CHAPTER III

GANDHIJI’S CONCEPT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

3. Introduction

As per the official data in India more than 70 percentages of people are in the rural areas. Many depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Even before the Independence many organisations and also many foreigners were very keenly involved in the development of the rural sector. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India focused mainly on the industrialization after the Independence of the country [Gandhi, M. K. and S.M. Shah: 1977: p 27]. However, Gandhiji’s mind was concentrated more on the progress of the people, living in the rural sector by starting various kinds of village industries and decentralised rural economy. He says “Soul of India is living in its village”. So the development has to reach more in the areas of the rural places in coming days and declared that “if the villages perish, India will perish too” [Gandhi, M.K. Harijan:29/8/1936:p 226].

3.1.1. Rural Economy before the Independence

Gandhiji reached India in 1915 from South Africa and at that time severe problems were there in the areas of social, political and economic fields. Besides, the people belonging to the extreme and moderate categories have different views on achieving freedom from foreign forces. The British who ruled India for almost more than a century has given least consideration for the development and promotion of small scale Industries and also for the rural economy of the country. Their interest mainly was to exploit our natural resources, wealth and human labour of our land and use them for their sake interests. Many historians and economists who lived during that period had
portrayed the situation in an eloquent manner. Gandhiji knew that our people would not have any kind of progress till the time of the departure of the British from our land. Very soon Gandhiji decided to spend entire time for the progress of the rural people by securing freedom from the alien forces.

3.1.2. Comparison between Rural and Urban Economy

A great disparity between the rural and the urban life can be seen in our country. Major industries are working in the big cities. The rich exploit the natural resources without giving any importance to the future. They use human labour for their own vested interests and aims. So naturally some of the rich people dwelling in the major cities have been controlling everything in the social, economic and political fields of the country. Ultimately it leads to create a division between the rich and the poor people in the society and poor become more poorer throughout their life [Arunachalam, K :1979: pp126-127]. Gandhiji has strongly condemned this level of exploitation and social systems prevalent in our country. The people in the cities used to think that villagers are savages, illiterate and unskilled. This attitude should be changed and instead the villagers should be made to stand on their feet by providing them proper education and self-awareness for the betterment of their life. The education system introduced by the British, have made great disparity between the people in the urban and rural areas. This has created two kinds of citizens in the country, there who know English those who do not know it. Existence of rural community is very vital, because these people produce the essential items both raw materials and food for the people. Gandhiji found that the only way of bringing hope of good living to the rural people is by making the village the central place in the economical programme [Shah, S.M:1977: pp 6-9]. He had an intense desire that rural people should be well enough to take care of the entire resources for their
own benefits and progress which will be the only remedy for witnessing a positive change in the life of rural masses.

3.1.3. Village Self Sufficiency and Relevance of Employment Generation

Gandhiji’s real intention was to create more employment opportunities in the rural sector so that rural masses would not migrate to the big cities or towns. Sadly these migrating people end up in urban slums due to the lack of proper abilities and skills once they go there. The human relations are very much bonded and affectionate in rural areas. Gandhiji believed that rural economy would be much benefited and developed by introducing the spinning wheel and charka. Each village must have capabilities to produce essential items which are needed for its own survival. Simultaneously this will help to achieve self-sufficiency, self-reliance and more employment opportunities among the people in the village [Shashi Prabha Sharma:1992:p122]. Lack of self sufficiency has caused the exploitation of the people of the village by the rich in the developed and undeveloped countries. He believed that not only the supremacy of foreigners who ruled India but also the sprout of modern civilisation also has made far and wide consequences such as poverty, unemployment and economic crisis in rural areas. So, even an alternative government formed by the people based on this economic policy could not make any change among the rural people [Pandey, B.P:1991:p 43]. The co-operation is very essential for attaining self-sufficiency among the rural people in the near future, otherwise all the efforts would be in vain. He always supported the co-operative farming in the field of agriculture. [Vimal Shah:1960:p4]) This would help to improve the production and employment opportunities. It
would reduce the heavy labour and the villages would get tools and equipments very early. The spending of money could also be minimised.

3.1.4. Gandhi’s Vision on Indian Villages

The historical data prove that even before pre-independence period, barter system existed in villages and they could survive the foreign invasions and threats for many centuries. Gandhiji had a plan to re-establish the non-exploitative ancient village economy not exactly at that same level but with ‘modified and purified form’ as a model unit to the rural people of India.[Mathai, M.P:2000:pp187-190]

Gandhiji says “My idea of village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet inter-dependent where dependence is a necessity. Thus, each village’s first concern would be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve of its own for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then, if there is more land is available, it can grow useful cash crops, excluding ganja, tobacco, opium and the like. The village must maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own waterworks ensuring clean water supply. This can be done through maintaining good wells and tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible, each activity may be conducted on a co-operative basis. There will be no caste discrimination such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence, with its technique of Satyagraha and non-cooperation must have the sanction of village community. There must be compulsory service of village guards who would be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village.” [Gandhi, M.K. Harijan:26/7/1942]
Gandhiji expected to make the life pattern of village based on oceanic circle than in a pyramid manner. Importance of this structure is “individual is always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life and composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circles of which they are integral units”. [Gandhi, M.K. Harijan:28/7/1946]

3.1.5. The Importance of Ideal Village and Rural Mindedness

Gandhiji dreamt of an ideal village where everyone should do some kind of manual works and have to overcome the various diseases due to the unhygienic situation prevailed in these locations. The decentralised based production and distribution would prompt the people to stay back in the villages and allowing them to participate in the activities for the welfare of the entire masses. The people in the village should work among the villagers in order to identify and make them aware about the social, economic and hygienic aspects.

According to Gandhiji “An ideal Indian village will be constructed so as to lead itself to perfect sanitation and it will have cottages with sufficient lights and ventilations built of a material obtainable within a radius of five miles of it. The cottages will have courtyards enabling householders to produce vegetables for domestic use and to house their cattle. The village lanes and streets will be free of all avoidable dust. It will have wells according to its needs and must be accessible to all. It will have houses of worship for all and also a common meeting place, a village common for grazing its cattle, a co-operative diary, primary and secondary schools in which industrial education will be the central factor, and it will have
Panchayats for settling disputes. It will produce its own grains, vegetables and fruit and its own khadi. This is roughly my idea of a model village.”[Gandhi, M.K. Harijan:9/1/1937]

Gandhiji had advised to serve the people in the rural areas before joining any political party for serving the country. This practice would influence and mould the character of the social workers and make a ‘we-feeling’ attitude among them. Here we recognise that his intention for joining the active politics was not for getting any higher post rather to serve the community especially in the rural areas.

Gandhiji asserts that “if we neglect our duty to our villages, we shall be inviting our ruin. This duty is an onerous one. It is incredibly simple. We have to be rural minded and think of our necessities of our household in terms of rural mindedness” [Gandhi, M.K.Harijan:1/3/1935]. Here we could realise that ‘the Gandhian concept of rural development was based on achieving self sufficiency of villages in which everyone would have adequate food, shelter, clothing, proper hygienic and sanitation facilities and every person willing to work is provided with gainful employment’ [Sinha, S.K. and H.K. Sinha:1998:p98].

3.1.6 Relevance of Morality and Human Labour

The primary elements for the success of society would be the supremacy of the moral principles in all aspects of life as envisaged by Gandhiji, known as Truth and Non-violence. Western development policies give more inclination towards the material progress and luxurious life but, the East is more concerned with the moral progress and ethical values. Majorities of people live in cities in the West but in the case of the East, majorities are still dwelling in the village [Arunachalam, K:1981:p15].
real meaning of development does not mean the economic progress of some sect of people but it is the progress of the entire section of people in the society based on social responsibilities and moralities [Jain, S.C. :1985:pp128-133] “Gandhiji’s thoughts were on a revolutionary tract seeking to set up the framework of a new society which is to be founded not on a conventional economic doctrine but on ethical and moral considerations. Gandhiji only believed in a doctrine based on ethical and moral considerations”[Sharma, N.K:1995:p12]. The experts in social and economic fields assert that in comparison with great industrial nations in Europe and developed countries we have enough man power. So developments in economic field have to be given more priority for using the human labour which is abundant in villages.[Shah, S.M: 1977:p25]

3.1.7. Relevance of Bread Labour Concept in Rural Sector

Gandhiji had developed this concept by reading the books of Ruskin, Tolstoy and New Testament. ‘The divine law, that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands was first stressed by a Russian writer named T.M. Bondaref. According to Gandhiji he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen foods. Sacrifice here means ‘Bread labour.’[ Gandhi, M.K. and Ravindar Kelekar: 1960:p6].Here he meant except for people who have some serious disabilities, others should show earnest interest to do some manual work. He never excluded people such as professionals, scientists, engineers who are doing intellectual works. They also have to engage seriously in some manual work in their life. [Gandhi, M. K. Harijan: 29/6/1935:p156].‘Bread labour’ concept would give new vigour among the many unemployed people living in the rural areas of the country. Even people living in the rural locations are also dreaming to get white collar jobs in the cities. These tendencies should be curtailed. “The God has given
everyone the capacity to work and earn more than his daily bread and
whoever is ready to use that capacity is sure to find work. No labour is too
mean for one who wants to earn an honest penny. The only thing is the
readiness to use the hands and feet the God has given us” [Gandhi, M.K.
Harijan:19/12/1936:p356]. Of course people can attain essential items such as
food, shelter and clothing by doing the physical labour in far and near places
of the villages. The people involved in the physical labour would get sound
health and peace in life. These people could overcome many diseases from
day to day life.

3.1.8. Need of Swadeshi Concept in Rural Sector

The division of Bengal by the British had made resentment and
strong agitation among the Indian masses. Gandhiji had announced the
Swadeshi Movement in order to boycott the foreign clothes and other foreign
items. The main aim was that all the villages in India would be well and
sufficient enough to produce essential items for its own survival rather than
depending on the imported products from outside the country. In the moral
fields its emphasis is to attain the decentralised based economy so that
village development would take place simultaneously in the country [Shashi
Prabha Sharma:1992:p120]. Many would think this connotation as negative
and restricts the relationship with other nations but it stood for the ‘final
emancipation of the soul from her earthly bondage and realising her oneness
with all life.’ ‘In the light of this understanding Gandhiji defined Swadeshi
thus: “Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of
our immediate surroundings and to the exclusion of the far remote”[Gandhi,
M.K. and M.P.Mathai:2000:p141]. In the villages, the success of Swadeshi
depends upon the people’s attitude for buying the products which are made
locally. At the same time Gandhiji never liked to keep ill feeling or bad
attitude towards the foreign people or their products. This doctrine completely depends on selfless service, based on love and ahimsa [ibid:p143]. In case of any need, the villagers should have the responsibilities to supply essential commodity to the nearby villages. This quality is also embedded in this concept.

3.1.9. Importance of Grama Swaraj in Rural Sector

In the practical level the Grama Swaraj means self rule and self restraints. In terms of national swaraj, people give more preference for moral strength than brute force. In this ideal village if people are doing any wrong thing or illegal activities it would not be treated in a harsh method rather reformation of the mental attitude of the culprit is the panacea. While emphasising the concept of Village Swaraj, Gandhiji’s intention was to create non-exploitative, non-violent and non-competitive society in the near future.

The article written by Gandhiji in Harijan in1942, very clearly depicts that ‘My idea of village Swaraj depend upon perfect democracy based on individual freedom’. Basically, he believes that people in the village should be free from all kinds of evils, bondage, poverty and lacuna. His writings and speeches on various occasions clearly show how much he loved the progress of the rural people in India. Even his dressing code has resemblance to poverty and malnutrition faced by the poor people in our country. [Rahul Ramagundam: 2008: p87]

Some of the main elements included in the Gandhian concept of village Swaraj are trusteeship, swadeshi, bread labour, self sufficiency, decentralisation, co-operation and equality. By swaraj his intention was to liberate the human beings from evils, bondage and low human dignity,[Sheo Kumar Lal:1981:p2]
3.1.10. Restriction on Industrialisation

Due to the growth of Industrial revolution there was a tight competition among the developed countries to conquer the markets all over the world. Third world countries do not have sufficient economic stability for building infra structure for the heavy industries in their land. Besides, a great number of small scale industries were uprooted one by one from the markets. Often the developed countries’ focus was only to exploit the natural resources, human labour and sell their products in the third world countries at affordable prices. India was also not exempted from these colonial supremacy and exploitation.

Gandhiji was totally against the exploitative industrialisations run by alien forces and indigenous groups in the country because these lead to the destruction of small scale industries located in the rural areas. “Structurally, industrialisation and mechanisation of the West were powerful things of exploitation. They caused concentration of economic power in a few hands and in the city centres and consequently, led to the decay of the villages.” [Gangrade, K.D. and R.P. Misra:1989: p62]

On several occasions people were being evacuated continuously even from the remote places in connection with the industrialisation projects and finally they would even lose their right on their land and property. According to Gandhiji, “Mechanisation is good when hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work, as in the case of India. The problem with us is not how to find leisure time for the teeming millions inhabiting in our villages, but how to utilise the idle hours, which comes to about six months in the year.” [Gandhi, M.K.:1955:pp24-25]
However, Gandhiji was not against the use of machines in villages but it should not reduce the employment opportunities at any level.

3.1.11. Preference for Environment Friendly Development

The heavy use of chemicals and bio-fertilisers has caused the reduction of fertility of the land day by day. But in many places, even today the rural people are using this method, at an alarming level. Gandhiji has strongly recommended the eco-friendly cultivation and production method, even for small farming activities. He supported small electrical projects organised by the Government for the irrigation purpose. Heavy-electrical projects could cause the destruction to the small aquatics to a great extent. But the small irrigation system would benefit both living and non-living beings. “Gandhiji believed that economic productivity, environmental protection, maintenance of resources, defence and social justice should go together with growth”[Asha Patel:2005:p10]. At the same time he was against the policy like over exploitation of natural resources in order to get rapid economic growth by blindly following the western method of development.

3.1.12. Priorities for Non-Violence based Economy

Gandhiji was an ardent follower of non-violence and believed that the proper development of village economy also is a channel to reach non-violence. So the village economy was given more emphasis and consideration. To some extent the growth of village economy would help to rotate the major portion of money in its own territory than going to rich industrialists in the cities. Thus the economical system could strengthen the villages in many ways.
The villagers should develop a high degree of skill to sell their products and they should command a ready market outside. When our villages are fully developed there will be no dearth of person with high degree of skill and artistic talent. There will be poets, artists, architects, linguists and research workers in the villages. In short there will be everything in life, worth having which will be in the villages. Today the villages are dung heaps. Tomorrow they will be like tiny gardens of Eden dwelled by highly intelligent folk whom no one can exploit. [Gandhi, M.K. Harijan:10/11/1946].

If the rural people acquire talent and skill they would be an asset to the society and these can be used for proper exploitation of natural resources for themselves and for the future.

3.1.13. Relevance of Trusteeship concept in Rural Sectors

The concept of Trusteeship was one of the main contributions which Gandhiji gave to the present society. One of the parables in the New Testament of the Bible says ‘workers who reached vineyard in different time had received same wage from the Landowner’. This parable really inspired the life of Gandhiji. [Mathew, 20:1-16]. Based on this story several thoughts emerged in the mind of Gandhiji. All jobs have the same value and dignity. Doctors, Professionals and working classes should have same status, payment and value in the society by introducing the concept of trusteeship. Gandhiji had dreamt of equality in society, especially in social and economic fields.

Even before, Gandhiji was deeply interested in concepts such as ‘aparigraha’, non-possessions which also framed to reach the concept of Trusteeship. This concept mainly depict that all people should have to acquire money for their survival and rest of the money should be used for the
service and welfare of the entire society. The idea envisaged by Gandhi for
the concept of Trusteeship got great admiration and wide discussion all
around the world.

“Gandhi advised the owners of property to consider themselves as
trustees of the property which really belonged to the whole society and
manage it accordingly, taking only what they needed for their own upkeep
but using the rest for the welfare of society.” [Mathai, M.P:2000:p197]

As per the concept people who have enough money should act as a
‘Trustee’ and use the money wisely for essential purposes. There are even
criterions for selecting the Trustee and amount of money to be kept by the
persons. The greedy mind and the money oriented life style were the real
cause behind the increase of various social problems and criminality in
society. Gandhiji believes that all people have the resources for the survival
but no way to fulfil their greed in the world. By implementing this concept the
society can avoid the class wars and the fight between the poor and rich which
are going on continuously. Several times, the rich countries have considered
the poor countries as a source for their raw materials and markets for selling
the products in an affordable manner. Sadly, these exploitative attitudes
continued in the world during the last few centuries mainly by the developed
countries. Gandhiji strongly condemned and criticised this practice which
dominated in the world. The concept like ‘Swadeshi’ was introduced by
Gandhiji to resist and oust the alien forces from our country. Zamindari system
existed in India even before the arrival of the British in the country for
business purpose. In this system land ownership will be in the hand of a few
rich people and the workers and the labourers had to live like slaves. Another
dimension of the Trusteeship concept was that the landlords and rich people
who have enough land should donate the excess land to the hundreds of
landless people living in our country. Here Bhoomian Movement of Sri. Vonobha Bhave played a good role. They collected land from the landlords who donated willingly. The Movement then distributed these lands to the landless people. Hundreds of people were benefited by this. Even though this Movement did not produce complete result in many areas of the country, but the people in several places donated their land for the landless people.

Here Gandhiji’s intention was to implement socialism by upholding the principles of non-violence. Ultimately, people who are having particular skills and intelligence should use them for the benefit of the society to which they belong. [Arunachalam, K.:1981:p12]

“Trusteeship means, all money and property originally belongs to the society and those who possess it are only the trustees whose duty is to increase the earning and value of the Trust property” [Maharajan, M: 1998:p39]

However, if the Trustee is not acting in a faithful way, people can organise a non-violent agitation against them and confiscate the properties to the government by using a less violent method. [Gandhi, M.K.:1951:p 24]. In many rural places of India especially in remote areas people are almost living like slaves and the rich landlords are exploiting the skill and manpower of these poor for increasing their profits and vested interests. He wants to see the end of the exploitation both in villages and main cities and dreaming to achieve socialism which upholds the principle of equality in social, economic and political fields and not interested to see the division based on money in society. The role of middle men would disappear gradually from the society after the implementation of the concept of trusteeship. In our country even after the Independence majority of people are struggling for
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their existence due to the lack of land, proper food and low income. But at
the same time a small group of people are holding much land and having
supremacy in social, political and economic fields. These great gulfs have
cause a continuous struggle, social tensions and unrest in various sections
of our country. Since independence, several governments have ruled India
however none could find adequate solutions for these burning issues. So
certain radical groups and extremists are active in the rural areas, using
weapon as a tool for achieving their right for living, property from the
landlords and authorities. These landlords maintain certain groups and
members to fight against the radical groups by using weapon and to preserve
their rights. So there were continuous fights between these two classes
causing bloodsheds in several states. Understanding this issue, Gandhiji very
early introduced his great concept of trusteeship mainly to solve these
serious problems faced by the rural people and gave emphasis to the
relevance of non-violent approach, fellow feeling attitude, good sentiments
among the community towards the marginalised, oppressed and depressed
sections of the society.

“The concept of trusteeship economy which, Gandhi built up
systematically was a pioneering effort on his part. His emphasis was on
idealism and innate goodness of human beings in society, the social concern,
the fierce determination and unshakeable dedication which could bring about
a socio-economic order somewhat superior to the acquisitiveness of the
private enterprise and the all-powerful democratic socialism in which the
individual was sacrificed at the altar of the state” [Maharajan, M :1998:p45].
3.1.14. Effect of Panchayat Raj in Rural Sector

The primary responsibility of Panchayat is to maintain peace and harmony among the villagers. Gandhiji believed that independence should start from the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic or Panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore that every village has to be self sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world.

Villagers should be ready to face any threat or attack from outside. If any emergency situation is emerging, each village could receive help from neighbouring villages. Gandhiji believed that villages should deal with other villages just like countries deal with other countries. Each village should be ready to maintain its self sufficient activities very cleverly and in a systematic manner in every situation. They should respect other villages.

In 1992 the Government of India had passed the 73rd amendment of the Panchayat Raj Act in Parliament mainly to fulfil Gandhiji’s dream of giving more powers to the people living in the villages of our nation. Gandhiji had strongly criticised the Parliamentary system which was enforced by the British in India, because it was not properly acting as a custodian of people living in the grass root level. By an ideal village, Gandhiji meant each village will be self-sufficient and well enough to take care of all matters like Judiciary, Executives etc. associated with the village. The people who are eligible for voting must be elected as the members of the Panchayats. “The government of the village will be conducted by the Panchayat consisting of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. They will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system
of punishment in the accepted sense, this Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its period in office”.

[Gandhi, M.K. Harijan: 26/7/1942]

The Panchayat Raj system is the primary step to reach the decentralisation process at the grass root level of our nation. Gandhiji wanted to bring back the glory of villages which existed before the arrival of the British in India. This Act has been implemented in India except in a few states like Jammu and Kashmir, Mizoram and Nagaland and in certain tribal areas of the country. But the implementation of the Act could not make the expected results in many fields.

“True democracy could not be worked out by twenty men sitting at the centre. It had to be worked from the bottom level by the people of each village.” [Narayanswamy, S :2002:p 44]

Several rural people could reach to the national level in political fields after passing the Panchayat Raj Act in India. Basically people like to see good qualities and virtues in the life of representatives belonging to the Panchayat raj. Some of the qualities that should be kept by each leader in the rural communities are morality, patience, love, fearlessness, cleanliness, knowledge and committed mind to the needy people.

“The greater the inner purity of the Panchayat leaders, the greater shall be their hold on the people, without any effort on their part”. [ibid:p 48]

Making perfect democracy in the ground level of society is essential in this system. The Gandhian perception emphasised to dream on ‘attaining the kingdom of God on earth’. Three tier systems of Panchayats were formed by passing the 73rd amendment Act in our country which is at the village, block and district level.
“In the Gram Panchayat, there is a provision for a village parliament with the legislature. Here, the Gandhian concept of democratic decentralisation has been accepted and every village will have the rule of the Panchayat. It will have full power and strength. Every village will stand on its own feet and the central point will be the individual, who will be ready to die for the sake of the village.”[Janardan Pandey: 2002:p 63]

By giving rest to human hand and promoting the growth of machineries cannot be considered as a justice at any cost. For strengthening the secular and democratic values in the country, Panchayat raj can definitely play a great role in the rural sector. Funds allotted for the development purpose of the rural areas should be spent very wisely in the interest of the entire sections of the marginalised groups in the village. The power of landlord and land mafias would be reduced gradually by creating awareness in the mind of rural people about their rights and responsibilities towards the land transactions. The participation of the rural people would increase the mutual co-operation and awareness among themselves and that will increase the speed of the development, planning and its effect in the areas concerned. In recent times women also got the opportunities to participate in the political activities and in decision making by passing the Panchayati Raj Act. The gulf between the bureaucrats and common people were reduced to a great level in rural sector. Some expert comment that social evils like purdah system and dowry should be abolished to a great extent by the application the Panchayati Raj in India. Great changes have occurred in the areas of social values and people participation, in the rural sector. People belonging to the SC, ST and Reservation categories are attaining a tremendous change in the educational fields, standard of living, social status and political awareness due to the impact of the Act in the rural areas. In the earlier period
these people were thrown out from the main stream but now they are getting more and more opportunities in various fields. Self-sufficiency in village means the fulfilment of the basic needs of the people. This is the only alternative for improving the happiness of the millions and overcoming the exploitations faced by the weaker sections of the society. Panchayati Raj system has really come out from the Community Development Programmes initiated by the policy makers of India. Another main priority of Panchayati Raj is to maintain good hygiene and sanitations so that great level of diseases could be eradicated from the society. For that Panchayat can organise awareness camps among the people and highlight the need of personal cleanliness in day to day life. To some extent people can overcome the illness by practicing physical exercises and good diet control. Lack of proper sanitation is one of the main threats faced by hundreds of villages and even in many cities of India. Each Panchayat should take particular interest to manage the waste disposal which is emerging as a problem in every nook and corner of the villages. Waste can be used as another alternative for energy source and manure for cultivation. Gandhiji very specifically mentioned the relevance of nature cure in the village. Meanwhile experts can study more about this treatment and its application.

“Nature cure does mean a change for the better in one’s outlook on life. It means systematic regulation of one’s life in accordance with the laws of health. It is not a matter of taking free medicines. The man who takes free medicine from the hospital accepts charity. The man who accepts nature cure never begs from others. Self-help enhances self-respect. He takes steps to cure himself by eliminating poisons from the system and take precautions against falling ill in the future.”[Gandhi, M.K. Harijan: 2/6/1946].

In the Panchayat Raj system Gandhiji had clearly mentioned about the importance of co-operative cattle farming system. ‘One benefit of this system is that any number of cattle could be kept commonly in a farm than in individual household places. Other than that by keeping the number of cattle in a particular place would help to reduce the problems like foul air and dirt from the surroundings. The service of the veterinary doctors would be easily available to the co-operative cattle farming, compared with individual cattle preservation. Another benefit of the co-operative farming is the less expense for fodder, common grazing ground and good price for the milk.’ [Prabhu, R.K:1959:pp33-34]

3.1.15. Implication of Sarvodaya Concept in Rural Sector

The concept of Sarvodaya is also another great contribution of Gandhiji to the present society. The meaning of Sarvodaya means welfare of all. This concept asserts that development should reach to the last person in the society. The main aim of Sarvodaya is to make a society based on the principle of morality. Truth and non-violence are the two main components associated with this concept. Here Gandhiji had very specifically mentioned the reframed social and economic order which is more convenient to rural people. The basic unit of the sarvodaya society is the self-sufficient village having the ability to fulfil all the basic needs of the people.

The Sarvodaya social order is mainly against the social evils deep rooted in our society. “Sarvodaya is a means for the establishment of an ideal socialistic order where ‘individual change’ is a pre-requisite for a social change” [Mahajan P.Mani and K.S. Barathi: 1987: p73]. The economic order is also the need of the principle of equality. By using the concept of Sarvodaya, Gandhiji’s focused more on the development of the poor in the
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rural sector. He asserts that developments reaching the lower section of the society would create new enthusiasms and awakenings among the rural mass. Money or material possessions in the hands of few people cannot be claimed as a progress of the country. In the Sarvodaya ideal world, there is no scope for exploitation, discrimination and violence. A votary of Sarvodaya is expected to work for the welfare of all and die in the attempt to realise the idea. In modern times, Sarvodaya is acclaimed as a dynamic philosophy which can be used to transform humanity. It seeks to build a new society on the foundations of the old spiritual and moral values of India and meet the challenges of modern age and is indeed the panacea for all evils of modern civilisation.

“Sarvodaya also presupposes a social order that would provide equal opportunity for all to develop of their personality. This would further imply the establishment of socio-economic-political and educational structures that would facilitate the development and expression of the latent potentialities of the individuals.” [Mathai, M.P :2000:p156]

Gandhiji’s political, economic, social endeavours and programmes were mainly oriented and directed towards the progressive enlargement of the human consciousness through the service of poor, the down-trodden, the dumb and the meek and intrinsically integrated into the intimate and infinitive realisation of the divine spirit. Ultimate aim of Sarvodaya movement is to make a silent revolution in the society through the change of people’s attitude as well as appropriate development strategy concerned to the rural people.
3.2. **Constructive Programme and its relevance in Rural Sector**

Gandhiji has very clearly mentioned his views about mechanisation, industrialisations and social issues in his seminal work ‘Hind Swaraj’. This book clearly depicts about Gandhi’s perspective on modern civilisation, development and its further effects in human society. In the same time Gandhiji in his work ‘Constructive Programme’ clearly portraits about eighteen programmes for the re-construction of Indian rural areas [Venkata Reddy, K: 1988: p41]. The political parties small or big should have to think about the main issues dealt by Gandhiji in this book in a very prophetic manner. One of the aims of this study is to attain complete freedom for India by trusting more on truth and non-violence Economy. [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p5]

The social changes envisaged by Gandhiji have two elements which are ‘satyagraha’ and ‘constructive programme’. Satyagraha was framed for the maintenance of social justice and reformation but in the case of constructive programme main preference is for the restructure of rural community so that development would reach in the grass root level. “The Constructive Programme, if it could be successfully worked out would help the helpless and marginalised masses of people to regain their self respect, sense of dignity and brotherhood.” [Mathai, M.P:2000:pp255-258]

Capitalism always insists more on competition for acquiring more profit from business. Here there is no meaning for the concept such as social justice, equal opportunities, for the individual and the society. By knowing this fact Gandhiji had emphasised more and more on decentralisation in all spheres. Gandhiji strongly believes that concept like truth and non-violence have strong influence for achieving complete freedom to our country. In
India the aspects like class, race, colour and creed have led the society to backward than moving forward. Violent methods will never help to find amicable solution for any issue rather it would breed more violence in the coming days. Structural violence is very much deep rooted in our social, political and economic systems and rural people are more affected by this phenomenon.

The Gandhian movement of rural reconstruction consists of eighteen items [Gandhi, M.K:1941:pp 6-27] which are:

1. Communal Unity
2. Removal of Untouchability
3. Prohibition
4. Khadi
5. Other Village Industries
6. Village Sanitation
7. Basic education
8. Adult Education
9. Women
10. Education in Health and Hygiene
11. Provincial languages
12. National languages
13. Economic Equality
14. Kisans
15. Labour
In India people of different religions are living together for the last few centuries. This country had given refuge to several religious groups who faced persecution based on their religious identity and cultural peculiarities. However, before independence a little skirmish had broken out in different places of India based on religious identity and dogma. Gandhiji was shocked to see the label which mentioned separate water and room for the people belonging to Hindus and Muslims. He is personifying the unity between the hearts of people in the country and not the political affinity. For making communal unity, first of all, each one should try to identity his own religion as well as the people belonging to other religions. According to Gandhiji ‘He should have the same regard for the other faiths as he has for his own’[Gandhi, M.K:1941:p 6]. One of the main mottos of the British in India was to divide the Indian society based on religion so that they can preserve their vested interests and control the country very easily. This policy had been known as ‘divide and rule’. When the communal riots broke out in India, Gandhiji visited many places and tried to pacify the people and even in many places his presence could retain the calmness and harmony among the people.

According to Gandhiji political parties and religious groups should have a strong and cordial relationship with people of other parties and having other faiths. He strongly condemned the formation of various divisions in our society based on various religions such as Hindus, Muslims and Christians. According to Gandhiji all people are the sons of God and all religions are the
different sides of the same reality. The parliament system introduced by the British never helped to percolate power completely to the ground level instead it had given authority to a few members who are the representatives of the Parliaments. For the time being these members are selected by the common man and they have the right to make law in the Parliament. In short, success of the Parliament depends on the peaceful and harmonious coexistence of the people in the society.

According to Gandhiji, if people are unanimously moving against unhealthy practices or laws implemented by the supreme authority, none can prevent them. Here comes the importance of Gandhiji’s concept of civil-disobedience and its effects on the society. A country, ruled by coercive forces cannot destroy the mass movement by using the authoritarian forces like police and military.

“Parliamentary procedure is good only when its members are willing to conform to the will of the majority. In other words, it is fairly effective only among compatibles.”[ibid:p7]

Gandhiji believes that Indian constitution is similar to that of British and can make only an artificial unity among the people and not the pure unity and co-operation among them. On many occasions the members selected for the parliamentary system would not have real commitment and concern to the poor in the rural areas of the nation. They are being selected mainly based on the money power and religious association.

“Unity can never come out of these artificial entities being brought together on a common platform. Such legislatures may function, but they can only be a platform for wrangling and sharing the crumbs of power that may fall from rulers whoever may be”. [ibid.]
As per Gandhiji’s view, the suggestion for making the separate electorates in Parliamentary system would also promote to create divisions in the society than unity in society. Dr. Ambedker has strongly protested Gandhiji’s attitude on this issue but his intention was to make communal harmony. This could be solved by the Poona pact made by Gandhiji and Dr. Ambedker.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of our country, in his book ‘Discovery of India’ says that unity in diversity is the main feature dominated in Indian culture. By considering the unity of the country very seriously, our constitution and policy makers had supported the concept of secularism in our country rather than adopting the view of sectarianism or particular favouritism to any religions. Maintaining peaceful atmosphere is very essential for the success and progress of the country. In short, when members of the same family are fighting one another, there will be disaster [Mark, 3:24-25]. So in a country when the fight between different religions takes place continuously, definitely any one can predict the final outcome. On many occasions people in the rural areas are poor and innocents but they are enforced by certain vested interests groups in the society to involve in the communal clashes even for minute things. This disharmonious atmosphere existing in the rural areas has been creating a stumbling block and backwardness in the areas of development even in modern period.
3.2.2. Removal of the Untouchability

The arrival of Aryans from Middle East had caused the subjugation of aboriginal people, the Dravidians from the main stream and they were treated as lower caste by the invaders. This has caused the growth of several social evils and gave them the upper hand in the influence of religions. The Practice of untouchability was the one of the great curses which existed in the Hindu community. Many years before, this practice had created great division and low caste people were alienated. This practice has also provided many additional benefits as well as prestigious positions to the caste Hindus [upper caste]. At the same time people belonging to the lower caste were denied their natural rights and justice. Many lower castes Hindu embraced other religions which emerged in India in order to overcome the social evils and purify the social system. Gandhiji had very seriously criticised and written many articles and commended against this age old social evils on several occasions.

‘If the Hindu take up the cause for their own sake, they will influence the so-called ‘Sanatanis’ far more extensively than they have hitherto done. They should approach them not in a militant spirit but, as befit their non-violence, in a spirit of friendliness.’[Gandhi, M.K:1941:p 8]

The Hindus should come forward and take particular interest for abolishing this sin from our society as early as possible. They can only convince and change the mindset of people belonging to the same caste by using appropriate awareness as well as persuasion.

“And the road to Swaraj is steep and narrow. There are many slippery ascents and many deep chasms. They have all to be negotiated with
unfaltering steps before we can reach the summit and breathe the fresh air of freedom.”[ibid.]

The Members belonging to the Harijan community were very poor in socio-economic fields and this also strengthened the practice of the social evils in India. Many times these jobs were very menial, such as scavenging and removing human excreta. Upper caste Hindus considered these people as inferiors in society. Gandhiji considered people as the children of God. So the practice of untouchability is a sin against God. In certain places in India based on this practice people were categorised as down castes and they were never allowed to enter the Temple which belonged to the caste Hindu [David Hardiman:2009:pp128-129]. Gandhiji fought against racial discrimination in South Africa also.

Gandhiji has supported the ‘Varnasthrama Dharma’. He never saw a division based on this system rather he found harmony between different classes by upholding the duty of each caste on equal level.[Devan Ram Prakash:1920:p 23]. But in practice, casteism has created additional burden and also social nuisances in society in the later period in India. In rural areas this practices have made severe divisions and alienation among the people. Gandhiji has asserted that reformers in the villages has to collect water from same source and supply both to savarna Hindus and Harijans, in order to wipe out the practices of untouchability from our community. [Gandhi, M.K:1954]

“The existence of untouchability among untouchables is an additional reason for the cultured Hindu society to rid itself off the curse” [Devan Ram Prakash:1920:p34]. He believes that by adopting the skilled jobs like
spinning and weaving, this group will be able reach the economic self-reliance.

Harijan community should inculcate good habits, cleanliness and moral courage for social improvement. Gandhiji had to face severe oppositions and criticisms from various corners related with this problem. However, on certain occasions he had used the satyagraha as a weapon to fight against the social evils. Though he had suggested the formation of law against this practice, he never recommended violence for solving this age old problem. Besides, he has supported and participated in the non-violence based agitation led by various people and community in different parts of India. In India people who were considered as untouchables were abundant in the villages. So ultimately the development of rural society would lead the progress of the poor, oppressed, downtrodden and the untouchables who are living in many parts of India. Gandhiji had kept this understanding very seriously in his life. He knew that what ever rules and regulations have been made for abolishing the social evils, this practice will not be eradicated very soon from our country.[Mathai, M.P:2000:pp170-171]. Yet after the independence the policy makers had passed laws against this practice and had been implemented throughout the country.

### 3.2.3. Prohibition

A good society can be maintained only by keeping the sound health of the people. Addiction either to drugs or any other intoxicated items may cause physical and moral depression to the individuals. Drug addictions and Alcohol consumptions are the main reasons behind the destruction of many families in India or outside. This habit is somehow extended reducing the potentialities of the individuals and it leads to a great loss to the family and
even to the society. Basically most of the people in this category would be facing very severe financial crisis in their daily life. On the contrary some people are driven to suicide, after the consumption of alcohol and drug addiction. Investigations done by the expert reveal that drug addiction and intoxication also be a cause associated with the various anti-social activities and criminality existing in our country. This habit has a main role in creating socio-economic problems, both in urban and rural areas. Many problems would be created by excessive drinking such as traffic accidents, sexual immorality, quarrel between family members and destruction of property. [Bharathan Kumarappa:1952:p12]

Perhaps making more opportunities for various entertainment programmes would help to reduce this bad practice which is prevalent in our society. In many cases few days are not enough to make changes in the habits of the drunkards but it will be possible by strong determination and will power. The critics observe that in our society the Governments have to take firm decisions, for reducing the level of alcohol consumption. However at the same time they are giving fresh licences for starting toddy shops and liquor shops in many places of the state.[ibid:p16].

Once Gandhiji said that, if he is appointed as a dictator for an hour primarily he would close all liquor shops in the country [ibid:p9]. One of the greatest criticisms during the time of Gandhiji, is that the political parties had not given adequate care to the social and moral reformations. Majority of people in the rural community also have been addicted to these social evils. According to Gandhi when a person is eating poison definitely it will create harmful effect in his body and in the same manner the alcohol consumption would also make corruption in the soul.
“Medical men can make a most effective contribution towards the removal of this evil. They have to discover ways of weaning away the drunkard and the opium-addict from the curse.” [Gandhi, M.K:1941:pp 8-9]

Women and children play a great role in bringing a changes and reformations in the life of people addicted to alcohol and drugs. Many examples show that changes would take place in the life of drunkards if they are approached with love, care and service. The Government has the responsibility to introduce the prohibition in moral level even though it may reduce the revenue to the state. [Patil, S.H:1983:p 64]. Other than that, money for the de-addiction programmes could be used for the creative purpose and some other essential needs. The Government have to start various recreation centres so that people can be refreshed by participating in sports and games and some other beneficial programmes. On the contrary, many in our society are forgetting the fact that real happiness and health can be attained by the process of self-purification rather than the self-indulgence. By understanding the seriousness and the depth of the problems in rural areas Gandhiji had given special consideration for the prohibition in the ‘constructive programme’.

“Constructive workers make legal prohibition easy and successful even if they do not pave the way for it” [Gandhi, M.K: 1941:p9]. The Members in the ‘Constructive Programme’ from earlier period are working continuously for abolishing drugs and alcohol from both rural and urban areas.

Even the factory owners and business groups should arrange a common place for labourers to relax so that they won’t involve in any unhealthy bad habits and practices. The social workers should visit such people and give adequate counselling and guidance to them. The liquor shop
owners should stop their business and take initiatives for starting some other business ventures. Progress can be expected in this area only by the public opinion as well as mass movement. During his time Gandhiji had also participated in various kinds of movements and agitations conducted against the consumption of alcohol.

In fact People who are addicted to drugs and alcohol could produce only negative results in their family and society. In the society usually women are the victims of alcohol consumption practiced by their life partners and close relatives. Later on, the influences of Gandhian ideologies, and women groups and other organisations have come forward in several places for organising satyagraha and agitation movement against toddy shops and liquor shops which are working in the rural areas [David Hardiman: 2009:pp 216-218]. In many places government used the police forces to pacify or suppress the movement if needed.

3.2.4. Khadi

One of the higher ambitions of the khadi production was to increase the socio economic development of the people living the rural sectors. Gandhiji believed that, khadi can strengthen the village economy in a systematic manner by promoting self-employment and the marketing of the products. [Bharathan Kumarappa:1955:p185]The British rule in India had been a cause for the decline of khadi and small scale industries in India. Khadi highlights the decentralisation of production and distribution, which are the necessities of the life. Gandhiji says “Khadi is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality and, therefore, ultimately, in the poetic expression of Jawaharlal Nehru, ‘the livery of India’s freedom” [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p10] .Depending on khadi as a
livelihood has three main benefits. They provide cloth, work and self-confidence to the poor. In order to overcome the poverty in the rural sector each one should practice weaving in their own home and sell the products in the markets.

In 1934, Gandhiji said in ‘Harijan’ “Khadi is the Sun of the village solar system. The planets are the various industries which can support khadi in return for the heat and sustenance they derive from it. Without it, the other industries cannot grow...and also without the revival of the other industries, khadi also could not make any further progress”. [Gandhi, M.K. Harijan:16/11/1934.]

People received suggestions and guidance about rural industries from an organisation known as All India Spinners Association [A.I.S.A]. Foreigners who ruled in India had given preference only to heavy industries but not much interested in khadi and small scale industries. Rural communities were facing many difficulties by these policies. People working in the land of foreigners may get only a fraction of profit or earning. But if they raise agriculture in their own land, they could fetch more money.

Many people who criticised Gandhiji’s concept of khadi production could not understand its relevance but now silently agree that it has some value even in the present society especially among the rural community. In the Western economic policies more consideration is given for the rich and less priorities for the rural economy. But in the East majority of people are living in rural areas and Gandhiji stood very adamant for the development of rural community. [Agarwal, S.N:1945:p16]

Gandhiji says that we should never discard our age old parents and children and we have to spend money and time for their survival. In the
same way we have to preserve the Khadi for the protection and well being of the rural economy. He believes importing raw materials from outside the country would help only some rich merchants and corporate groups in the country. [Bharathan Kumarappa: 1955: p.34]

“The Art that is machine made appeals only to the eye: but the art in khadi appeals first to the heart and then to the eye.” [ibid: p.71]

Gandhiji was shocked, seeing the rate of poverty and unemployment level in the villages and realised that use of charka would be a remedy for overcoming these problems. He insisted that rich classes also spend some time for khadi productions and this equal participation will reduce the gulf between the poor and the rich in the society. [Yovesh Chandra Sharma: 1999: pp.12-16] Khadi production upholds the principle known as simple living and high thinking. Gandhiji had wide knowledge about different kinds of ‘Takli’ and instructed the people to operate this equipment in accordance with the situations. Making division between labour and intelligence may create stagnation and negative effects than the positive result. Gandhiji believed that using khadi would never promote the supremacy of machines over men. Having self sufficiency in village will naturally increase the welfare of our country. Though it may provide only less amount of wage to the workers however this would provide more employment opportunities in rural areas. Gandhiji kept this idea in his mind. Khadi will improve the production of other village industries in various manners [Ramachandran, G: 1951: p.12]. Learning spinning will help the women to sit in their house and make earning for them. So they need not have to go outside for finding the job. One main problem at present is that the khadi products are not able to compete with other industrial products which are produced in bulk level and with low price. Naturally, the price of the khadi products may increase in
the market because of the amount of human labour needed in this area than other industrial products. But the profit attained by the khadi products would never go outside the villages [Agarwal, S.N:1945:p20]. Pure economy focusing more or less increase the profits but ‘khadhar’ economy is rooted in altruistic as well as non-violent based rural economy [Arunachalam, K: 1979:p59]. After independence policy makers and political leaders have not given full support and vitality for the sustenance of the khadi products upheld by Mahatma in his period.

3.2.5. Other Village Industries

People cannot depend on agriculture throughout the year mainly because of the climatic changes, lack of irrigation and soil fertility. It is possible only in some particular seasons. So some small scale industries should be started according to the availability of the natural resources with the commitment of the people. Rural people have to decide the kind of small scale industries which are more appropriate to their locations in each period. Gandhiji gives stress on the growth of the rural industries like khadi, handloom, sericulture and handicrafts. Starting other industries together with khadi will create more employment opportunities in our rural community. Geographical aspects and marketing facilities also have to be given special concern in these fields. Kumarappa, the ardent follower of Gandhiji had mentioned the scope of various small scale industries among the rural community. Gandhiji also had the wilful heart to adopt the strategies and ideas envisaged by Kumarappa in regards to the growth of small scale industries in the country. Many Gandhian organisations which are working in the remotes areas have spent money, did voluntary work and gave training to the aspirants in this field.
“Village economy cannot be completed without the essential village industries such as hand-grinding, hand-pounding, soap-making, paper-making, match-making, tanning, oil-pressing, etc.” [Gandhi, M.K: 1941: p13]

Gandhiji believed that members of political parties should spend more time in villages and take initiatives for starting various village industries in accordance with the situations and resources. People living in the rural areas also should have the deliberate interest to purchase the items which are produced in the village itself and that will be the additional strength to the rural economy.

“When we have become village-minded, we will not want imitations of the West or machine-made products, but we will develop a true national taste in keeping with the vision of a new India in which pauperism, starvation and idleness will be unknown.” [Ibid: p13]

In his opinion, Government also has to give equal preferences for both the agricultural sector and the small scale industries, for the progress of the people in the villages. “Indian economy is mainly sustained by agriculture and agro-based industries. Any developmental planning worth its name in India has to be around rural development. Unfortunately, in spite of our pretensions to do so, our planners have not been alive to this realistic situation resulting in mass exodus from villages to cities and the consequent phenomenal growth of cities leading to all ills and evils.” [Pasricha: 2001: p184]

Formation of small scale village industries will also develop the skills and creative attitude among the rural mass. Our priorities always should be to give jobs to more people than starting the heavy industries which are based on centralised system. Recently, in certain places, business groups supply the raw materials to the people to assemble the products as per the
need of the markets. After the independence government has allotted certain amount of money and grants for starting various small scale industries in our countries. But in many places the functioning of small scale industries are not that much effective and the expected progress is not achieved. On many occasions these products have to face severe competitions in the markets which are controlled by corporate and rich industrialists. Based on the situations and the recent trends, changes should be inculcated in product manufacturing and market distribution systems. Each group associated with the small scale industries have to produce things of their own interests and priorities and could sell the products in the market to the needy people at reasonable price. Some times they can use the help of agents to sell the products. More importantly, everyone should get minimum wage when engaged in the small scale industrial work. Otherwise people would not have interest to join with this employment activities. So existing small scale Industries should be developed continuously and at the same time declining of these kinds of industries should be revived in time frame manner. “Rural industries serve as a link between agriculture and industries, between village and cities, provide employment to unemployed, is an interface between small and large scale industries. It does not require huge infrastructure or complex technology, and even a layman can manage it” [Asha Patel:2005:19]. Key elements associated with village industries are the participation of more people in the rural areas than the mass production, which is against the strategies used by rich industrialists in the country [Yovesh Chandra Sharma: 1999: p13]. The concept underlying the revival of Khadi and village industries is the concern for the unity and status of the villages units against the big cities and individuals against the machines. Growth of small scale
industries is very essential for the survival and development of village economy and this has been forecasted very early by Gandhiji.

3.2.6. Village Sanitation

One of the sad things seen in our villages, even today is that certain people are not at all bothered about to keep proper hygiene and sanitation in their own life and in their dwelling places. This is one of the main reasons for the diseases to spread in our society. In many parts of our villages, people cannot walk without closing the nose and eyes because of the offending smell and dirty things spread everywhere.[Shriman Narayan:1968:pp24-25]

“Divorce between intelligence and labour has resulted in criminal negligence of the villages. And so, instead of having graceful hamlets dotting the land, we have dung-heaps.”[Gandhi, M.K:1941:p13]

Houses in the ideal village should be built with locally available materials and should have sufficient light and ventilation. One of the primary duties of the members of the political parties is to maintain the cleanliness of villages in a very adequate manner. Gandhiji believes that their activities should be based on actions rather than vain promises.

Regarding our villages Gandhiji says that ‘A sense of national or social sanitation is not a virtue among us. We may bath and do not mind dirtying the wells, the tanks and the rivers where we perform ablutions. He regards this as a great vice which is responsible for the disgraceful state of our villages.’[ibid:p14]

The Gandhian constructive workers should take time and interest to clean the public wells, tanks and rivers. Thus they can motivate and influence the people living in the rural areas and make them aware of the importance of cleanliness in their life and surrounding areas. ‘If rural
reconstructions do not include rural sanitation, our villages would remain the muck-heaps that they are today. Village sanitation is a vital part of village life, but it is difficult to maintain. It needs a heroic effort to eradicate the age-long insanitation. The village worker who is ignorant of the science of village sanitation, and who is not a successful scavenger, cannot fit himself for the village service’ [Gandhi, M. K. Harijan: 18/8/1940]. Waste accumulating in the village territories could be transformed in a proper manner for producing the energy sources such as electricity and bio-gas plants. At present there are many techniques which are available for the proper de-composition of waste in an eco-centric manner. In many places bio-degradable wastes are being used as manure for the cultivation purpose.

Soon after reaching Champaran for solving some dispute between the farmers and the employers, Gandhiji’s first priority was to teach the lesson of hygiene and sanitation to the common people. Great results had been visible because of the presence of Gandhiji who had motivated the people to accept the needs of the change in the sanitation. Gandhiji had voluntarily worked among them by seeing the pathetic unhygienic situations in the sanitation areas and very soon he had arranged some mobile health units also for these people. So people loved him as a ‘karmayogi’ or activist [Gandhi, M.K:1927: pp 371-373]. Unfortunately most of the people especially villagers are not that much aware about the need of the sanitation in day to day life. Sadly in many places, people had used the same source of water for drinking purposes as well as for daily activities, cattle breeding etc. Thus the polluted water can also be an agent for spreading various diseases among the human society. At any cost pure water should be supplied to the common people in rural areas and even in the urban areas to solve these problems. In many places people walk very long distance for collecting pure water.
“Village sanitation is a vital part of village life and is an effort to eradicate age long insanitation” [Gandhi, M.K. Harijan:18/8/1940]. One remedy is to practice proper sanitation in personal life, family and in society. Natural treatment method envisaged by Gandhiji was an example for ‘how to accrue the cure from nature’. Gandhiji had instructed the people in the ashrama started by him to practice high level of sanitation in personal life and in dwelling places. He strongly believes that our village territories could be transformed into Eden Gardens in coming days by active and committed work of people. He dedicated his complete mind and physical body for the welfare of the rural community. Experiments show very clearly that sanitation attempt could be success only by continuous participation and good habits of the people in the society. “Sanitation is not a negative process of removing dirt. It is a double positive process. First dirt must become manure. Secondly, where there is dirt we must put beauty and sweetness. For instance, the open spaces in and around village can be converted from a filthy condition into healthy places by simply removing the dirt and growing vegetables and flower. The temptation will always be there to make it dirty again” [Ramachandran, G. :1951:p35].

3.2.7. **New or Basic Education**

Main aim of the education is to transform the village children into good members in the model villages. Primarily the encouragement should come from villages. Gandhiji was of the opinion that by neglecting the children, ‘constructive workers’ cannot build the structure of the Swaraj in our country. Educational policies implemented by the foreigners in our country had not considered the wants of the people living in the rural and even in the urban sectors.
“Basic education links the children, whether in the cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India. It develops both the body and the mind, and keeps the child rooted to the soil with a glorious vision of the future in realization of which he or she begins to take his or her share from the very commencement of his or her career in school”. [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p14]

By education Gandhiji means the ‘all round drawing of the best in child and man, their body, mind and spirit’ [Pandey, B.P:1991:p49]. At the same time literacy is not the end of education. Education, envisaged by Gandhi was based on physical, moral and literal as was practiced at the Tolstoy Farm in South Africa. Some of the things included in the vocational training was carpentry, shoe-making, gardening etc [Patil, S.H:1983:p 82]. However, literal as well as spiritual training is also being inculcated in these educational systems. But he strongly believed that by learning some alphabets and reading some books alone would not fulfil the real aim of the education. Education should mould the character as well as the life pattern of the aspirants [Joseph C. Mukalel:1997:p 66]. At the same time he never supported the education to be used as a channel for business aims and some vested interests. In this system both teachers and students should work together for getting the results. The revolutionary scene that was put by Gandhiji in the area of education contained the concept like naturalism, idealism and pragmatism. Education should enable individuals in the village to fall back on manual labour as the principal means of participation in the rural development programmes. [ibid :p180.]

By the introduction of handicraft and craft centred education system Gandhiji’s intention was to make a silent social, economic and political revolution in the villages. For that members have to analyse the availabilities
of natural resources in near places as well as the demand of the handicraft products in the markets on each occasion. He hopes that this kind of education would promote the knowledge about their physical and social environments especially in rural areas of the country [Pritham Singh Bhai:1944:p91]. This educational system would promote employment opportunities and social-economic security in society. Another aim of this education is to bring the idea of dignity of labour in the mind of people. In India harmony could be gained by the adoption of this education process. This could be a channel for the elevation of village economy as well as the reconstruction of village industries in an advance manner. This new education system is not supporting the transportation of any items, machineries from outside for the function of the village industries, because people in the village are more capable and learning all necessary aptitudes for the entire activities. However many developing countries have plenty of natural resources but the people do not possess adequate skill for the proper exploitation of them. This could be solved only by practical and skill oriented education that was propagated by Gandhiji for the masses in the rural areas [Arunachalam, K:1981:pp33-34]. He believes the teacher who is assigned duty in the rural education should have proper commitment; village minded approach in life and role model in society so that they can attract more pupils towards education process. [Pritam Singh Bhai:1944:p90]

Some of the main benefits attained by the students through these education systems are the dignity of labour, self-reliance, useful literary knowledge, social awareness, moral upliftment and the political participation of students in the society.
3.2.8. Adult Education

Gandhiji asserted that our country had not given adequate care for Adult Education process. During his time people in the villages have strong contempt for the foreigner’s authority in India but they did not have the force to resist the alien forces in India. On a certain level, the ignorance and lack of unity were prevalent in the society. According to Gandhiji ‘adult education means, therefore, first true political education of the adult orally’ [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p15]. Besides, literary education can also be provided in the same manner. In this education scheme non-violence will be the main principles to be upheld by the members. Adult education does not mean the learning of the alphabets instead it is accruing the knowledge which is more useful to the villagers. Gandhiji believed that social workers can do a great role in adult education among the illiterate people in the villages. Other than that, this also will be a channel to reduce the rate of illiteracy and lack of awareness, deep rooted in many fields among the rural people in our country.

Arithmetic, Geography, History and some other subjects could be taught to the people as they are related with the villagers and their needs. If these education processes are moving in a good way and making good results, definitely many will be interested to join this scheme from the village. Here people should remember the famous Chinese proverb which says ‘teach them how to catch the fish than give fish for eating’. While getting political empowerment, adult education process will improve the social status of the members as well as the development of the country in a simultaneous manner. Through this education Gandhiji’s aim was to awaken the masses of young people in the villages for the progress of our country. The civilized and the literate people would be an asset to the country. In this education more preference is given to the total development of the
individuals which include the accumulation of various skills, moral and personal upliftment. Changes in the area of syllabus could be made in accordance with the situation and the needs.

3.2.9. Women

Gandhiji strongly advocated that women also should have the same status as that of men in society. By knowing this fact Gandhiji had given special consideration for issues connected with women in ‘constructive programmes’. While joining with the satyagraha programme against the social evils, women also got an opportunity to come out side from home and perform more in the social field. Women are more efficient and capable to implement the non-violence better than men group in society. In the area of sacrifice women is more and more advanced than men.

Women in our country had attained prestigious position same as that of Goddess in society before the pre-Aryan periods but their position was degraded to the secondary categories in society afterwards due to the impact of patriarchal system and rigid social norms [Shobha Raghuram:1997]. This sentiment and systems are not allowing women to perform well in the society and claim more rights in the functional areas even today. Often majorities of women in the rural sectors of the country have to confront several obstacles day by day which are lack of awareness, ignorance, illiteracy, narrow mentality, purdah system, increased family size and preference for male child. [Ram Bali Misra and Chandra Pal Singh: 1993:p173]

“In a plan of life based on non-violence, woman has as much right to shape her own destiny as man has to shape his. But as every right in a non-violent society proceeds from the previous performance of a duty, it follows that rules of social conduct must be framed by mutual co-operation and
consultation. They can never be imposed from outside. Men have not realised this truth in its fullness in their behaviour towards women. They have considered themselves to be lords and masters of women instead of considering them as their friends and co-workers.” [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p16]

Men and women have differences in certain areas but both of them have the same mental abilities. Women are the mistress of the house, keeper and distributor of the bread in the homely atmosphere. Naturally most of the men cannot come to the level of women for providing care and proper nourishment to children in the house. At the same time women could not do heavy physical labour done by the men in the society [Gandhi, M.K.:1958:pp 9-10]. After finishing their household works women can also participate in various small scale industries either in their house or outside. In social areas they can very actively join various ‘constructive programmes’. In a non-violent based society moral strength is more important than the physical force. Gandhiji was quiet happy when he saw some of the women in various states working on the charka even when they confronted several difficulties and inconveniences.[Yovesh Chandra Sharma:1999:p 26]

Women very eagerly participated with mass non-violence movement organized by Gandhi in 1930 against the British policy which restricted the production of salt by common people. “The salt campaign brought out thousands of women from their seclusion and showed that they could serve the country on equal terms with men. It gave the woman a dignity which she had never enjoyed before” [Pritam Singh Bhai:1944:p 99].

According to Gandhiji “Wives should not be dolls and objects of indulgence, but should be treated as honourable comrades in common
This sentence reveals that he never likes to see the degradation of women in any field by the men.

Everybody accept that women have great roles for the development, welfare and proper nourishment of the children. So woman should be a role model in family as well as society, a role model throughout the life. Basically Gandhiji expects that women should undergo change and have empowerment in their life. In the society each child is very precious, valuable and the future citizen of the country. Considering the prosperity and success of the country women should teach non-violence, self-reliance, simplicity, truth and self-reliance to children.

At present the Governments both in the Centre and the State, are taking initiatives for implementing several programmes and micro-enterprise programme throughout India for the empowerment of women. In many areas, these attempts are helping the women in our village to find job opportunities, social awakening and leadership skill in many fields.

3.2.10. Education in Health and Hygiene

On various occasions Gandhiji had mentioned the importance of sanitation in personal life and social life. Once again he has shown interest to discuss the relevance of health and hygiene in the ‘constructive programme’. Main reasons behind the spread of many diseases are the lack of seriousness and ignorance which are kept by some sect of people in the area of health and hygiene. Though India got freedom in 1947, still lot of people are under the line of poverty and they do not have proper food, cloth and shelter. Day to day hundreds of people are dying and facing illness due to the lack of education or awareness in the area of health and hygiene. Health consciousness of the rural people is naturally very low in many places and
the rates of mal-nutrition are reported from various rural areas. The villager’s food is deficient in vitamins and this has been noticed by the health volunteers working in remote places of the country.[Jha, S.N. and Durgabai Deshmukh:1970:p110]

Experts say that ‘there is a strong relation between body and mind.’ So in order to attain a healthy mind each one should shed all violence from life and obey the laws of health.

“The fundamental laws of health and hygiene are simple and understandable. The difficulty is about their observance.”[Gandhi, M.K.:1941:p18]

As per the opinion of Gandhiji some of the laws related with health and hygiene are mentioned in the following lines.

• Always have pure thoughts and avoid all idle and impure thoughts
• Breath fresh air continuously in day and night
• Give more preference for the expression of inner thought with clean activity.
• Even the eating process must be to keep the mind and body in good order.[Ibid:p18]

Habit of cleanliness is not only a matter in personal life but also in the living area so that people could reduce the intensity of diseases from our society. So the main task of ‘constructive workers’ as well as the social workers living in the country is to teach the important lessons of health and hygiene among the people in the village.[Patel, S.H.:1983:p 69]. One of the famous adages is ‘cleanliness is next to Godliness’[Shriman Narayan Agarwal:1953:p26]. At present both government and voluntary agencies are
spending crores of rupees for maintaining the health of the countrymen. People especially in rural areas are affected with various kinds of diseases. Basically for keeping the health, people are ready to spend money or whatever resources are available. Even today in certain places especially in remote areas people are using the open places for passing the human excretes. This practice should be stopped because this may only help to the spread of various contagious diseases in far and near places. In certain areas some sects of people have been assigned to carry the filthy waste and manual scavenging work in the society. The sad thing is that people belonging to these categories have been given least consideration and status in the society. By knowing the depth of the problem, Gandhiji has taught the inmates of the Ashrams how to dump the human excreta in an eco-friendly manner. This shows Gandhiji was very much conscious about the health related issues in the society. Social workers should take interest to clean the public places, wells so that other people in the village would follow the paths of these people. Success of any programme does not depend up on what things are written instead how they are practised.

3.2.11. Provincial Languages

Except in India, nowhere in the world could we see various cultural diversities and people speaking different languages living together. After the arrival of the British in India a lot of people had shown great curiosity to learn the English language. At the same time they discarded their priorities and concern for regional languages. Many people forgot the fact that native language is learned through heart but alien languages could be realized only by brain. So we can observe faults while speaking the foreign languages mainly in the use of idioms, gestures and vocabularies. This learning process had created a great gulf in our country between the people who know
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English and who do not know it. Gandhiji believes that, without keeping the worth of the provincial language people cannot attain the dream of swaraj and the self-sufficiency. Children should get more insight and knowledge about mother tongue whether they stay in rural or urban areas of the country. [Pritam Singh Bhai:1944: p84].

“The masses remain cut off from the modern mind. We are too near our own times correctly to measure the disservice caused to India by this neglect of its great languages. It is easy enough to understand that, unless we undo the mischief, the mass mind must remain imprisoned.”[Gandhi, M.K:1941:p18]

In certain places, especially in remote areas people are continuously communicating each other and doing various activities, even though they do not have the proper alphabet in their languages. Gandhiji insisted that students should use the medium of native language for their education. “According to Gandhiji the best and the easiest way is to relate education to the social, political and cultural life of the country and to impart it in the mother tongue” [Mathai, M.P:2000:p223]. Development of each native language was possible only because of the hard work of hundreds of people in different places. So people have the responsibilities to preserve their own native language without destroying its beauty and clarity. Naturally people are more effective and dynamic in speaking, when they use the native language. Each language expresses its culture in a specific manner. But the English language is considered as an international language as it helps people to travel around the world and do business and diplomacy. However it does not mean that the people should keep an unfriendly attitude towards their mother language. In another way, forgetting the relevance of the native language means people is discarding almost their native land. People very
early hear and talk native languages continuously. So this language has enormous influence and impact for the development of mind and social life. There is a wrong concept that except English, no other languages could give great contributions and scientific innovations. For example countries like Russia and Japan have got great success and scientific achievement without the use of the English language. At the same time translations should be made from one language to other language so that people could grasp various thoughts, ideas and teachings practiced by other languages. Basically rural people are using more diverse languages in daily activities. So preservation of provincial languages is very much important for their success. If not, the cultural imperialism and foreign languages influence would cause to abolish the native languages from the society in near future. Even today various places as well as some islands have been witnessing these problems among the aboriginal people due to the invasion of foreign language’s hegemony.

3.2.12. National Language

Hindi is the main language spoken by the majority of people in India. Not only the people in the North part of India but the people in the south also could understand this language in an efficient level. Some of the vocabularies seen in the other language are also used in Hindi language. So people can very easily learn this language. Sanskrit was one of the main languages spoken in ancient India. Many great epics and Vedas were written in Sanskrit Language. There is a strong relation between the Sanskrit language and Hindi language. By considering the relevance and national integrity, Hindi can be considered as a national language than any other language spoken by people in India. [Bharathan Kumarappa: 2007: pp53-56]. By learning the Hindi language a great percentage of people can communicate with people living in the rural areas. Religious, political, social and economic activities can be done very
efficiently by the use of the Hindi language all over the country. After the Independence Government of India had allotted grants, money and conducted seminars for the promotion of the Hindi language throughout the country. One shameful matter noticed by Gandhi was that some of our people were deliberately speaking the English language, besides they insist others also to speak in English.[Agarwal, S.N:1945:pp24-25]

‘Our love of the masses must be skin deep, if we do not spend time to learn Hindustani just like we spend time to learn English’. [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p19]

3.2.13. Economic Equality

For maintaining economic equality in our society, our first priority is to reduce the gulf between the poor and rich and make a society based on non-violence. Some sects of the people assert that violence is the only alternative for bringing economic equality in our society. These kind of radical thoughts promote the growth of the Naxalite movement in our country. Using violence for solving the existing problems may create a series of violences than any amicable solutions. A verse in the New Testament of the Bible says ‘those who take the sword would be killed by sword’ [Mathew, 26:52]. Violence or war would produce more suffering to the women and children, we can learn this lesson from the history.

By applying the principles of non-violence the main emphasis is to make conversion of the mind of people than using the method of compulsion or coercion. Love and self- suffering are the two main core things attached to the concepts of non-violence. “A society or a nation constructed non-violently must be able to withstand any attack upon its structure from within or without.” [Gandhi, M.K :1941:p 20]
By economic equality Gandhiji means everyone should get sufficient food, proper shelter and medical relief. On this issue Gandhi and Marx have same perspectives but the methods for solving the issues are quite different from one another. The main aim of Gandhian view on economic equality is to support the equal payment for all jobs. In this system doctors, lawyers and labour classes would get equal status and wages in the society. This may be the ideal socialism dreamt by many experts, social scientists and activists in the world.

Trusteeship based economic equality should be popularised among the people. The relevance of non-violence in practical life may be included in the educational curriculum. Gandhiji dreams that people should have to cultivate the practice of sharing the excess money for the benefit and welfare of the entire community than for the personal welfare.[Gandhi, M.K:1951:p24]

There is a wrong understanding in the mind of some people that reformation may happen in our society after attaining the Swaraj. “But it has to be built up brick by brick with co-operative self-effort”. [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p21]

Even the non-violence based agitations do not make any changes in the sentiments or the attitude of rich people. Definitely, they would face the serious consequences in near future. ‘A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power. The wealth should be given and shared for the common good.’ [ibid: p20]. Economic policies implemented by either developed and underdeveloped countries always give more inclination towards the interest of corporate and rich classes which also increase the
economic instability in the rural communities. However Gandhiji was always focusing on the development of the rural economy and the welfare of the marginalised people in the society where the soul of country is resting.

3.2.14. Kisans

Majority of People in India depend on agriculture for their survival and livelihood activities. If these people are conducting agitation against social injustice based on non-violent method definitely none can prevent them to reach their goals. The dispute existed in Champaran was very severe, but great change had occurred here after the arrival of Gandhiji. Here farmers of Indigo cultivation faced the continuous exploitation by the landowners who were foreigners for a long period [Gandhi, M.K:2009:pp 376-379]. Several times people used the violent method for solving the issue but it did not give any good result on the practical side. In the same way kisans in Kheda, Bardoli and Borsad also faced exploitation from the cruel oppressors [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p22]. Hearing this problem Gandhiji has advised the kisan group to use the weapon of non-violence against the oppressors. In that period landlordism was deep-rooted in India and kisan groups even had not the right and privilege for claiming the eligible benefits and right for their own land and property. However, many people did not have strong faith in non-violence even though they followed the paths of Gandhiji and hear his advice regularly. Three main things that coincide in the concept of non-violence are peace, harmony and love to the enemy.

In many places Gandhiji’s presence could help to settle the issues between the kisans and the oppressors. In India other than agriculture, people depend on many different occupations in accordance with the situations, natural resources and their skills. By neglecting the kisan group, our country
would not get the self-sufficiency in food production and the survival of many other industries, small and heavy. Gandhiji had a desire that each village should be capable to produce the food for its own needs. Our country cannot move forward by giving encouragement to administrative and official sector on one side and discard the kisan group. Gandhiji could foresee this matter very early itself. Besides, all kind of organisations should try to reduce the grievances of the farmers. They should not stand for the political gain and some vested interests. Usually in India some of the crops could be cultivated only in a particular season. So farmers may remain without work for some seasons. It is essential that these farmers should be provided with some kind of work during the lean seasons. Gandhiji had given special concern for the development and well being of the kisans in the rural areas of the country. Due to the presence of non-government agencies in rural areas presently farmers are getting more training, equipments, knowledge about both farming and non-farming areas mainly for starting the self-employment programme.

3.2.15. Labour

People belonging to the labour group are continuously facing several allegations and exploitations in India and outside. Many of the political movements, radical thinking and literature emerge based on the grievances of the labour class. India also was not exempted from these problems. The land owners should never think that having ownership in land would give superiority over the tenants and landless labourers. As per Gandhiji’s perception excess money or profits gained by the land owners should be spent for the benefit of the agricultural labourers and others. It means that land owners should act as a trustee in the society [Patil, S.H:1983:p 92]. Yet Gandhi did not support the violent agitations even among the labour class.
Gandhiji had really appreciated the activities of Ahmedabad Labour Union which stood on non-violence principles in many areas. ‘This organisation was influenced by the municipal policy of the city. It has to its credit very successful agitations which were wholly non-violent. Mill owners and labourers have governed their relations largely through voluntary arbitration’ [Gandhi, M.K:1941:p23]. Gandhiji wanted that all labour unions in India should adopt the model of Ahmedabad Labour Union in their own respective areas.

In several places, labour unions used to conduct strikes, sabotage for gaining their demand either from owners or government. This method would create several problems and inconveniences to the common people. Another thing is that the development of labour unions may cause the direct or indirect progress of the rural mass in our country for bargaining their demand on various occasions. There is a common belief and assurance that, the working ability is the main strength of the labour groups. In the same way owners are spending their capital for building big infrastructures and buying raw materials for the functions of the business. The landless labours have to get adequate food, clothing and shelter while working in the fields and other places. There should be friendly and cordial relations between the trade unions and owners. The developments of rural areas are more or less related with the proper and cordial relationship between the labour unions and employers of the society.

3.2.16. Adivasis

Basically Adivasis are the real inhabitants of our country whose material position is perhaps no better than that of the Harijans who have been victims of neglect by the so-called high classes [Sarat .C.Joshi:2009: pp102-
103]. But due to the attacks and the invasions from foreigners in the past these people were thrown out from the main stream. Giving preference to adivasi in the sixteenth of the eighteen ‘constructive programmes’ does not mean that Gandhiji had given least considerations to the problems of them [Gandhi, M.K:1941:pp23-24]. Considering the vast geographical structure of our country it will be a tedious task to give an exact description of the adivasi groups in our land. Even now also many adivasi groups living in our country do not know proper alphabets of their own indigenous languages, even though they intermingle and communicate with each other. So it will be a difficult task to analyse the socio-economic problems confronted by these groups from earlier period. Strict rules and regulations are followed by these groups. They are not allowed to contact and communicate with other groups of people living away from them. During the last few centuries, they are showing interest and vigour for settled life in rural territories on a great margin. The development of the country could be measured only by assessing the progress of all sections of the people. After the independence many groups, individuals and governments also had done various activities for the welfare of the adivasi communities. Historical evidence shows in India that Christian Missionaries have done abundant contributions for the upliftment of these aborigines in the country. [Agarwal, S.N:1945:p36] Gandhiji expected that this is also the bounded duty of the other sect of people or the advanced communities of our land to work for the upliftment of the segregated and marginalised communities. Many social organisations motivated by the Gandhian principles and service mentality are showing interest to work extensively for the development of these communities.[David Hardiman:2009:pp136-154] Gandhiji had instructed the ‘constructive workers’ to spend their time voluntarily for the progress of the
adivasi groups. By considering the seriousness of the issue, both Central and State Governments have implemented several welfare projects for the progress of the aborigine people after the independence of India.

3.2.17. Lepers

Considering the number of people affected with the leprosy disease, India is just behind South Africa. People having this disease used to face alienation from the society. They have to face physical pain as well as the mental depressions in the life. Gandhiji considered that doing service to lepers is almost same as the service to the humanity. Gandhiji says ‘Plenty of the lepers who are much in need of attention are neglected and he was tempted to call this action as heartless'[Gandhi, M.K:1941:p24]. The institution which worked under the inspiration of Shri Vinobha Bhave in Warda had done great service to the people affected with leprosy disease. Other than this, in India many social organisations and missionaries are running several institutions and dwelling places for giving comfort and service to the leprosy patients. As per medical science, certain categories of leprosy diseases would not be transmitted to other human beings simply by touching or mingling. But some kind of leprosy diseases would be transmitted from one individual to other. In the same way certain kind of leprosy would give intense pain to the patients while some would not give pain.

According to Gandhiji “If India was pulsating with new life, if we were all in earnest about winning independence in the quickest manner possible by truthful and non-violence means, there would not be a leper or beggar in India uncared for and unaccounted for” [ibid.]

Here making change in the attitude of people is more important than allotting a great amount of fund for the leprosy foundations. Father Damien
was a great Philanthropist who dedicated his entire life to the service of the leprosy patients in his institution for a long period. Finally, he was affected with this disease and passed away. In his institution leprosy patients cultivated different crops and sold the products in the markets. This practice has provided them happiness, joy and a small earning to the members in the institutions. This kind of experience is rarely seen in the world. Gandhiji had a desire that social workers in the rural areas of the country have to give special concern for the well being of the people affected with leprosy disease.

3.2.18. Students

Each student should be considered as an asset and hope of the future. During the time of Gandhiji, students and teachers participated with non-cooperation movement conducted against the British rulers in India. On several occasions students who completed the British education were struggling much to find jobs in their respective field. That is why Gandhiji emphasized the relevance of craft centred education. Gandhiji knew that many of them were not interested to practice the principle of non-violence in day to day life.

Following lines mentioned are some of the advices Gandhiji like to give to the students in the ‘constructive programme‘ which is mainly made for the development of rural people.

Students have to spend time for education purpose such as policies of different parties, efficacy of democracy and totalitarianism than working as an active member of a political party in the country [Shriman Narayan Agarwal:1953: pp 33-35.]. However Gandhiji was not against the participation of students during the time of national emergency. He believed
that students should not involve in any kind of addiction because it would affect very much on their mind and body. [Agarwal, S.N:1945:p 9]

Students should always use non-violence as a method for fighting against the injustice which is prevalent in the society. But on certain occasions some of the authorities are not at all interested to hear the problems and grievances confronted by the students in the country. On such occasions students conducted the agitations against the institutions in a peaceful way. Their aim was to make repentance in the mind of the managers rather than using a retaliation approach in these situations.

“Gandhi focused on the young with a view to make education self-sustainable and to help the rapid spread of the spinning activity. The campaign to recruit students to the khadi and spinning programme received a massive boost with the declaration of non-cooperation and asked the students to withdraw from attending government owned and affiliated educational institutions”[Rahul Ramagundam:2008:p79].

Students have to make good relationship with students belonging to the other religious faiths and he thinks this will be a way to root out the practice like untouchability, communalism that are deep rooted in the society. They can influence the parents and society even today and go on to take many decisions related with society and country in future.

Gandhiji insisted that students must get adequate freedom in the ideal village but that should be used in a wise and restraint manner. They have to cultivate purity in heart and personal life so that they can make good relationship with fellow beings living in the neighbourhood. Since they are similar to Bharmacharis, they have to control their thoughts, words and actions in non-violent manner. [Patil, S.H:1983:p82]
Each student has the responsibility to do the cleaning work in the far and wide places of the villages and also to participate with first aid work for the injured people in the society. Gandhiji’s intention was to create social work as well as village serving attitude among the students community. At the same time he advised that they never forsake the relevance of the national language as well as regional languages in the social and economic fields. Gandhiji wants to see some qualities in the life of students such as self-restraint, fearlessness, protection of weak fellow-students and non-violent attitude.

“They will be scrupulously correct and chivalrous in their behaviour towards their fellow-girl students”[Gandhi, M.K:1941:p27]. He never ever tolerated and supported any kind of bad behaviour or approach from boys towards the fellow girl students.

Making appropriate changes in the life of students will be a stepping stone for the reformation of society and the making of the good citizens. In future each student has to do a great role in the family making process in the country. The students can also participate with the ‘Constructive Programme’ envisaged by Gandhiji without disturbing the regular study [Agarwal, S.N:1945:p9]. So change happening in the life of the students would promote the progress of family, society and even to the country.

Gandhiji’s had the intense desire to see the developments of the poor and the downtrodden, who live in the rural areas. Basically, in India, majority of people are dwelling in rural area that is why he asserts that soul of India is living in the villages. He strongly believes that, not only the material progress but also the progress of morality is very essential for the success of the country. This is the cream of the economic policies adopted by
Gandhiji towards the country. He spent a lot of time for serving the poor and the people living in the rural areas of the country. Gandhiji had introduced ‘Constructive Programme’ consisting of eighteen items especially for the well being of the rural people.

Later, he added two more programme in these categories. Many people have criticised that his ideas are very difficult to practice, but silently they approved the relevance of these ideas in practical areas. He never liked to see divisions based on financial criteria rather uphold the motto known as development of the last and the least in the society. He insisted that village should be self–sufficient in its all areas of needs. He had formulated very clearly the frame work of the ideal village and insisted many instructions for the development of the rural masses. The Gandhian concept of Swadheshi, Bread Labour, Village Swaraj, Trusteeship, Panchayat Raj and Village Industries had great impact in the society even after his death. However, having more inclinations towards industrialisations, the alternative governments which came to power have shown less interest to implement the Gandhian development ideologies. This was the main criticism that emerged in the society. He has dreamt of a non violent socialist based society, but never liked to see blood shed to achieve the goal. However, at present many organisations are very actively working in rural areas by the motivation of Gandhian ideologies and the commitment towards the poor in the society. Thus our objective of Gandhiji’s outlook on Rural Development has been fulfilled.
Reference


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