CHAPTER IV

PERSONALITY AND PRINCIPLES OF MAHATMA GANDHI
4.1 Introduction

The study of the personality and principles of Gandhiji is quite relevant in today's contemporary world in many respects. His personality has indeed many facets which have extended in various aspects of human life and human rights. Gandhiji gave equal importance to spiritual life as well as material life. It can be seen in his entire life. And moreover, it was the secret of the success of his entire life. The power of his material life and action was his firm belief in soul force. For Gandhiji, soul force was his entire power of action. In his early years young Gandhiji was very shy and timid in character. His early personality may be seen in his Autobiography.

"I used to be very shy and avoided all company. My books and my lessons were my sole companions. To be at school at the stroke of the hour and to run back home as soon as the school is closed that was my daily habit. I literally ran back because I could not bear to talk to anybody. I was even afraid lest anyone should poke fun at me".

But later in his life his ideals and actions based on human rights made him to become a Mahatma; it is well known to the world. Einstein's description of him as “the greatest man of our times” is a testimony of this
dimension of Gandhiji’s personality. Gandhiji believed that the transformation of his personality would be complete only when it continued to work for the transformation of society. Hence the Indian society at large was his laboratory. His experiments with truth have been done in this laboratory. To quote his own words,

“I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no rich class and no poor class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. This is the India of my dream”.

Gandhiji dreamed that the Indian society must be based on social justice and equality. The Indian constitution puts seal of legality on social equality for which Gandhiji fought relentlessly. Article 15 could, therefore be traced to the teachings of Gandhiji who believed that “democracy can only exist and flourish amongst a society of equals”. Without economic equality, political and social equality sound lifeless. Gandhiji accepts the doctrine of equitable distribution and equality of status and of opportunity. Economic equality would be without any substance if in a country, a large
section of fellow citizens is treated at the sub-human level and is denied elementary human rights. Gandhiji’s personality has mainly two dimensions. On the one hand, it is the integrated growth of body, mind and spirit - Personal dimension, and on the other this integrated self is co-ordinated with his fellow beings through service - social dimension. The social dimension of Gandhiji’s personality was very close to his human rights activities. He was a social activist regarding the various rights of the people. He was a man of action. A man who practiced what he preached. Gandhiji writes: “It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words”\(^5\). He taught nothing which he himself was not prepared to practise. There is no gap between precept and practice. This had a great impact on the masses in India. He was a man who practiced the Christian precept, ‘Love thy neighbour’. He was a man who absorbed the ancient wisdom in the ‘Bhagavad-Gita’, and he was a man who valued the ideals of social harmony and brotherhood preached by the ‘Holy Quran’. Gandhiji believed: “True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faith and faith”\(^6\). Gandhiji was a multi-faceted personality. A brief appraisal of the different dimensions of his rich personality is attempted here.
4.2 Charismatic Leader and Visionary

Charisma literally means “a divinely inspired gift or talent. It also means a special quality of leadership that inspires great popular allegiance”7. It is commonly defined as “a certain quality of an individual by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman powers or at least specific exceptional powers or qualities”8. Undoubtedly Mahatma Gandhi has been a great charismatic leader of modern India. Gandhiji was not endowed with any supernatural or superhuman qualities. His charisma consisted in his magnetic personality and utter dedication which attracted people from all walks of life. Dr. Rajendra Prasad describes his experience with Gandhiji in his book *At the feet of Mahatma Gandhi*. His veneration of Gandhiji leads him to the imaginative feeling that “Mahatma is a modern replica in human form of the sacred Ganga”9. Besides as a visionary Gandhiji led his people out of captivity in to the land of political freedom too. A visionary is farsighted and creative and has a comprehensive outlook. His farsightedness also convinced him that conventional weapons would not be effective in attaining political freedom for India. Out of his farsightedness he fashioned a totally new weapon – a
weapon the world had never dreamed of, namely, *Satyagraha*. *Satyagraha* literally means ‘holding to truth’ or ‘insistence on truth’10. R.R.Diwakar in his book “My Encounter with Gandhi” recalls Gandhi’s role “not merely as the architect of India’s freedom but also as an inventor of a new weapon of resistance – *Satyagraha*, which relies entirely for its sharpening and use on inner resources, our soul, the very spirit of all human beings”11. *Satyagraha* is an effective weapon, if self control is used as a moral force. It presupposes that the end does not justify the means. Hence the concept of *Satyagraha* establishes a close moral nexus between means and ends. Gandhiji was never tired of talking about means and ends and of laying stress on the importance of the means. Nehru explains why he and others were drawn to Gandhiji’s leadership, reflecting especially on the role played by the means of *Satyagraha*:

