

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND WAY AHEAD

JAGMEET BAWA¹ & HARPREET SINGH²

¹Joint Director, IRC-UHVE, I K Gujral Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala, Punjab, India

²Research Scholar, IRC-UHVE, I K Gujral Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala, Punjab, India

ABSTRACT

Present study tries to focus on the overall conflict resolution philosophy given by Mahatma Gandhi as an alternative path towards the eradication of conflicts. This study deals with three things; Gandhian philosophy of conflict resolution, critical evaluation of the Gandhian theory of conflict resolution and study comes out with a universal and holistic way out for the resolution of conflicts. Gandhian conflict resolution philosophy is an outcome of his own life experiences, but his model of conflict resolution does not meet with the parameters of a universal and holistic model of conflict resolution. His techniques for conflict resolution, though simplistic, but can be misleading, as it is self-contradictory from many aspects. Present study not only discusses the shortcomings of the Gandhian philosophy, but also presents universal guidelines to evaluate a philosophy and way ahead to resolve the conflicts at various levels of human living from individual, family, society to the highest level that each one of us can verify.

KEYWORDS: Conflict, Individual, Beliefs, Assumptions, Preconditioning, Natural Acceptance, Gandhiji

INTRODUCTION

After the end of Second World War, international actors became very active to resolve the conflicts, at all the levels and to establish peace. Collective security has been introduced as a very important weapon for the peacebuilding. After the disintegration of Russia, United States took the driving seat to curb out the conflicts at global level. But the reality is totally opposite to what America and other international organizations are saying. Though everyone is aiming at the conflict free world, but conflicts are at their highest level of history. Presently there is hardly any area which is not hit conflict or by the outcome of conflicts. Either we talk about the Middle East, South Asia, many parts of Europe, United States of America, even Africa; these countries have paid so much in the name of ethnic conflicts. Peoples are migrating around the world to take shelter, which is affected by these conflicting situations. Often, one side coercively imposes its will upon the other side, sometimes violently, and thus initiates a conflict. But the path of progress was not smooth; irrespective of so much of research in this field; conflicts obviously not abolished. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870-1924) elaborated Marxism with his still influential analysis of the relationship between capitalism and imperialism, which generated conflicts for radical societal transformations. Also, during this time, religious thoughts and practices were also developed in ways that proved relevant to conflicts at that time. Pacifist sentiments and commitments had long been a part of Christianity and other religions, often expressed by quiet withdrawal from worldly conflicts, but it was not the proven method to avoid conflicts. The First World War (1914-1918) destroyed many millions of lives due to conflicts. The establishment of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ-1922), the predecessor of the International Court of Justice, was provided for, in the Covenant of the League of Nations. Laying the groundwork, between 1946 and 1969, many developments provided the materials with which contemporary conflict area was built.

The UN Security Council has the primary responsibility for international peace and security. It has one central mission: the maintenance of international peace and security. The UN performs this by working to prevent conflict; helping the parties in conflict to make peace; peacekeeping; and creating the conditions to allow peace to hold and flourish. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN). It was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began to work in April 1946. But still all these developments are not able to contribute much in limiting destructive international and domestic conflicts. We witness the number of inter and intra regional conflicts within a nation. For the sake of giving conflict resolution theories or resolving conflicts at different levels we have only taken diplomatic solutions. Tackling the central cause of the conflict is the basic process in the development of future approaches of conflict resolution. Conflict resolution aims at the elimination of the source of conflict. A temporary arrangement of conflict resolution is not being existed. Settling the immediate disputes with the underlying conflict cannot be viewed. Basic issue or human needs have never been considered in this approach. The fulfillment of human needs will emerge in the form of a mutually satisfied solution through the right understanding. The history of mankind shows how great men have always struggled and fought against prevailing social evils and human sufferings. Out of those men in human history, the 20th century produced one outstanding personality – Mahatma Gandhiji (Thomas 1991). Gandhiji responded to the challenges of the given historical situations, realized the historical necessities of their time and tried to actualize the needs and aspirations of the people of his times in his own ways. Gandhiji tried to evolve a revolutionary approach to political and social change. His originality lay in the formulation of a new technique of non-violent, non-cooperation and Satyagraha for social action. Traditionally, we understand that there are two types of forces, physical and spiritual forces. Gandhiji said that in general, people are familiar with the physical force. Physical force is based on violence. Violence cannot be solved any issue, it created more violence. Physical force promoted only one side victory and it defeated the other side. The real issue of conflict does not resolve this approach. Gandhi was opposed to this physical force” (Tendulkar 1961). Joan V Bondurant, an international peace researcher; said that force can be used in either violent or nonviolent ways. With violence, force is used to intentionally harm the opponent. But with nonviolence, force is used to make changes in the opponent (Joan V. Bondurant 1988)

