

# Gandhian Ideas of Rural Industrialization

Dr. M.G. Bage

P.G. Department of Sociology Utkal University Vanivihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

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**Abstract:** Gandhi's ideas on rural industrialization is not mere a conceptual exercise but a part of his campaign for rural reconstruction as a means to National Freedom and socio-economic development. Gandhi used to have a geostatic view of the social problems. This is reason why he considered that the freedom of movement must be accompanied by campaign against social taboos like untouchability, harassment to women and weaker sections and creation of new climate for rural industrialization.

**Keywords:** Gandhian ideas, Rural Industrialization, economy, Village life.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Even though Gandhi was educated at London and exposed to western ideas in his youth, he was a different sort of mind that grappled with ideas of the accident and the orient. Very like the title of his autobiography, his life was in fact an experiment with truth as well as the basic ideals of Indian civilization.

Gandhi was not a voracious reader nor was he intellectually inclined. Gandhi believed in revival of economic oprder of ancient India based on the spirit of disposition, simple life, less consumption. For him material prosperity was spiritually bankruptcy.

Gandhi; s vision of India was a vision of the villages-self reliant and self sufficient as little republics. His emphasis was on re-discovery of the prestige villages and their atmosphere of non-violence, mutual cooperation and above all rural reconstruction in the light of India's glorious past of peace, harmony and prosperity. His concept of self determination was primarily economic other than political. Hence his emphasis was on attainment of swedshi as a stepping stone to swaraj. It was not a kind of obsession but clarity of vision that he professed, preached and propagated the honest message of rural reconstruction.

Gandhi vision for western industrialization was not based on any Marxist knowledge or any kind of personal experience. