values and differs from isolated, unilateral, material-oriented development models. It is unique, since it is people-centred activities and sustainable approach. This model is directly associated with both an individual morality and a social morality. In New Delhi declaration it is stated about indiscriminate use of natural resources that “Some for all rather than more for some”.
6.4 Recommendations:

Following recommendations could be useful in protection of environment and conservation of natural resources:

1. Gandhian philosophy to be thoroughly understood by youth and practiced by them globally. It is for the benefit present and future generations.

2. The youngsters must be explained the certain important principles like satya, ahimsa, satygrah, bramhacharya etc. to achieve Gandhiji’s dreams that is sarvodaya and swaraj.

3. All the children to be guided by parents, teachers, leaders at local levels, NGOs’ and Government.

4. There should be proper coordination between Government, NGOs’ and media for propagation and inculcation of Gandhain views among youth. There must be continuous hammering through electronic and print media. The Government must appoint brand ambassador to create awareness.

5. Active participation of youth in mitigation of environmental degradation by using Gandhian principles is essential. It is young generation who will suffer, if they ignore Gandhiji.

6. Women to be motivated for participation in preventing environmental degradation. This is because women are natural creator, better listeners, born teacher, can contribute to world peace.

7. Integrated education including basic, ethical and vocational education to be provided. It aims at the complete empowerment to young people not as consumer or employee but as human beings having their own national identity strongly rooted in truth and non-violence, love, compassion and humanity.

8. It is to be inculcated in youth to live comfortable, need based and simple life by curbing their and wants and greed. This may help in end consumerism. It is possible only by accepting spiritualism against materialism.

9. If above guidelines are followed judiciously and scrupulously then present generations and generations to come can live pollution free, healthy and affluent life and then there will be complete swaraj as contemplated by Gandhiji.

10. It is also proposed to include Gandhian philosophy on Environment in the syllabus for environmental studies. This philosophy may be useful for mitigation of environmental problems to environmentalist, researchers and consultants.
11. The practices followed at Gandhian institute and ashrams should be thoroughly understood by visiting such places and brought into practice as a part of life. This will be practical part of the syllabus.

12. The various centres to be opened in different towns and villages with help of Government, NGOs’ and voluntary organisations for creating awareness amongst public at large.

13. Lottery tickets, railway tickets and continuous help of broadcasting and print media is necessary for mitigation of environmental problems.

14. Environmental Days to be observed that is seminars, workshop to be arranged on environment by student.

15. Compulsory social service for student of all graduate disciplines for minimum of six months. This should be part of the syllabus before awarding graduation certificate. The social service will include water conservation, water harvesting, and forest and wildlife protection, working in rural cottage industries producing value added products, marketing of rural products, working in agricultural field, imparting value based primary education to rural people, working in primary heath care centres, Rural sanitation work, manufacture of organics fertilizers and pesticides, waste reduction, reuse and recycling, implanting trees near villages, strengthening co-operatives. The funding and training will be done by Central and State Government, NGOs’ and Voluntary Organisations. The help from Rural Co-operatives, Agro Service centres and Self Help Group if highly solicited. Such programmes are to be implemented properly and carried out judiciously.

16. Decentralisation of industries necessary. Instead of pure Industries bio-industries, cottage industries recommended to support agriculture.

17. Technology and machinery must be small scale, less exploitive of natural resources, energy sauer, less waste generating, employment generative and with human face. It should not create any deprivation.

18. Machinery must be portable and easy to operate like chakra so that women can work on machine during leisure time.

19. Use of renewable energy to be increase rather than non-renewable.

20. Prime indicator of development should be GNNRP (Gross National Natural Resource Product) instead of GNP (Gross National Product). GNP is a human made macro-economic indicator which neither reflects the extent and nature of human well being nor the damage done to the environment. GNNRP is sustainable and shows
manageable amount ecological damage. The basic principles that are local self reliance and equity with social justice of Gandhian model of development must become applicable to all situations form ecosystem to industrial societies.

6.5 Conservation Strategies according to Gandhian Philosophy:

The present study has observed the need to follow Gandhian philosophy of life so as to make the same more happy and safe on sustainable basis. It is further observed that this philosophy is useful not only for poor countries but also for western countries. India may play leading role in persuading the philosophy at global level. However, it is necessary to adopt a conservation strategy based on Gandhian principles and design policy instrument for the purpose. While designing strategy following steps may be followed:

6.5.1 Creating Awareness:

Awareness can be created amongst targeted group of youngsters at school and college level. These groups need to be explained Gandhian cardinal principles of truth and non-violence and other principles in its deepest sense. There must be compulsory inclusion of Gandhain philosophy in syllabus for theory and practice. Assignments to be given in group activities to ensure that individual participation is essential to develop habits of co-ordination and co-operation. It is to be inculcated in youth that Gandhian practices are quite feasible in modern society which will make the life comfortable, happy and safe. It would also prove how Gandhian principles have not been out dated.

It is to be noted that mall culture promotes greediness while Gandhain Philosophy encourages satisfaction and happiness in life. This point can be emphasised in awareness campaign. There should be positive interaction between rural and urban areas. Rural development should not be at the convenience of urban market, but to cater development in villages in true sense of the term.