Michael J. Nojeim has written extensively on the nature of violence and nonviolence (Michael. J. Noeim 2004). This concept of nonviolence is defined as using force to provoke opponents into changing their actions, without intentionally harming them, but instead of exercising the transforming of power by intentional self-suffering. In turn violence is using force to deliberately harm, if not destroy, an opponent’s physical and psychological well-being in order to compel a change in their behaviour. Gandhiji had given his theories on resolving the conflicts to this changing world. Gandhiji’s method of conflict resolution was based on Satyagraha and non-violence.

OBJECTIVE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

Our aim of this study has been to understand the Gandhian philosophy of conflict resolution. This work analyzes the Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict resolution and conflict resolution techniques, critically evaluates the Gandhian philosophy and come out with a universal and holistic idea of conflict resolution for the contemporary world by putting the individual in the centre.

Present work adopted a multidimensional comparative approach encompassing theoretical considerations backed up by theoretical and empirical evidence from political scientists, historians, authors of conflict studies.

Gandhian Theory of Conflict Resolution

Gandhian conflict resolution perspective demands a great deal of sacrifice from the practitioner. Gandhiji calls it Satyagraha, which means adherence to truth. Basically Satyagraha has two components-Satya means truth (Mishra 2005). Truth in Sanskrit means SAT. Sat means -God is, nothing else is. Therefore, the more truthful we are, the nearer we are to God. One is a moral agent only to the extent one embraces Truth. Graha means insistence, firmness for truth. Graha means holding firmly on to truth. The root meaning of Satyagraha is holding onto truth, hence truth force. Non-violence is the ahimsa according to Gandhiji (P Ramakrishna 2005). Gandhi widely used the word Ahimsa. Ahimsa is a Sanskrit word. Ahimsa means non injury or non-killing. Gandhiji always voiced oneness of human beings. In Gandhi's perception of Ahimsa is a positive term meaning not merely non-injury, but positive will to action for the well being of the others even at the sacrifice of oneness. Gandhiji's active nonviolence emerged as a result of his experience in South Africa, especially his painful experience at Maritz burg. Gandhi said "without nonviolence, it is not possible to seek and find truth; they are like the two sides of the same coin". If one has to be Satyagrahi; he has to be non violent. Gandhiji could never accept violence as a 'cleansing force'. He asserted that "Individuals or nations, who practice nonviolence, must be prepared to sacrifice their all except honour." As a corollary, "where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence" (Hugh 1980). Peace is more perfect than war because the legitimate aim of war is more perfect peace. War is 'mutual violence' which must breed hatred, revenge and bitterness-a poor foundation for greater peace. Nonviolent resistance brings out the issues into the open and approaches a new settlement in accord with Truth.

Truth has always functioned in the form of nonviolence or love. Truth is the basic factor of the Gandhian concept of Satyagraha. It is the realization of being, the foundation and purpose of existence. If we define God as absolute being, then God is also Absolute truth. God is truth, goes the familiar saying, but Gandhi gave the statement an unusual twist (Diwakar 1968). He argues that it is more correct to say 'Truth is God' than the traditional 'God is truth'. Gandhiji evolved Satyagraha as the most pragmatic and potent technique of conflict resolution. Truth and nonviolence as its main elements are interrelated as ends and means. According to Gandhi aim of satyagrahi is to search for "ultimate truth". His mind was always open, fresh and receptive to the truth and non violence as he went about finding it from day to day life experiences. A Satyagrahi is who always practices Satyagraha, which in Gandhian philosophy called nonviolent resistance, non-violent direct action, militant nonviolence, etc. Gandhiji described this technique of Satyagraha is applicable in all circumstances from the interpersonal to the group, national to international conflict and from micro to macro level conflicts (Thomas 1991). He believes that the true source of right is a duty. The satyagrahi's objective is to convert, not to coerce the evil. The process of conversion involves more steps: reasoning, persuasion and moral appeal the self suffering in lieu of violence. Sataygrahi is gentle, never wounds. It must not be a result of anger or malice. It is never fussy, never impatient. It was a complete substitute for violence. Whatever Gandhiji believed or assumed is the sum of inputs Gandhiji got from education, family, society, culture, etc. Gandhiji method of conflict resolution was based on truth and non-violence. Truth was image of God for Gandhi. He did not believe in a personal god. For Gandhi, truth is God & God is truth. Gandhi has written his autobiography named "My experiment with truth" and mentioned truth can be achieved through experiments and life is the laboratory where experiments are carried out. The truth of Gandhi was not confined to any country or community. In other words, his religion had no geographical limits. His patriotism did not separate from the service of human beings, but was its part and parcel (Mishra 1974). Gandhiji developed an integral approach and perspective to the concept of life on the basis of experience and experiments. His ideas, which came to be known to be his philosophy, were a part of his relentless search for truth (Iyer 1973). Truth & non-violence are complimentary to one

another. He regarded every human soul as secretary of truth (Jain 1974). Satyagraha does not only change the heart of the enemy, but also purifies the heart of the practitioner. It destroys his evil qualities. But Gandhiji also mentioned to keep country be ready for Satyagrahis is really tedious a task. Gandhiji mentioned Satyagraha demands a great deal of sacrifice and plenty of patience and said it was not the weapon of the weak. Only the persons ready to undergo any amount of suffering, even death in defense of it. This is what made a satyagrahi fearless in most violent & brutal expression. The technique or method Gandhiji used was evolved out of a philosophy of non-violence. Gandhiji mentioned the use of pressure of hunger strikes, threats of self immolation, picketing & similar other coercive measures. But is seldom an appeal to the conscience of their opponents (Thomas 1991). Later on Gandhiji's Satyagraha has been completely perverted in what is known as gherao method of coercing the decision maker. The gherao is potentially immoral in as much as it amount besieging seldom peacefully, unarmed, reasonable and helpless men or body of men & not lifting the siege until demands have been fully conceded. Gandhiji always claimed that Satyagraha can rid society of all evils, political, economical and moral. Satyagrah being a resistance to evil, in the context of social conflict, included as its most visible form opposition to unjust laws. For Gandhiji, the rules of morality, which ought to guide the life of an individual, should likewise guide the interactions between nations. In the Gandhian model the individual comes to conflict situation as one who is not innately aggressive and he has the freedom of will to resolve conflicts in a non violent way. Conflict is a natural fact of life either we focus on interactions between individuals, groups, organizations or nations. Conflicts are everywhere of the range of emotions that may arise conflict in forms of conflict settlement, conflict transformation, conflict coercion and conflict prevention as a way to reach the state of cooperation. Gandhiji called his struggle satyagrah was a moral equivalent of war and a deeply spiritual action. Gandhiji believed that individual's forms society, as we are so our environment becomes. He claimed a small body of determined spirits fixed by faith in their mission can alter the course of history. He saw relationship between individual and society as one of the parts determining whole. For Marxists, it is the social existence, which determines individual's consciousness (Kar 2014). He believed that men are the outcome of circumstances. According to Freud, there is the existence of human will. The determinist position holds that all events follow universal laws and as such an act of will too is determined by the individual's innate character and motive.

Basic Principles of Satyagraha in Gandhian Perspective

Satyagrahi need not wait forever. When the limit is reached he takes risks and conceives plans of active Satyagraha.

A satyagrahi never misses, can never miss a chance of compromise on honorable terms, because I can never be sure I am right. Gandhi asserted: Human life is a series of compromises and it is not always easy to achieve in practice what one had found to be true in theory. Conflict resolution through Satyagraha is based on the beliefs and assumptions that:

- Some elements of common needs to the disputants always exist.
- Disputants could be amenable to an 'appeal to the heart and mind'.
- Satyagrahis are capable of carrying Satyagraha to the end.

Concepts of Satayagraha in Gandhian Perspective

Gandhiji said that truth is God. God is absolute truth. But at the same time, he said that I have not realized absolute truth, so long I must hold to the relative truth as I have conceived it.

Gandhiji's perspective of conflict resolution follows following concepts:

Patience

One can be patience if there are no confusion and contradiction in belief and assumptions. Satyagraha campaigns are methods of fighting where conflict has reached the grievance stage. Fighting is related to being violent, so contrary. Gandhiji ethics stems from the injunction that what you do to others, you also do to yourself.