What I admonished was the moral and ethical side of our movement and of *Satyagraha*. I did not give an absolute allegiance to the doctrine of nonviolence or accept it forever, but it attracted me more and more, and the belief grew upon me that, situated as we were in India and with our background and traditions, it was the right policy for
us. The spiritualization of politics, using the word not in its narrow religious sense, seemed to me a fine idea. A worthy end should have worthy means leading to it. That seemed not only a good ethical doctrine but also sound, practical politics, for the areas that are not good often defeat the end in view and raise new problems and difficulties. \(^{12}\)

4.3 Profile of courage and strong faith

Courage and faith can be described as two sides of the same coin: both are mutually dependent. Gandhiji was exceptionally gifted with both these qualities. And moreover, these qualities helped him to face the British officials as well as his other opponents with calmness and gentleness. The source of Gandhiji's courage was his firm faith in Truth and Non-violence and his readiness to obey the voice of his conscience. He told the magistrate of Champaran, “I have disregarded the order served upon me, not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience.”\(^ {13}\) His conscience was always against the social evils such as untruth, injustice etc. He had said: “I am not anti-English.
I am not anti-British; I am not anti-any government; but I am anti-untruth; anti-humbug and anti-injustice. So long as the government spells injustice, it may regard me as its enemy, implacable enemy."14.

4.4 Upholder of Human Dignity and Human Rights

The dignity of man and the meaning of man are linked to the essential nature of man. Human entity is complex, with an immortal soul15 and a perishable body16. Every man has the capacity for the highest development because of his soul and its powers. Man has the capacity for higher development. For it equality is an essential element. Without that a real living is not possible. Gandhiji had said: "The moment we have restored real living equality between man and man, we shall be able to establish equality between man and the whole creation"17. Gandhiji gave top most priority to individual dignity and individual rights. He always upheld the respect and dignity of every man. And moreover, he had identified the social evil which adversely affect the dignity of man – untouchability. Gandhiji had very clear views regarding untouchability form the very early days. He recalls in his autobiography, "I told my mother that she was entirely wrong in considering physical contact with Uka (an untouchable) as sinful"18. Untouchability is one of the major social evils facing our country. There
were millions of untouchables in the whole population of India in the North as well as in the South. They were the despised and downtrodden people of India. Gandhiji considered untouchability as a curse. He prayed that if he had to be reborn he should be born as an untouchable so that he could share their sorrows and sufferings. He was wedded to the cause for the extinction of untouchability before he was wedded to his wife. He had said: “There were two occasions in our joint life where there was a choice between working for the untouchables and remaining with my wife and I would have preferred the first. But thanks to my good wife, the crisis was averted”\(^\text{19}\). Untouchability can rightly be considered as a black blot on Indian caste systems particularly Hinduism. Gandhiji said: “The more I studied Hindu scriptures, and the more I discuss them with Brahmins, the more I feel convinced that untouchability is the greatest blot upon Hinduism”\(^\text{20}\). Hence Gandhiji declared an open and uncompromising war against untouchability.

4.5 Writer for Change and Awareness

Gandhiji edited three journals during his life. The first one, *Indian opinion* (1903 – 1914) was in South Africa. The other two, *Young India* (1919 – 1932) and *Harijan* (1933 – 1948) were both from Ahmedabad.
Considering the whole of Gandhiji’s writings, it is clear that the characteristics of his personality such as his love for truth, his wrath against injustice, his deep love even for his opponents, his sympathy for the downtrodden and his eagerness to ameliorate their condition. In South Africa where he found himself involved in defending the self-respect and rights of his countrymen who had been made victims of injustice, indignities and discriminations of various kinds, then he discovered the principles of Satyagraha (Truth Force).

The Indian opinion was a weekly paper, publishing news of interest from the South African Indians. And it would contain an epitome of events happening in India and also contain news especially affecting Indians of all parts of South Africa. And moreover, the journal was filled with discriminatory law cases involving Indians, and which Gandhiji used to plead for Indians sake. Gandhiji wanted to change the life situations of Indians in South Africa and he firmly resisted the discriminations, which had been prevalent in the Indian community. Besides, Gandhiji used the journal for public awareness. In 1905, there was the outbreak of plague in Johannesburg. Gandhiji with a band of volunteers was fighting against this deadly disease. Throughout this period he was writing editorials, publishing news and letters,
drawing the attention of the town council and also the Indian community to
the seriousness of plague. Gandhiji was also fighting against the disabilities
suffered by the Indians in South Africa. Gandhiji expressed many of his
novel ideas in the form of editorial in Indian Opinion.

Young India and Navajivan proved that Gandhiji was a good writer.
He had a clear vision about his writings. He had taken up writing not for its
sake but as an aid to what he had conceived to be his mission of life. Among
the journals published by Gandhiji, Harijan was the most important and
most effective in many respects. Harijan was founded by Gandhiji himself
in 1933. It was intended to promote Gandhiji's campaign against
untouchability and for temple entry for the untouchables. Gandhiji accepted
the untouchables and for the promotion of their social dignity he called them
as Harijans. The term 'Harijan' means, children of God\textsuperscript{21}. Gandhiji believed
that before God all are equal. Hence he fought against untouchability. The
journal Harijan first appeared in February 11, 1933 and it was the most
influential journal involved in the movement for Indian independence.
4.6 Social Reformer and Humanist

There were many evils in Indian society. The system of child marriage which resulted in the physical, moral and intellectual ruin of both boys and girls. It also led to the increase in the number of child widows. Due to dowry system girls and boys were sold and purchased. Female could not receive education. They had to live under the purdah and so were denied the benefits of air, sunshine and social life. And there were castes and sub-castes dividing the society and the nation into so many watertight compartments. And moreover, there was the system of untouchability. There were millions of untouchables in the whole population of India in the North as well as in the South. They were treated as the despised and downtrodden people of India.

But the alien British government was not interested in the welfare of the people by removing social evils. The Indian National Congress which was founded in 1885 was more interested in the political emancipation of the country. But it does not mean that no attempts were made for the removal of social evils. But with the advent of Gandhiji on the stage of the Indian National Congress, its whole outlook was changed. He started a crusade against social evils through his speeches and writings and moreover, he edited
journals and wrote regular articles against social abuses. He denounced child marriage and detested dowry system. For Gandhiji, child widows were not widows in the true sense of the term. Gandhiji vehemently opposed the system of untouchability, prevailing in virulent form in India. Gandhiji deeply felt the pitiable conditions of the untouchables and took it as his life’s mission to raise their status in society. For Gandhiji, untouchables are not outcastes. They have the same rights and opportunities as enjoyed by the upper castes.

Gandhiji says:

“All the religions of the world described God as the friend of the friendless, helper of the helpless and protector of the weak. The rest of the world apart, in India who can be more friendless, helpless or weaker than the forty million or more Hindus of India who are classified as untouchables. Hindus have their own inner conviction and therefore, voluntarily, got rid of the present day untouchability, we shall all be called Harijans, for according to my humble opinion, caste Hindus will then have found favour with God and may therefore, be fitly described as His men.”23
Gandhiji’s humanism was the pivot of all the different aspects of his wonderful personality. His humanism meant his utter devotion to the human interests – welfare of the individual men and women of the human race. For him, all human beings were potentially divine and the service of man was the service of God whom he called *Daridra Narayan* – the God of the poor also.\(^{24}\)

The word *humanist* was first used in the fifteenth century in Italy to designate some scholars who were not only proficient in Greek and Latin, but also committed to human values as opposed to the life denying trend of medievalism\(^{25}\). And from the historical standpoint the philosophic usage of the word ‘Humanism’ is of very recent origin. Erich Fromm defines humanism as “belief in the unity of the human race and man’s potential to perfect himself by his own efforts”\(^{26}\). Paul Kurtz opines, “Humanism is an ethical philosophy in which man is central”\(^{27}\). These thinkers go beyond mere human experience, and point to a normative interpretation of humanism. But according to Amiya Chakravarty: “Gandhiji as a profoundly religious man was the supreme humanist in the modern crisis”\(^{28}\). He expresses his opinion regarding the humanistic elements of Gandhiji’s religious ideas. For Gandhiji
man's ultimate aim is the realization of God. He had said: "My creed is service of God and therefore of humanity." The first element in the humanism of Gandhiji is the freedom of man. He believed that freedom and freemen alone can make a just and human society. Thus Gandhiji's concept of freedom arose out of his humanism. The attainment of India's independence through non-violent means is Gandhiji's humanism. Hence, humanism was inherent in every spoken word and thought of Gandhiji. No word in his writings, no phase of his public life can be detected that does not contribute, directly or indirectly to humanistic objectives. He lived and breathed his last for it. It is the lively spirit of self-sacrifice and self-suffering which made Gandhiji the leader of suffering humanity for all time.

4.7 Principles of Mahatma Gandhi

4.7.1 Introduction

Gandhiji's entire public life was based on certain principles. He had lived and worked for it. All of his principles, Truth and Non-violence are the basic pillars of his entire life. The other important principles are Satyagraha, Morality and Religion, and Sarvodaya.
4.7.2 Truth

Truth is the corner stone of the entire thought of Gandhiji. Gandhiji was an ardent follower of Truth who not only preached but also practiced it in practical life. He says, "I am but a seeker after Truth. I claimed to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit I haven't yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize one self and one's destiny, i.e., to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections. Therein lies all the strength, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitation." Gandhiji had a firm faith in Truth and his whole life was oriented towards its pursuit. In all his thoughts and actions Gandhiji always emphasized the adherence to Truth and Non-violence. But of these two concepts Truth always had the first place for him. In other words, it was only in the pursuit of Truth that he discovered Non-violence.

According to Gandhiji, Satya (Truth) in the first place is derived from Sat which means 'being' of what is existing. Thus Gandhiji concludes from this that Truth means that which exists. Except truth nothing exists in reality. Gandhiji says that Truth is a reality and this reality is nothing but God. Gandhiji says, "God is Truth." In other words, according to Gandhiji, God
is the other name for Truth\textsuperscript{33}. In 1925, in a talk with Christian missionaries in Darjeeling, Gandhi said that for him “God and Truth are convertible terms”\textsuperscript{34}. And moreover, in an address at Wardha, he had declared, “to me Truth is God and there is no way to find Truth except the way of non-violence”\textsuperscript{35}. Thus Gandhiji changes his position and propounds that Truth is God. He released Truth from the ethico-spiritual bondage; and applied efficiently and to a greater extent successfully to every walk of life such as social, political, aesthetic, ethical, religious etc. Realization of Truth has no meaning if it is not translated into action. Man is both an individual and social being simultaneously. Once he realizes the Truth and begins to act upon it and stops there, then that action would be incomplete and may not have much lasting value. He has to share his new insight with others. The sharing is essentially a human action. Through this process the individual has to get a chance to testify the Truth. Truth is to be practiced in all the activities of life. Gandhiji says that Truth should be pursued at any cost, even at the cost of one’s life because Truth reveals knowledge which is the most important element of life. Gandhiji opines that where there is Truth, there exists knowledge. And where there is no Truth there is no knowledge.
And where there is true knowledge, there is bliss and sorrow disappears. In other words, it means that Truth is a light of knowledge by which the darkness of ignorance is removed. For to reach Truth Gandhiji practiced certain vows, such as the vow of Truth, the vow of Brahmacharya (purity), the vow of Non-violence, the vow of poverty and non-possession. Among all these five vows Gandhiji gives much importance to Non-violence and says that Ahimsa (Non-violence) is the means through which Truth can be found out.

4.7.3 Non-Violence

Another important principle of Gandhiji was Non-violence. Gandhiji considered this ideal primarily as a weapon for moral regeneration and reorientation. With the help of this unique weapon of moral power he drove out the Britishers and fought the ills of society in all spheres of life. For Gandhiji, Non-violence is the law of life. According to him, it must pervade the whole being and should not be applied to isolated acts. But this law should also be practiced both at the individual and national basis. Gandhiji was an ardent follower of the principle of Non-violence in both theory and practice. The whole life of Gandhiji was directed, regulated and moulded by the spirit of Non-violence. In fact, the principle of Non-violence was the
breath of his life. Gandhiji had said: “For me Non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle, it is the rule and breath of my life”\textsuperscript{37}. And moreover, he reveals “Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed”\textsuperscript{38}. It clearly reveals the role of Non-violence in his life. And moreover the propagation of Non-violence is the activity of daily life during intercourse with each other. Non-violence of Gandhiji is based upon the concept of spiritual unity with the opposite party which would not be there if violence will be met with violence. Thus, it has great faith in the essential goodness of human nature. It demands the conversion of the bad to good through love. So that the evil doer may become conscious of his spiritual unity with the non-violent individual. Thus the principle of Non-violence of Gandhiji includes love, affection, kindness, sympathy, mercy, tolerance, patience, forgiving and forgetting and co-operation, mutual aid and constructive programme. For Gandhiji, a person loves another person who loves him, this is not Non-violence. Rather, a non-violent person is he who loves those who hate him. This is the significance of Gandhiji’s concept of Non-violence. Gandhiji implemented the method of Non-violence for solving all human problems, social, religious, economic and political. He firmly believed that the method of Non-violence could lead to the establishment of
a world without hatred, wars and all kinds of exploitations. During his active participation in making India free, Gandhiji pursued Non-violent Non-cooperation and Non-violent Civil Disobedience methods. Gandhiji explains, “Whether one or many, I must declare my faith that it is better for India to discard violence altogether, even for defending her borders. For India to enter into the race of armaments is to court suicide. With the loss of India to Non-violence, the last hope of the world will be gone.”39. It clearly reveals the anxiety of Gandhiji regarding the denial of Non-violence. He had always opposed violence. He believed that it hurts the rights of the people and the society will fall into peaceless situation. Hence he writes in the Hind Swaraj, “Those who will rise to power by murder will certainly not make the people happy.”40. Thus we come to the conclusion that the principle of Non-violence developed by Gandhiji is new and unique in the sense that it is all-pervasive, multidimensional and a panacea for all types of evils – social, political, economic, ethical, individual, national and international.

4.7.4 Satyagraha

Gandhiji used the term Satyagraha during 1906 to 1914 in South Africa, to represent the Non-violent movement of the Indian settlers in the
Transvaal Republic against the racially discriminatory legislations of the White Government. The term Satyagraha is Sanskrit in origin and is a combination of two words Satya and Agraha. ‘Satya’ means truth and ‘Agraha’ means firmness, or adherence, or insistence, or holding. Thus the compound word ‘Satyagraha implies firmness in truth, or adherence to truth or insistence on truth, or holding on to truth. As Gandhiji considers truth equivalent with Non-violence or love, soul or spirit or morality, the term Satyagraha implies a force born of truth or Non-violence or love, or soul or spirit or morality. Therefore, in other words, Satyagraha is Truth-force or Non-violent force, or Love-force, or Soul-force or Moral-force. Thus, “The moral weapon to fight untruth with truth and violence with Non-violence is described by Gandhiji as Satyagraha”. Gandhiji gave a new direction to the technique of Satyagraha and he wanted to tackle all problems of social, moral, and religious fronts through it. He first used this technique in South Africa. And he had gained much experience about the validity of this technique in South Africa. This technique has been tested on many occasions and it has the capacity of being universal. It can be very useful in modern times too. According to A.C.Kapoor: “Satyagraha is the technique of resisting
all that is evil, unjust, impure and untrue and resolving all maladjustments in human relations by love, voluntary suffering and self-purification by an appeal to the divine spark in the opponent’s soul". Satyagraha prevents all sorts of hunger, greed and untruth. It is the highest and purest form of Non-violence. In Satyagraha, the opponent is not an enemy to be destroyed or defeated, but he is a person who has to co-exist with the Satyagrahi. Satyagraha is a soul force or love force. So the Satyagrahi can solve all problems and conflicts by winning the hearts of the opponents. Satyagrahi is twice blessed; it blesses him who practices it, and him against whom it is practiced. So it is a truth force. Gandhiji calls it the soul force. Satyagraha is a relentless search for truth and a determination to reach truth through Non-violent means. And moreover it is a very powerful non-violent method of direct action. According to Gandhiji, a Satyagrahi is a fearless person. He will never submit to any arbitrary action. He who has attained the Satyagraha his state of mind will remain victorious under all conditions. For Gandhiji, Satyagraha is a philosophy of life. It is also the religion where he wanted all men to live by it. According to Gandhiji, Satyagraha is practicable in every situation. The Satyagrahi becomes mentally strong by enduring physical suffering. In this
context, Gandhiji wrote: “I see that Satyagraha is assured of divine help, and that in testing a Satyagrahi, the creator imposes on him at every step only as much burden as he can bear.” The Satyagrahi must not use any sort of violence against the exploiter because the aim of the Satyagrahi is to convert the opponent and to make him realize his mistake. Violence hurts the rights of the opponent. There are different forms of Satyagraha. Gandhiji employed these forms during the freedom struggle in India. There are three forms of Satyagraha, namely, (a) Non-Cooperation, (b) Civil Disobedience, and (c) Fasting. These three methods of Satyagraha are known as the non-violent direct action. According to Gandhiji, Non-cooperation is a universal remedy against all evils—social, economic and political. Gandhiji believed that under exploitation there is cooperation between the exploiter and the exploited and therefore the former must withdraw his cooperation so that the exploiter ceases to exploit. Hence Non-cooperation means to cease to cooperate. Non-cooperation may include strikes, hartal, boycott and resignation of offices and titles. In principle, “Non-cooperation is a protest against an unwitting and unwilling participation in evil.” Civil disobedience is a form of non-violent rebellion. By refusing to obey the immoral laws of the state, the civil
resister denies the existence of the established authority. Gandhiji points out, "A little reflection will show that civil-disobedience is a necessary part of Non-cooperation. You assist an administration most effectively by obeying its orders or decrees". However, as Gandhiji rejects the infallibility of the government, he sanctions disobedience of those laws of the government which are morally wrong and which are against the conscience of the people or of even a single individual. Gandhiji observes, "Disobedience to the law of the state becomes a preliminary duty when it comes in conflict with moral law". Accordingly, for the first time, in South Africa, Gandhiji advised the Indians of the Transvaal and Natal to disobey the Black Act, and the immigration Restriction Act. They did the job quite non-violently and accepted self-suffering by going to prison instead of paying the fine imposed on them for the violation of the Acts. Because, courting imprisonment by disobeying the government's immoral laws is the highest type of self-suffering and the most effective mode of registering protest with the opponent. Gandhiji also applied the non-violent non-cooperation and civil disobedience in the Indian national movement for seeking redress of particular grievances, and for the wider purpose of achieving the freedom of India.
Fasting is the most potent form of Non-cooperation. Gandhiji called it a ‘fiery weapon’⁴⁹. Fasting aims at the purification of self. It is offered to convince the opponents. In the course of his Satyagraha movements, Gandhiji made use of this method against official injustice, untouchability and also against Hindu-Muslim riots.

4.7.5 Morality and Religion

The other important principle of Gandhiji was morality. He had applied morality in every field of life – social, political, religious and economic. He has tried to solve all the problems of life on the basis of morality. For Gandhiji, morality is the basis of all. According to him morality and religion are convertible terms and he believed that it is morality that leads to religion. The history of world religions confirms that without a strong basis of morality “religion cannot exist. True morality covers religion for the most part”⁵⁰. So it is morality that is of utmost importance to us; and it is morality that promoted religion. However, Gandhiji opines that, Truth and Non-violence are the two principles which serve as the basic structure of all morality. Morality is acquired by a man through the observance of Truth and Non-violence. A man cannot be moral if he is not non-violent and truthful. So to be moral, it
is essential for a man also to be truthful and non-violent. Truth and Non-violence only can protect human rights.

For Gandhiji morality and religion are two faces of the same coin from which neither of them can be separated. According to him, religion is to morality what water is to seed that is sown in the soil. Thus morality and religion would go together. Neither morality precedes religion nor religion precedes morality. They are intertwined and interdependent on each other. Morality emphasizes the relation of the individual to society and religion emphasizes the relation of individual to God. Gandhiji advocated that religion and morality would pervade the whole of human life. He did not perceive religion as something more than morality. Morality is a way of life. Without it, we cannot respect and accept the rights of others. Gandhiji strictly followed morality in all his actions and performances. He tried to confine the national independent movement to the strict principle of Non-violence. It is the core of morality. And moreover, Gandhiji tried to moralize all religions and thereby to avoid hatred, fanaticism, and religious orthodoxy. He had a separate meaning to religion. He had said: "By religion, I don’t mean formal religion or customary religion, but that religion which underlies all religions which
bring us face to face with the maker.”\textsuperscript{52} Gandhiji’s religion was a practical religion. According to him, religion which takes an account of practical affairs and does not help to solve them is a religion. Again Gandhiji says, “Religion should pervade every one of our actions. Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It is not less real because it is unseen. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity etc. It does not supercede them. It harmonizes them and gives them reality.”\textsuperscript{53} Gandhiji emphasizes that religions are not for separating men from one another but rather for binding them. Therefore, he subscribes to the creed of equal regard for all faiths and creeds. Hence he had practiced \textit{sarvadharma samabhava} in all his life. Shriman Narayan observes, “Mahatma Gandhi entertained equal respect for all religions and stressed the need for developing \textit{sarvadharma samabhava} in national life with a view to establishing a secular democracy in India.”\textsuperscript{54} Gandhiji’s religious perspective was very wide. He also thinks that any evil deed done by a Moslem hurts him as much as that done by a Hindu. “I regard myself as a friend of the Moslems. They are my blood brothers. Their wrongs are my wrongs. I share their sorrows and their joys. Any evil deed done by a Moslem hurts me just as much as that done by a Hindu.”\textsuperscript{55} This will help one to
recognize, appreciate and promote the common values in all religions. And moreover, it promotes the fundamental rights of a citizen i.e., the right to freedom of religion.

4.7.6 Sarvodaya

Sarvodaya means the rise or welfare of all. Gandhiji’s activities were inspired by the principle of Sarvodaya, which can be called non-violent socialism. The basic principle behind it is that the good of individuals is contained in the good of all. Individual well-being can be realized only through the realization of the dignity and well-being of all. In Sarvodaya society, Satya and ahimsa are the unshakeable basis for political and social activities. According to Gandhiji:

True democracy or the Swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated ahimsa56.
Violence cannot have to establish individual freedom and the freedom of all. The political power must be used only for non-violent means. And moreover, the power would not be observed as an end for anything. For Gandhiji: “Political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their conditions in every department of life”\textsuperscript{57}. This approach towards political power is an essential condition to better the welfare of all. The exercising power of the political authority is justified only in so far as they serve the welfare of the members of the society or state. For to realize the welfare of all each and everyone must do their duty properly. Duty determines the welfare of the people. Hence the true source of Sarvodaya is duty. To safeguard the “rights of all” is Sarvodaya. For that, everyone must perform his duty in a stringent sense. Ultimately, we can find the fact that the base of rights violation is the violation of duty. Hence we must give more importance to duty than our rights. It determines the level of Sarvodaya in the society and the nation as a whole.

4.8 Conclusion

The magnitude of personality and principles of Gandhiji was intense and immense. His multifaceted personality clearly revealed the fact that he was an ardent admirer of human rights. He had lived and worked for it. As a
charismatic leader and visionary, he took an initiative to lead the people of India out of captivity into the land of political freedom. This action was a great human rights action. This mode of non-violent action is quite relevant in today’s public action. Each public activist must practice the Gandhian vision of action in his or her public life. People are under captivity in various walks of life; political, economic, social, cultural and religious. They want to get a charismatic leader with a vision of their freedom. Gandhiji had a vision of India’s freedom, and had a strong faith and courage in all of his activities relating to the rights of the people. He had given prime importance to individual dignity and individual rights, and spent the entire life for it. Besides, he showed an awareness through his writings about the rights of the people. And moreover, Gandhiji was a great humanist and a great practical idealist, the world has ever seen. What he had said, he practiced in his life. It is the notable trait of his personality. He had practiced his principles in his daily life. All of his principles are based on morality. It was the reason behind the success of his entire public action. Moreover, the entire public action of Gandhiji stands for the ‘welfare of all’. Without certain moral principles, we cannot respect and accept the rights of others, our fellow beings. Hence we must practice the Gandhian principles, in our day-to-day life without fail. It is the solution of human rights violation which is prevalent in our society.
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15 "Bodies appear and disappear, but not so the atman which ever is", *The Bhagavad Gita*, Swami Chidbhavananda, Sri Ramakrishna Tapovanam, Tirupparaiyur, 11th impression, 1982, 2 - 12, p. 130.

16 "Man’s physical body is composed of five natural elements – air, water, earth, fire or Tejas (The emerging principle) and ether (space). The soul quickens it" *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, p. 96.


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