6.5.2 Demonstration Centres:

It is beyond doubt that diffusion of new ideas may be possible if the demonstration centres ate established. Such centres should emphasise conservation of biosphere and wellbeing of humankind. The people may be taught to follow the path of non-violence, peace, etc. which are quite sustainable. Field demonstration will be arranged by youth for use of organic manure, natural pesticides and social forestry.
Also importance of bio-industries and other cottage industries supporting agriculture to be underlined to cater the need of local people and absorb the additional agriculture labour force as agriculture is seasonal. This will help in improving rural economy. The decision must be taken at local level involving local people in transparent manner as per Gandhian philosophy. Once economic development is achieved, there will be development in educational level which will help in participation in modern economy. Demonstration can be arranged in Panchayat offices, agro-service centres at rural and tribal area. In urban area centres can be opened in schools, colleges and community centres. It may be possible to implement Government Minimum Need Programmes, Intergraded Development Programmes and Employment Generation Programmes. The funding for demonstration will be done by state and central Governments, Non-Government organisations and voluntary organisations if necessary. Local leaders are influential and their participation is necessary. Active participation of individual may be solicited. Periodical review of the situation is also essential to modify the strategy, if necessary.

6.5.3 Multipliers Effect:

Once demonstration centres are established it should have automatically multipliers effect. But it is observed that ideal village like Hiware Bazar and Ralegan Siddhi have not shown multiplier effect. This is mainly due to lack of proper policy and strategy. To avoid this obstruction for multipliers effect it is necessary to revitalise economic system at local, regional and national levels. A policy for promoting village products should be designed so that production and consumption would be within the village so that village products should out number industrial products. This will stop competition of village products with industrial products restricting mass production for which the people should be village minded. In this context it may be noted that products of Khadi and Village Industries are still surviving. Their products are sold all over the country competing products of multinational companies at global level. It is observed at the time of field visits that people are interested in buying Khadi products and hence advertisement is needed for products availability and stores at Government level. It is also noticed that Khadi garments competes price and quality wise with the mill garments. It is the reality of market that there is high level of willingness to purchase khadi despite economic system is promoting products of multinational companies. Thus, in given situation Khadi and Village Industries are still surviving. It has inherent potential and high
growth in future.

6.5.4 Mass Production:

According to Gandhi production must be by masses and not mass production. In mass production automatic machineries are used. It creates uncontrollable waste which affects environment, displaces labour and have negative impact on development. For any enlargement it is to be kept in mind to draw innovative strategy which will conserve environment and ensure equity at micro level. The labour oriented cottage industries will have lean production, less effected on environment as it produces residual waste and takes care of natural resources. This will reduce migration of people from rural to urban area and preventing city congestion.

6.6 Relevance:

The study also indicates scientific views postulated by Mahatma Gandhi. The contemporary study reveals that Gandhiji was not against science, machinery and technology. He was supporter of science. According to him all scientific investigations should not be destructive, but for welfare of humanity. The technology and machinery must be environmental friendly and employment generative. This will help in reducing unemployment and poverty. Otherwise it will create deprivation in society and may lead to crimes.

Further, Gandhian methods of disposal of waste have two dimensions. Firstly, assimilating waste is converted into manure by shallow burring and non-assimilative by deep burring. It is also specified that human waste and kitchen waste should not be berried together as bacteria working on it are different. Secondly, it saves a lot on fertilizer which otherwise is imported. This is making gold out of waste and saving a lot on foreign exchange. It also generates employment. Thus Gandhian idea of conversion of waste into useful manure prevents environmental degradation, job intensive and economical. Thus it is socio-economical and protects nature.

The Gandhian concept of protection of cattle is extraordinary. The cattle and cows are to be preserved properly instead of slaughtering. After the natural death of cattle, flesh and bones can be converted into manure and hide can be used to make leather articles. Thus, lot of foreign exchange could be saved. Gandhian thought are perfectly scientific and has socio-economic value.
6.7 Conclusion:

Human beings encounters with environment for a long time. The actions and activities of man have affected local environment long ago. Due to industrial revolution, advancement in science and technology the scope of his influence expanded globally, which has given rise to social break down, hunger, poverty and consumerism. All these are causes of degradation of environment. The degraded environment has effect on social structure creating deprivation as suggested in Agenda 21 and also observed in Gandhian philosophy. The modern development pattern is on the western path which is going away from common man and environment as well. The consumerism leads to mass production compelling high rate of utilisation of natural resources as revealed in Gandhian philosophy. The philosophy has also pointed out that how mechanisation reduces requirement of human labour and creates unemployment leading to ill-distribution of wealth. The current study is based on literature review, survey made with common man and knowledgeable persons. The study further concludes that it is need of the hour to apply Gandhian notions in day to day activities to shift from economy driven life style to an new life style of low consumerism and healthy distribution of wealth. This may lead not only to reduce foot print of carbon, ozone and water. It is in this sense Gandhain ideas are useful to address global issue of environment. Thus, the study finally, concludes that there is a great concern about environment in Gandhian philosophy and practices. The hypothesis stated earlier is acceptable beyond doubt on the basis of present investigations.