Gandhiji preached and practiced, if single individual is morally strong, it can bring about transformation in an environment in which he lives.

Faith in God

The basis of Satyagraha is that the opponent is open to reason and has a conscience and that human nature is bound, or at least likely, to respond to any noble and friendly action. Belief in the goodness of human nature and the operation of reason is the optimist's act of faith.

No violence – non violence is means, truth is end. If we take care of the means we will surely reach end sooner or later is one of the main belief of Gandhiji. Nonviolence is never a method of coercion; it is one of the conversions.

Fearlessness

For Gandhi, possession of arms was a sign of fear and cowardice. Cowards could never be moral. Nonviolence and cowardice are contradictory terms. The courage in Satyagraha "is a matter of heart" and not physical strength.

Self-suffering

Self-suffering "is used in a course that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes." And it keeps the resistance nonviolent.

Evaluation of Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict Resolution

Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts seem to be attracting more and more attention at first glance, but the practicality of the Gandhian philosophy of conflict resolution requires complete verification, on the basis of some universal parameters.

By going through the literature survey, we would say Gandhi's simplicity, as confirmed in his apparently inadequate philosophical stand on conflict resolution, can be misleading (Allen 2007). It has been found that Gandhi is not a philosopher in any specialized sense, and he has little have to do for highly abstract and technical philosophical formulations. Most important, his thoughts on conflict resolution serve as a challenge and as a catalyst for having re-thought dominant positions and have more value for significant philosophical thought than most mainstream 'academic' philosophy.

With respect to conflict, violence, nonviolence and peace, Gandhiji's philosophy does not give all the answers. The approach of the present study to Gandhiji on conflict resolution is necessarily selective. This means ignoring or devaluing other Gandhiji data, structuring and privileging data in terms of significance, and formulating and arguing for one of a number of possible interpretations of Gandhiji on conflict resolution. One has to be selective not only in terms of Gandhiji's writing, but also in comparing Gandhiji with other philosophical thoughts and evaluating their respective contributions. This also because much of this challenge comes from the sheer volume of writings by and about Mahatma

Gandhiji. Although, he never wrote a lengthy book, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* comes to one hundred volumes of very assorted and highly fragmented articles, correspondence, speeches, and other writings (Gandhi 1958-94).

Before moving to Gandhi's analysis of conflict resolution, we pay attention on different attributes and explanations. First, we comment on texts, contexts, and interpretations. Second, we comment on the inadequacy of antithetical essentialist and anti-essentialist interpretations. Third, I clarify my use of Gandhiji's "conflict resolution." And finally, we emphasize that Gandhi is misleadingly simplistic by citing his approach to such normally over looked phenomena as educational violence.

After this introduction, we submit that Gandhiji serves as a valuable catalyst, allowing us to rethink our positions on conflict, violence, nonviolence, and peace education. Gandhiji's method of conflict resolution was based on Satyagraha and non-violence. A brief formulation is given of Gandhi's key distinction between relative and absolute truth and how this shapes his approach to conflict resolution. After noting the importance of Gandhiji's analysis of self, self-other relations, and Swaraj or "self-rule," we conclude by suggesting that Gandhiji's approach to conflict resolution faces many significant challenges and difficulties. Nevertheless, his approach has much of value in challenging dominant philosophical approaches and offering creative alternatives.

In many writings it has been mentioned that whatever Gandhiji said, Gandhiji believes that (Johnson 2006). But our proposal is all the conflicts all around us is because of us starts believing whatever we get from outside, from parents, teachers, society, friends, media, advertisement, etc., which are the sources of beliefs & assumptions, but the resolution is if we start knowing the realities through self exploration. Our beliefs and assumptions play a very important part in the way we behave with other human beings and we work with the rest of nature (comprising of air, soil, water, plants, animals etc.). There is a direct relationship between what we believe & assume with our behavior and work. As we get older, we start living with these beliefs & assumptions by expressing these through our behavior and work. We found sometimes these beliefs & assumptions are true and sometimes false. Because these beliefs & assumptions are not evaluated on some basis with which we can verify, that's why we are not sure of either our beliefs & assumptions are right or wrong. So this is the need of hour to evaluate the beliefs & assumptions (Jagmeet & Harpreet 2016).

Gandhiji has given the philosophy of conflict, by dividing the conflict situations from interpersonal to groups to national to international levels. But we have tried to see the conflict by putting the individual in the center. We can evaluate at our own that whenever an individual lives in this existence at a time, lives at four levels of his living (Jagmeet & Harpreet 2016). If we look at our lives, it becomes clear that an individual's living can be seen as encompassing at the four levels as an Individual, Family, Society and Nature/Existence. Whenever an individual lives, he lives at the above mentioned four levels. Each one of us lives at all these levels, whether we are aware of it or not. If an Individual is not able to understand itself, so he is in conflict with all the four levels. We can easily see the conflicts of an individual at different four levels all around us like conflicts with own self, conflicts in families, conflicts in society and conflicts in nature/existence. So conflicts start from conflicts in the individual and its expression is the conflict at all four levels.

Gandhiji mentioned that the path of satyagrahi demands self suffering (Pradhan, Atul and Chandra 2007). But we can ask ourselves that either we want self suffering or not by using the universal process for self exploration. No body wants suffering, everyone wants happiness and prosperity. So the path of Satyagraha is not the universally accepted technique for conflict resolution.

In Gandhian perspective; satyagrahi need not to wait forever. When the limit is reached he takes risks and conceives plans of active Satyagraha. So Gandhiji views differ at various points as these statements are contradictory with each other.

Gandhiji said that truth is God. God is absolute truth. But also said that I have not realized absolute truth, so long must I hold to the relative truth as I have conceived it. Gandhiji had not realized the ultimate truth, so complete verification on the universality of his philosophy is required.

Gandhiji was not able to define the term God in a simplified manner so that everyone can have the understanding about God. Various philosophers do not accept the definition given by Gandhiji as Gandhiji did not give any valid logic about the terminology he has used for describing the God.

Gandhiji mentioned in case of conflicting situations always follow the principle of what you do to others, you also do to yourself. But our proposal is what we do to ourselves, same we have to do to others. We have to put ourselves in the centre in order to decide what is right or wrong. Righteous of us will be right for others also.

Whatever Gandhiji believed or assumed is the sum of inputs Gandhiji got from education, family, society, culture etc. Gandhiji got a lot of influence from Tolstaoy, Thoreau, Ruskin, Rajachandra and Bhagwat Gita, which reflects in the techniques used by Gandhiji to resolve the conflict (Kar 2014). Gandhi's own example is instructive: "I learnt the lesson of nonviolence from my wife, when I tried to bend her over to my will. Her determined resistance to my will, on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering on the other, ultimately made me ashamed of myself and cured me of my stupidity. She became my teacher in nonviolence". The family in which Gandhiji was born, the environment of society, the culture, Indian values and traditions has great impact on his mind. Gandhiji's father was also an honest man, which given a deep mark on his mind. Gandhiji's mother was also a religious lady, which inspired the young Gandhiji. As a child, Gandhi read the book of 'Shravana Pitribhakti Nataka' and he watched the drama "Satyavadi Harishchandra". This book and drama very much influenced Mohandas. Gandhiji has not evaluated these inputs by using some universal process of verification. Beliefs and assumptions without verification are the root cause of various kinds of problems and conflicts. An individual always expresses themselves through their behavior and work. If there is contradiction in the thoughts of an individual, the same gets expressed outside in the form of behavior with other human beings and in the form of work with rest of nature. The rest of nature includes everything that exists all around us like air, soil, water, plants, and animals. So finally this contradiction of an individual turns out as the contradictions at all the levels of human living. As said earlier the root cause of conflict is an individual is unverified assumptions. Right evaluation of these beliefs and assumptions turns them into universal values. This transformation resolves the contradictions, which leads to harmony in an individual. An individual who is in harmony with himself, when behaves with other human beings leads to mutual happiness and work of such human being with the rest of nature will lead to mutual fulfillment. Thus right evaluation of beliefs and assumptions in an individual can eliminate all the contradictions and can resolve the conflicts among human beings. But in our evaluation, whatever the origin of various concepts developed by Gandhiji, every concept should have some supportive reasons.

Gandhiji believed that individuals forms society, as we are so our environment becomes. But, in our study we have described that, individuals form family, families give raise to society and societies forms nature/existence. So individuals are at the base. The characteristic of the family is based on the innate character of individuals, the course of societies depends upon the families and the outcome of nature/existence depends upon the characteristics of societies.

Evaluating Gandhian Philosophy on Universal Parameters

There are many philosophies of conflict resolution available to us. How we can evaluate these philosophies for their practicality and universality in the present day world. So here are some guidelines on the basis of which we can evaluate a philosophy.

Understanding versus Beliefs and Assumptions

A philosophy based on understanding is more likely to be livable than those based merely on any faith, belief, assumption or preconditioning. It should be reasonable and not based on dogmas or blind beliefs. Indeed, we start assuming the things when we do not understand them. A good philosophy would be one that does not demands, beliefs and assumptions and is based on explanations that we can understand. A philosophy should not have dos and don'ts. Gandhian philosophy is based on beliefs and assumptions of Gandhiji.

Natural

A philosophy should be natural and verifiable. Being natural, it is acceptable in a natural manner of all human beings without being forced. But Gandhian philosophy at certain aspect is not natural and demands sacrifice from the practitioner.

Communicability

A philosophy is of little use if it is not easily communicable to the masses. If accessing the philosophy requires difficult regimes of discipline or acrobatic feats of the body and mind, then the utility of the philosophy gets reduced. An ideal and realistic philosophy would be easily communicable to any common person without demanding any special abilities. A great deal of effort is required to understand the Gandhian philosophy of conflict resolution.

Universality

A good philosophy would be one which would be universal which does not change with respect to person, time or distance. It should be applied across cultures and civilizations. But Gandhian methods of conflict resolution are successful because of his personality. Everyone can not practice these methods.

Comprehensive or Holism or All Encompassing

A comprehensive philosophy would include all spheres of living namely thought, behavior, work and understanding as well as individual, family, society and nature/existence. Gandhian philosophy of conflict resolution is not complete as it doesn't address all the dimensions of human being.

Solution versus Resolution

An ideal philosophy must provide a resolution to problems rather than just working on the symptoms of the problems. Negotiation, persuasion and mediation techniques of conflict resolution are the mere solution to the symptoms of conflict not the resolution of the root cause of conflict.

Existential

A good philosophy must be verifiable in an individual and one can realize it. There should be possibility that philosophy being manifest in the lives of individuals must appear clear and evident.

But Gandhiji said whatever I say are my experiences or beliefs and I realized the relative truth not the absolute truth.

Empowerment

It should be able to infuse some hope and confidence in an individual and prevent them from lapsing into misanthropy or worse. Gandhiji’s methods of conflict resolution do not provide any hope to implement on modern types of conflicts.

Feasible

A good philosophy must be socially feasible: and must be demonstrably so, without any repressive or coercive methods being used. But the Gandhian model of conflict resolution is based on the coercive method of conflict resolution.

Open Source

Like open source software, a good philosophy must be open source, so that once an individual is able to understand the fundamentals, can participate in the process of developing, documenting, and application of philosophy. Gandhian method of conflict resolution is not a self exploratory model so there is no possibility of proliferation of the model.

So the Gandhian philosophy of conflict resolution, is not according to the universal parameters we have discussed in this paper.

The Way Ahead

The wrong identification of needs and desires are rising in human beings due to unevaluated beliefs and assumptions. This is the main reason for various kinds of conflicts all around us. The desires and needs of human beings are linked to the physical facilities. Most of the conflicts at different levels of human beings are related to the needs of physical facilities. Lack of understanding and fulfillment of relationship with others is also the other reason that gives birth to various conflicting situations. Everybody wants a good relationship with all. When we have problem in these relationships, it troubles us; we remain in contradictions, which form conflicts. So human being has two kinds of desire or needs:

