



## **Gandhi's Environmental Philosophy: A Critique of Modern Industrialization and Advocacy for Sustainable Living**

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### **Abstract**

*Mahatma Gandhi's environmental philosophy critically examines modern industrialization, highlighting its destructive impact on both the environment and human well-being. He argued that industrial growth, rooted in unchecked consumerism and resource exploitation, led to ecological degradation and the erosion of spiritual values. Central to his philosophy was the principle of simple living, which advocated for a life of self-reliance, minimal consumption, and harmony with nature. Gandhi's vision for sustainable development rejected the notion of unlimited economic growth and instead promoted a decentralized model, where communities thrived on local resources, ensuring ecological balance and social equity. His focus on spiritual well-being over material wealth challenged the prevailing industrial paradigm, proposing an alternative way of life that fostered long-term sustainability. Gandhi's ideas on environmental stewardship and ethical development continue to offer valuable insights for addressing contemporary environmental crises, making his philosophy relevant in today's pursuit of a more sustainable and equitable world.*

**Keywords:** Environmental Philosophy, Simple Living, Sustainable Development, Industrialization, Ecological Balance.

### **Introduction:**

Mahatma Gandhi, a leader primarily known for his role in India's struggle for independence, also left a profound legacy in the realm of environmental thought. His critique of modern industrialization and his advocacy for sustainable living are as relevant today as they were in his time. Gandhi's philosophy has its root in a deep reverence for nature, a belief that human well-being is inseparable with the health of the environment. His critique of industrialization focused on its dehumanizing effects, its exploitation of natural resources, and its contribution to social inequality. In contrast, Gandhi promoted a lifestyle of simplicity, self-reliance, and localism, principles that resonate with modern discussions about sustainability and ecological balance. This paper explores Gandhi's environmental philosophy through three primary lenses: first, his critique of industrialization and its ecological and societal impacts; second, his emphasis on simple living as a path to both individual and collective well-being; and third, his vision for a sustainable future based on local economies and self-sufficiency. By revisiting Gandhi's ideas, we gain insights not only

*Gandhi's Environmental Philosophy: A Critique of Modern Industrialization and Advocacy for...* Sk Hasibul into his vision for a harmonious society but also into the potential for his principles to contribute to contemporary debates on sustainability and environmental justice.

### **Gandhi's Critique of Modern Industrialization:**

From the beginning to till today of Indian civilization what we have learned is that due to the lack of carefulness we used to be affected by the diseases of the greed of material comforts. In the vision of Gandhi, we can live our life peacefully if we instead of pushing our life towards the machine based modern world, we need to adopt the ancient way of living life with basic need. Ancient civilization taught us living our life on the path of simple way. On the other hand, the machine-dependended modern civilization leads us exactly the opposite way of living life of simple way. One of the important things learned from Indian ancient civilization is the need of having touched of spirituality always at every step of life. But current civilization full of industrialization keep us far away from spirituality. Regarding the touch of spirituality, he said that;

“Ours will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love of self. If we will but cleanse our houses, our palaces and temples of the attributes of wealth and show in them the attributes of morality, we can offer battle to any combinations of hostile forces without having to carry the burden of a heavy militia.” (Gandhi, 1957, p. 8)

Gandhi had the future vision regarding the environmental crisis. He was very much concern about environmental degradation though; such environmental crisis was not there in his time. From all his writing, it is clear that he lived very simple and luxury less life, his lifestyle was very simple and sustainable. He renounced all luxury willingly even though he came from a wealthy family. He could have led a comfortable life but he identified himself with the poorest of the poor (daridranarayan) in his country. His holistic approach towards all problem and practice of his principle still has the relevance in order to remove the present environmental crisis. We need to follow and practice the principles non-violence and try to achieve the goal of village swaraj, self-rule, self-sufficiency. In this context, it has said that;

“Non-violence and compassion are not only for all living beings, but also towards inanimate materials. Overuse of the latter, motivated by greed and the desire to make profits, is also a form of violence, since it deprives others of the use of such materials.” (Khoshoo & Moolakkattu, 1996, p. 27)

In Gandhi's vision, all the sign of modern civilization like railways, hospitals, doctors, lawyer, industries, machine etc. are disturb the man to live the simple life. He denies all which has been described as sign of civilization. In his view such kind of civilization called as black age by Hinduism and Satanic Civilization by Mohammed. Gandhi opposed against all which stop us living simple life. We are going to see one by one; regarding the court and lawyers he said that the court law is not for the benefit of all the people but for the people who want to sustain their power through court. He also considered the lawyers and court as third party and the decision of third parties is not always right. So, the decision through lawyer and court might be manipulated by power and money. Regarding this Gandhi said in his writings,

“It is wrong to consider that courts are established for the benefit of the people. Those who want to perpetuate their power do so through the courts. If people were to settle their own quarrels, a third party would not be able to

exercise any authority over them. Truly, men were less unmanly when they settled their disputes either by fighting or by asking their relatives to decide for them. They become more unmanly and cowardly when they restored to courts of law." (Gandhi, 2009, p. 46)

Gandhi practiced the simple living principle in his whole life. Using our own product instead of foreign help to lead the life in the simpler way. Richness made the peoples ego or individuality flying; as a results, they run after power, money, wealth over their daily necessity which made their complex and complicated. When people have wants of getting more than their minimum desire, they go for over exploitation of nature and made industrialization. Due to that few people become rich and having power in their hand, and some people become very poor with no power. It is the final result of industrialization. It is not only making few people rich but also on the other hand make some people losing their work and become poor. In Sarvodaya, Gandhi said about the industry and inequality caused by it;

"The art of becoming 'rich' in the common sense is not only the art of accumulating much money for ourselves but also of contriving that our neighbours shall have less. In accurate terms it is 'the art of establishing the maximum inequality in our own favour.'" (Gandhi, 1954, pp. 24, 30)

He said that true civilization is not where all people are no equal, all people do not have the equal essential amenities for survival. Where, few have wealth and power in their hand and few are not cannot be the true civilization. According to Gandhi the meaning of true civilization is in the reduction of our wants, not in the multiplication. The voluntary reduction of the wants promotes happiness and pleasure for all not only for the oneself. He also said that by perseverance, one can reduce his individual wants, and focus on the capacity of the service. The reduction of wants give a healthy body and a peaceful mind and that body and mind properly acquired by the soul. So, he never asked the men to stop doing activities, but he said that all our activities should be *satvika*, seeking the truth. So, it is our ignorance that we always think about their own food and resting or having more meal though some people are in hungry due to the lack of food to eat. This cannot be the true civilization specially, where the peoples have inequal desire. Additional insight into this issue is provided by him is like;

"Our civilization, our culture, our *Swaraj* depend not upon multiplying our wants -self-indulgence, but upon restricting our wants-self-denial." (Prabhu & Rao, 1945, p. 118)

Gandhi was never in prefer of technological power and product caused by it. Gandhi believed in the art and creativity of human being but when this art needs the technology and machine power to be expressed to the world, then he was completely against of it. He said that he loved music but did not ready to add the value to this, because he does not recognise the value of those things which needs technical knowledge for their understanding. According to Gandhi, more than anything, the human art can give us the real joy of art. He never ignores the works of artist, but in comparison, he went with the beauty of Nature. Further support comes on above said when it has said that;

“After all Art can only be expressed not through inanimate power-driven machinery designed for mass-production, but only through the delicate living touch of the hands of men and women.” (Prabhu & Rao, 1945, p. 45)

Industrialism is completely based upon the capacity of people to exploits, that is why Gandhi was very much worried about the industrialization in India. Gandhi even said that the nation like England which has accepted the industrialization as the part of the life, their unemployed is mounting up daily. So, if that was the condition of the developed country like England, then the vast country like India cannot expect any benefit from industrialization. He states that industrialization will be curse for India and for the other countries as well. Because when Indian will be industrialized, she will exploit the other countries and that will create chaos. Machine help to one country to exploit other, does not matter how close and friendly they are. So, inequality among the people as well as countries, chaos in between international relation is the consequences of the industrialisation. In support of this claim, it has been demonstrated that; “What is the cause of the present chaos? It is exploitation, I will not say, of the weaker nations by the stronger, but of sister nations by sister nations. And my fundamental objection to machinery rests on the fact that it is machinery that has enabled these nations to exploit others. In itself it is wooden thing and can be turned to good purpose or bad. But it is easily turned to a bad purpose as we know.” (Gandhi, 2021, p. 40) Gandhi never accepted civilization with materials and technological progress. He believed that machinery civilization brings the material comforts-based modernity, but the ancient civilization is still remains in Indian villages. Though he was against the material civilization but not unconcerned of material need of the poor in India. He does not agree with the concept of labour-saving machines, but he was interested in those gadgets that reduced the burden of human labour and was particularly interested in more energy-efficient spinning wheels. One of reason of Gandhi`s rejection to western civilization is not having the spiritual touch in it. Gandhi obviously had tremendous faith in the spiritualistic civilization of India. Even Gandhi said that the hatred against the British should have been directed against their civilization. Gandhi prefers the village life because it has not based on big machine and industries, which he considered to be derivatives of the materialistic values of modern civilization. Gandhi said that;

“It is the function of the panchayats to teach the villagers to avoid dispute, if they have to settle them. That would ensure speedy justice without any expenditure. They would need neither the police nor the military.” (Khoshoo & Moolakkattu, 1996, p. 109)

The civilization based on industrialization is all evil for us as well as future generation. When someone asked question about the telegraph and steamship, he said that he has no personal disagree with all these. He also said they could stay if they can without the support of industrialism and all it connotes. But if anything is needed which is against people`s simple life like exploitation, then it will not be accepted. Indian civilization is one of the oldest and famous culture all over the world not for her industries but for its attachment with the environment and simple way of living. Therefore, in Gandhi`s vision to let India be India, we have to destroy the industries completely at any cost, and to do that man has to be self-sufficient and not depended on anyone for their basic need. If people do not have that ability, they will kill themselves. According to him, England lost its moral values because of

*Gandhi's Environmental Philosophy: A Critique of Modern Industrialization and Advocacy for...* Sk Hasibul industries and same thing will happen with India if we do not leave the industries and go back to the simple.

### **Gandhi was not against of machine itself:**

Gandhi was never against of the machinery itself but the people's craze to machinery power. We have discussed it before that Gandhi was never accept what people call labour-saving machinery. It might be true that machinery powers can save the time and labour, but it should not be only for a fraction of mankind, but for all. His concern was upon the wealth in the hand of all not in few hands. Today the machinery power helps few people to get rich to richer, and make the poor to poorer. That means, technological and machinery power creates inequalities. Another important thing pointed by Gandhi is that the craze of machinery power of people is only for the greed and lust, not for the universal goodness. Even this industrial machinery power gives the material comforts to man, which stop them from the absolute liberation of the soul. After all these, Gandhi still did not reject machinery itself. In light of this, additional findings suggest that;

"I would rule out all machinery, even as I would reject this very body, which is not helpful to salvation, and seek the absolute liberation of the soul. From that point of view, I would reject all machinery, but machines will remain because like the body, they are inevitable. The body itself is the purest piece of mechanism; but if it is a hindrance to the highest flights of the soul, it has to be rejected." (Prabhu & Rao, 1945, p. 141)

As we have seen that Gandhi was not against of machine itself but the craze of people for it. He has realized that the machine will gradually become the master of the man, which he never ready to accept. It is true that machine led us to the over exploitation of the natural resources, but still he advice that if anywhere the use of machinery product become essential and it will be very less harmful to the simple life of man as well as the harmony between the nature and man, then we can use it but it will obviously not for personal benefit but for the universal goodness. When someone asked the question to Gandhi regarding the necessity of the India producing ships, locomotives, aeroplanes, etc. he replied that he does not believes that industrialization is important in any case for any country. He also said that India can do her duty towards the world by adopting simple and peaceful life. There is no connection or consistency between high thinking and living life with material comforts. In his vision, all the grace of life is possible when we learn the art of living simple life. He even said that we should always have the concept of compromise in our mind when we are using the product of machine. Regarding the use of railways in India, Gandhi replied;

"Railways are there, I do not avoid them. I hate motor cars but I make use of them willy nilly all the same. Again, I dislike fountain-pens, but just now I am making use of one though I carry a reed- pen about in my box. Every time I use the fountain-pen it hurts me, and I think of the neglected reed-pen in my box. Compromise comes in at every step, but one must realize that it is a compromise, and keep the final goal constantly in front of the mind's eye." (Gandhi, 1957, p. 13)

Gandhi believed that God has given nothing to man directly, he gave indirectly in the form of two hand. So, we must make our two hands in good work, obviously not for own but for the society. He said that, it is our duty to do best with our hands and feet for the world. For example, they must make the varieties clothes to fit in the different occasions by their own.

He refused machinery power specially when the same thing can be done easily by millions of hands. He also said that machinery power is no doubt easy but not necessarily blessing. The use of machine in current situation is heavy, but if we continue the use of machine like this then we shall be incapable and weak in the use of the living machines given to us by God. Someone asks him a question regarding the new scientific inventions; will you deny it? He replied that;

“I would prize every invention of science made for the benefit of all. There is a difference between invention and invention. I should not care for the asphyxiating gases capable of killing masses of men at a time. The heavy machinery for work of public utility which cannot be undertaken by human labour has its inevitable place, but all that would be owned by the State and used entirely for the benefit of the people. I can have no consideration for machinery which is meant either to enrich the few at the expense of the many, or without cause to displace the useful labour of many.” (Gandhi, 1957, pp. 48, 49)

When we talk about the effects of machines, the development in agriculture filed could come in the mind. It could be the golden opportunity for us to use the machinery power to produced more agricultural product. But the most important thing which we must think is that if India is ready to introduced it in agriculture or not. In reply to the question;

“Would not machine agriculture make a great difference to India, as it has to America and Canada?” “Probably, replied Gandhiji. But that is a question I do not consider myself fit to answer. We in India have not been able to use complicated machinery in agriculture with profit so far. We do not exclude machinery. We are making cautious experiments. But we have not found power-driven agricultural machinery to be necessary.” (Gandhi, 1966, p. 55)

### **The Principle of Simple Living:**

Emphasising on the way of simple living, he said, firstly we have to decrease our individual wants, because individual wants stop us to lead the life in a simple way. Multiplication of individual wants is the result of the separation of man from the nature. So, the best way to live the simple life is nothing but be close to the nature, and stay away from the luxuries and material comforts. Because material comforts make the people slave and increase the individuals wants. In order to this what he says is that;

“Mind is restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passions the more unbridled they become.” (Gandhi, 1954, p. 37)

He emphasised on equal economy and equal distribution of natural sources as the best way of living simple life. Further support come when he said; “Whatever cannot be shared with the masses is taboo to me.” (Gandhi, 1954, p. 45) Gandhi not only believed in simple life; he practiced it. He believed that we need to do everything required in our simple life, because when we depend on someone for something, we become slave of them. In his autobiography, he said that he freed himself from slavery to the washerman. He himself used to washed his own daily shirt. Luxury is not needed for simple life; it makes the people selfish. Gandhi refused all the unnecessary dresses and avoided from wasting money. He said learnt to save is the consequence of this life, but we have to make sure that saving should not for our own but for the society. His desire of living a simple life have started from very

young age when he was in England, which latter got recognized as Gandhi's life style. More support we have got regarding it from his own statements which was like;

"The extreme forms in which my passion for self-help and simplicity ultimately expressed itself will be described in their proper place. The seed had been long sown. It only needed watering to take root, to flower and to fructify, and the watering came in due course." (Gandhi, 2023, p. 197)

Gandhi focused on village living because he believed that this is the only way to be close to the nature. The simple living style is possible in village not in big cities. When we shift from village to cities, get separated from nature which could be barriers to lead a simple life. He said that nature and man both created by God, man has to work for their food but not against the natural law. If people violating this law means, he is stealing the natural things which supposed to belong to others. Even if peoples do not work for their own food and wait with having money in the hand for producer class to provide them food, then also they will be known as thieves. Since everybody have to earn their food, it is better to live in village. In agreement to this Gandhi posits that;

"If we as individual believe that revivification of India's village is a necessity of our existence we must mentally go back to the villages and treat them as our pattern instead of putting the city life before them for imitation." (Prabhu & Rao, 1945, p. 134)