Need for physical facilities

Need for a relationship

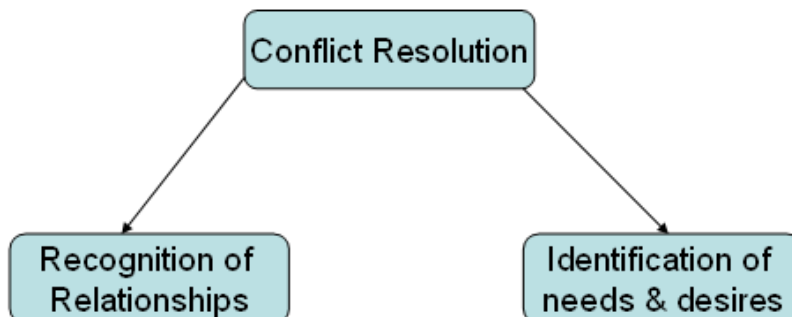


Figure 1: Requirement for Conflict Resolution

Current Scenario Today

In Relationship

Now a day's most of conflicts arise due to lack of recognition of the relationship between individuals. If there is a problem in the relationship, it bothers us, makes us uneasy and creates conflicting situations. Sometimes we are able to fulfill the relationships and sometimes not. We can see it in our daily interactions with the people in the family and even out of our family. We can also see at the level of interactions in society. Sometimes all goes well and sometimes it does not. There are larger conflict issues like wars, violence, attacks, fights, which are extreme forms of conflicts in human relationships in the world at large. Individual's state of mind can really disturb by problems in the relationship. For example: if your relationship with your father is not going the way it has to be, it bothers you all the time, till the issue is not resolved. You remain in contradictions in the self. This issue is basically we have not understood the relationships and due wrong assumptions about relationships, there are conflicts in relationships. Because our assumptions are not evaluated, so these are false and we end up in conflicts. Contradictions in the self of an individual become the reason of conflicts arising at different levels of human living like family, society and nature/existence.

In Physical Facility

In this world of materialism and consumerism, we started assuming that our desires are unlimited. For the fulfillment of unlimited desires, unlimited physical facilities are required. For having unlimited physical facilities, unlimited wealth is required. We want to have prosperity, but we end up having the feeling of deprivation. Everyone's approach of money is everything. We are not able to differentiate between wealth and prosperity. We started assuming wealth and prosperity to be the same thing and we end up our whole life working for accumulation of wealth. We have assumed that the accumulation of the wealth is the only thing we desire and rest shall be taken care of. This unevaluated assumption becomes the reason for having conflict in different parties for differing needs. Having wealth is necessary, but not a sign of prosperity.

So we largely live on the basis of beliefs and assumptions today. These beliefs and assumptions can be right or wrong. We are not aware of either the beliefs or assumptions we have been right or wrong, because we have not evaluated our beliefs and assumptions. We have not checked the beliefs and assumptions we own are naturally acceptable to us or not. As a result, most our interactions with human beings for relationship and need of physical facilities lead to conflicts.

Now the way ahead for the resolution of conflicts at different levels of human living is to understand the truth, i.e. to understand the realities in this existence which requires correct identification of needs and understanding of relationship i.e. recognition and fulfillment of relationships.

We have made a significant observation in our study "As long as we live with unevaluated beliefs and assumptions we shall continue to have the conflicts". In order to resolve the conflicts at different levels of human living, we need to understand them, and this would come from "Right understanding". To resolve the conflicts in human-human relationships, we need to understand the relationship, i.e. right understanding about relationships and feelings and to resolve the conflicts of desires and needs; we need to understand the basic human aspiration. That is right understanding of needs and desires. There is a need to have 'right understanding' so we can be resolved the conflicts of our relationships and needs for physical facilities. By having the right understanding of ourselves, we can resolve the conflicts and manage ourselves in a better manner. So right understanding of us is the key to understand the relationships and our needs for

physical facilities.

So right understanding is to understand the harmony at all the levels of an individual’s living as shown in figure 2.

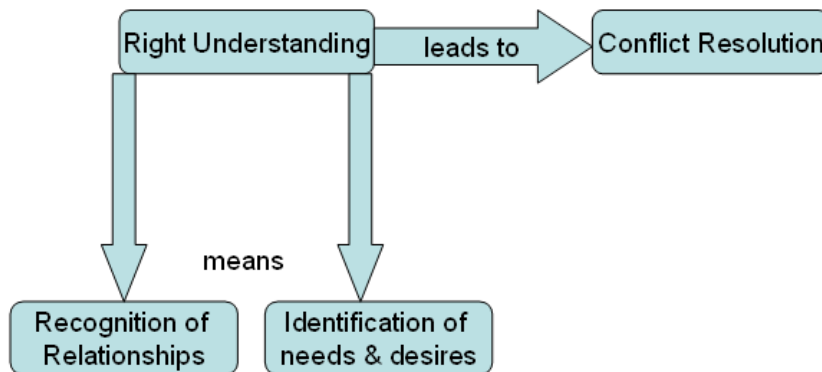


Figure 2: Right Understanding in Individual Leads to Conflict Resolution

In order to have right understanding we have to understand ourselves, for the understanding relationships we have to understand the family and society, to have an understanding about our needs and desires for physical facilities we have to understand the nature/existence as shown in Figure 3. Those are basically the levels of our living. So if we are able to understand the harmony at all these four levels of human living, we can actually resolve all kinds of conflicts around us.

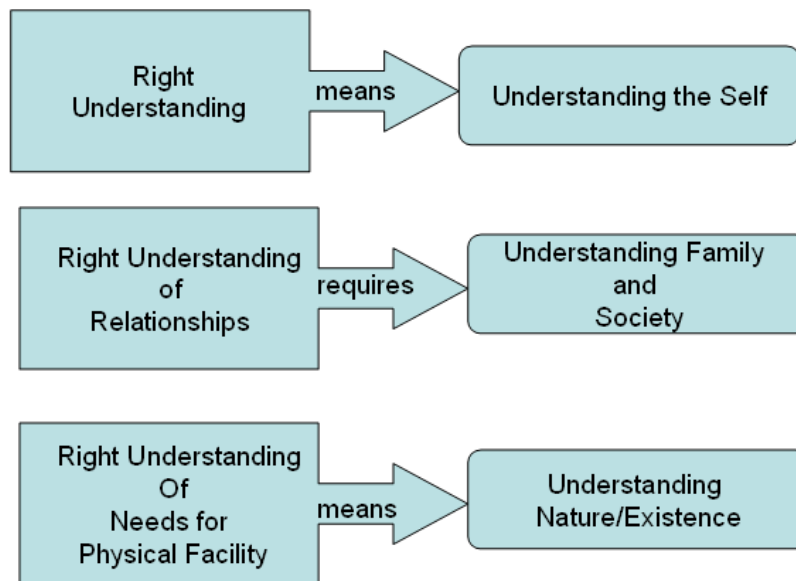


Figure 3: Right Understanding Consists of Understanding Four Levels of Human Living

When we explore all these levels we can see there are harmony at all these four levels. There is a synergy, an order at all these levels. We can also evaluate that this harmony already exists. We are not creating it. So need is only to understand this harmony and live according to it. Our natural acceptance is an aid to understand this harmony. We can self explore it our own. We can pass these all proposals through the universal process for evaluation in ourselves without referring to external inputs like books, scriptures, instruments, preconditioning etc. All the conflicts all around us today is because we fail to see and understand the harmony already present at these levels of our living. We shall find that our natural acceptance is for to live in harmony at all these levels of our living and end up assuming otherwise. This natural

acceptance is there in each one of us, regardless of what country, culture, age or gender. Natural acceptance is a human trait and all human have this. This remains invariant and intact in each one of us. It is not changed by preconditioning, assumptions or beliefs, however strong they are. Natural acceptance is always the same.

CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE SCOPE

To speak about the future of Gandhian philosophy may be a journey into the reasons of speculation. Those who think about the future of humanity also think about the way human beings will resolve their conflicts. A conflict free world without wars is the only hope of survival for mankind, but it may yet take centuries before such an order comes into existence.

The ultimate section in group life and social conflicts is still is violence. Even the Gandhian techniques for conflict resolution of negotiations and arbitrations seem to succeed many times, because of fear of war and destructions, rather than it comes out of any right understanding. Gandhiji always doctrine the concepts of Satyagraha for conflict resolution, which seeks to solve conflicts through self suffering. But Satyagraha achieved many a signal and unqualified success in fighting the conflicts. Some who speak with doubt seem to think that once Gandhiji was removed from the scene, Satyagraha had no future. It was only his personality that had been responsible for the success of Satyagraha. There are various contradictions in the concepts laid down by Gandhiji for conflict resolution. So we have developed universal guidelines for the evaluation of any philosophy that can be practical and applicable in the modern world. In last we have presented the way ahead for conflict resolution. As human beings, we have two types of needs, i.e. need of relations and the need for physical facilities. Due to unevaluated beliefs and assumptions, we are not able to understand the expectations in relationships and basic human needs and desires. So for resolving conflicts all around us, right understanding of relationships and needs for physical facility is required. In order to have right understanding we have to understand ourselves, for the understanding relationships we have to understand the family and society, to have an understanding about our needs and desires for physical facilities we have to understand the nature/existence. Those are basically the levels of our living. So if we are able to understand the harmony at all these four levels of human living, we can actually resolve all kinds of conflicts around us. In future research, we will try to understand the harmony at different levels of human living to have right understanding of our living in totality to resolve the conflicts.

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