In between village and cities, Gandhi has emphasised upon village life because he believed that the village communities produced and supplied to the whole cities according to their wants. The Indian villages become dry up when the market got full of foreign produced things. Gandhi always focuses on the natural economy; he wanted to do industrializing the village in a different way. He thinks that machine produced too fast and bring the kind of economy which India cannot grasp. He believed that cities are depend upon the machinery and industrialization and on the other hand, villages depend on handicrafts. Cities people are always getting big profit but all that has become possible by sucking the blood of village. But the village peoples always depend on money for their handicrafts. Gandhi wanted to make the villages as the strength and identity of our country and to do that what we need to do is suggested by him like;

"What is necessary is to make the villages self-sufficient and self-reliant. But mind you, my idea of self-sufficiency is not a narrow one. There is no scope for selfishness and arrogance in my self-sufficiency." (Gandhi, 2021, pp. 50, 52-53)

Gandhi looked at the growth of the cities as an evil thing and unfortunate for the mankind of the whole world including India. In his view the British have exploited through its cities which build with the cement made of by the blood of the villages. He gave his view regarding giving the proper place to the villages in order to build the Swaraj on non-violence. He even very carefully promotes the village living as the way to get true freedom. He said that not only our India but the whole world sooner or later has to live in the village to have the realisation of the true freedom. Gandhi considered non-violence and truth as the two main pillar of the human life and according to him the realisation of both is only possible in village life. So, Gandhi's focus was to create an ideal village not any big cities or palaces, but it was very difficult to conceived how the ideal village would look like. He makes sure that an ideal village will have all necessary thing for people like, food, health, education, freedom, equalities, cottages etc. and must be free from all kind of barriers of simple life.

When we think of how should be an ideal village look like? Gandhi's conception of ideal village attracts us which is like;

"An ideal Indian village will be so constructed as to lend itself to perfect sanitation. It will have cottages with sufficient light and ventilation built of a material obtainable within a radius of five miles of it. The cottages will have courtyards enabling householders to plant 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 accessible to all. It will have houses of worship for all, also a common meeting place, a village common for grazing its cattle, a co-operative dairy, primary and secondary schools in which industrial education will be the central fact, 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, 2021, p. 64)

For living a simple life, we all need to be a 'Bread labour'- that means we have to earn the bread that we eat. Gandhi said that when all people become bread labour, there will be no inequalities in the society. There will be enough food for all the people appetite. When people have started work for their labour, no cry of over-population, no disease and no such misery will be there according to Gandhi. It is true that many people do many other things through either their physical or mind, but all these are for the love of the common people. The concept of 'Bread labour' spread the equality among people, no rich no poor, no high no low, no touchable no untouchable will be there. In order to that point, it is said that; "If we did so, our wants would be minimized our food would be simple. We should then eat to live, not live to eat." (Gandhi, 1954, p. 20) Gandhi was very much concern about the life of poor in India, and that is why he sacrifices his whole life into the service of them. Every of his thoughts and activities has emphasised upon the easy way to live the good life for the poor. He said the desire is in my heart is service of the poor and that desire put Gandhi again and again among the poor to realised his own identity with them. This is the reason he was always against to save of stack or worry about tomorrow. He always tried to reduced his personals wants at the minimum level, because this is the way to be union with all in the world. Regarding this Gandhi said;

"I must reduce myself to zero. So long as one does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow-creatures, there is no salvation for him." He also said that a truth seeker should lead simple life without being slave of individuals wants. His concept was like; "A seeker after truth cannot afford to be an egotist. One who would sacrifice his life for others has hardly time to reserve for himself a place in the sun. (Prabhu & Rao, 1945, pp. 3, 5-6)

### **Love for nature as the heart of simple living:**

The love for nature of Gandhi directly takes us to the equality in the society. He said that since we born equal, means we all have same opportunity. It is true that few people have more talent but that does not mean that they should use that for their own purpose. He also said all man are not with same height, not with same colour or degree of intelligence, so it is very obvious that some will have the ability to earn more and others less. In order to that Gandhi said that the people who have more talent will earn more but extra thing will have to use for the goodness of the society not for their own. This is way all can feel like the

*Gandhi's Environmental Philosophy: A Critique of Modern Industrialization and Advocacy for...* Sk Hasibul member of same family and go for the common family fund. Further support come from Gandhi's view on equality of income, he said;

"The swaraj of my dream is the poor man's Swaraj. The necessities of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the moneyed men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness." (Gandhi, 1954, p. 34)

Gandhi's deep affection for nature implies the practice of equality. He said that natural sources are belong to each man equally. If one man takes more than his daily necessary, then other will be absent from it. So, we should always keep in our mind that nature does not have more than our daily necessity. Gandhi himself said;

"Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if anybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no man dying of starvation in this world. But so long we have got this inequality, so long we are thieving." (Gandhi, 1954, p. 14)

It says that there are two represented extremes, harmony with nature on the one hand and the conflict with nature on the other hand. Our past experience regarding the relation between the nature and human, that comes from our Vedic times is very clearly focused on the former one. In *Isho-Upanishad*, the nature has considered as Lord and everything belong to Lord. So, we cannot over exploit the nature, if we do so then nature will definitely take her revenge on us because no one is superior than any other things in the nature. In the very first stanza it has clearly said that;

"The whole universe, together with its creatures, belong to the Lord (Nature). No creature is superior to any other, and the human being should not have absolute power over Nature. Let no species encroach upon the rights and privileges of other species. However, one can enjoy the bounties of Nature by giving up greed." (Khoshoo & Moolakkattu, 1996, pp. 21, 22)

This is the universal relationship of man and nature but nowadays due to our greed and multiplication of desires we come into conflict with nature. We Indian have forgotten the ethic and morality which thought us our ancient cultures. As a consequence, we do take the nature just as the source of material things needed for the survival of the human being. We nowadays come to the stage where peoples always thing about the exploitation of the natural sources, but not utilizing it. This approach is for to meet their own personal desire not to meet the everyone basic need, which is supremacy over nature. This kind of thought and approach is completely alien to the Indian cultures. Indians have not been exploiters of nature but utilizers of natural resources.

### **Gandhi's Vision for Sustainable Development:**

Gandhi was one of the philosophers, who in the first decade of the twentieth century found out the unsustainable future based on multiplication of wants and greed for the material pleasures. His concept of satyagraha based on truth and non-violence implies the simple living of man, and unity with everything surrounded us. The environmental crisis which the whole world is facing today due to the people's materialistic luxuries, has been recognized by Gandhi in the beginning of the twentieth century. Gandhi said that all the luxury are unnecessary for living a simple life. There are many statements of Mahatma Gandhi which

*Gandhi's Environmental Philosophy: A Critique of Modern Industrialization and Advocacy for...* Sk Hasibul can be quoted to substantiate this point. One particular statement he made in the context of Europeans is of abiding relevance for the whole mankind. He wrote in 1938;

“The incessant search for material comfort and their multiplication is such an evil and I make bold to say that the Europeans themselves will have to remodel their outlook, if they are not to perish under the weight of the comforts to which they are becoming slaves.”

In his insight the avoidance of multiple wants and living a simple life with basic amenities is not only for the sake of India but for sake of whole world. As we have come to know nowadays that the heavy vehicles are increasing global warming day by day. Today, having luxurious car and other vehicles determined the status of the person as well as modernity of civilization. In this point Gandhi said that these things cannot be the symbol of either the modern civilization or individual's status. He loves to walk instead of using vehicle and got the good result in term of both environmental, and human health. Gandhi believed that all the natural resources belong to everyone equally, since these are the gift of the God. So, everything is for universal not for any individual, and if individual keeps more natural wealth to himself then other will be absent. Gandhi said when a person has more than his proportionate portion, he becomes the trustee of that portion for God's people. Gandhi has emphasised upon his concept of trusteeship more because he believed that this is going to be the ideal gift to the whole world. And when it will happen, then there will be no exploitation and no reserves in any countries. Since everything is given by God to his people, hence if anyone has more than daily need then they should become trustee. In this point Gandhi said;

“God who was all-powerful had no need to store. He created from day to day, hence men also should in theory live from day to day and not stock things.”  
(Gandhi, 1954, p. 46)

Gandhi's most important contribution to the sustainable development is his practice of simple living high thinking in his whole life. He emphasised upon the eco-friendly process of the economic development. He consistently lives his life maintaining harmony with the surrounding things. There is no doubt about the importance of his concept in present time. His sustainable development has the more importance than before, especially when we are finding solutions to such crisis like; worldwide greed, violence and runaway consumptive lifestyle which are putting a very heavy burden on the world's resources. We cannot question on the strong relation between the poverty and environmental problem. It has been recognized by the World Commission on Environment and Development Report as “poverty is a major cause and effect of global environmental problem”. So, Gandhi's effort towards economic equality could be the most accurate first step towards the sustainable development. Gandhi found out that human's multiple wants are reason which brings us in front of environmental crisis and as a results deep and serious thinking on sustainable development become compulsory nowadays. That is why the ideas and concepts of Gandhi need to be re-discovered again. In Gandhi's insight, if we respect nature, follow the path of sustainable development, make the non-violence as means and truth as end, then solution lies there. Gandhiji once remarked.

“The earth, the air, the land and the water were not an inheritance from our forefathers but a loan from our children. So, we have to hand over to the next generation at least as it had been handed over to us.”

In his book "Hind Swaraj", he focused on production by the masses but not on mass-production. He wanted everyone to be involved in production; this has more importance now than ever before. He also asked everyone to go back to villages and get themselves involved in handicraft and cottage industries which are labour-centric and which help in keeping the environment clean and green. (Das, 2021) His teachings and experiments are more valid today than ever before, especially when we are trying to find solutions to worldwide greed, violence and runaway consumptive lifestyle which are putting a very heavy burden on the world's resources. Regarding the relevance of Gandhi's thoughts, it has been said that;

"Gandhiji's greatest contribution to sustainable development was two folds. Firstly, his experiments in simple living and high thinking. He believed that with simple living the resources of the planet earth can sustain us comfortably and his famous saying that earth provides us enough for our needs but not for our greed is extremely apt today. Secondly his insistence on all-inclusive growth of the society and hence his focus on rural development." (Rajvanshi, 2010)

### **Conclusion:**

Although neither Gandhi considered himself as an environmentalist nor any of his initiative and thought were from core environmental perspective, but what he did and said makes him an environmentalist. He was against the large-scale industrialization and the same industrialization are like evil to simple life of man as well as to the environment. At the time of Gandhi, there were no such environmental crisis but he has recognised the evil of the industrialization on nature about eight decades ago. He has emphasised upon non-violence, village economic, and man-made product like charkha etc. Though his negative opinion to the large-scale industrialization was not for the purpose of saving nature, yet such view becomes one of the important ways to deal with the environmental degradation. He not only criticises the nature exploited large scale industrialization but he also gave nature-friendly alternative ways. Mahatma Gandhi advocated simple life based on physical labour in place of industrialism and consumerism. (Kharwar, 2017, p. 77) About the solutions on securing sustainable development, very few ways might be there than Gandhi's thought. By followed Gandhi's philosophy we can come to few solutions which are like; every person on the earth should not take natural resources from the nature more than their basic need. All should be aware about the responsibility of a rational beings in order to make sure the availability of the natural resources for the future generation. People have to live their life by following 'simple living high thinking, principle of Gandhi. And finally, we have to practice Gandhi's non-violence as the only way to live a peaceful life and truth as the end of that life. We all should think about Gandhi's statement before do anything in the universe and that is;

"Nature has enough to meet everyone's need but not to meet everyone's greed." In the final analysis, P N Haksar, a great thinker of our times, has said, "It is time that India stops celebrating Mahatma Gandhi's birth and death anniversaries merely as a ritual. Gandhiji was not only a political revolutionary but also a spiritual revolutionary. The latter was entirely segregated from religion. A spiritual awakening is the need of the hour, which is the only way to social reconstruction. There is need to reiterate Gandhian values, and instead of merely garlanding the portraits of Gandhi,

*Gandhi's Environmental Philosophy: A Critique of Modern Industrialization and Advocacy for...* Sk Hasibul Indians must translate his ideals into real life." (Khoshoo & Moolakkattu, 1996, p. 138)

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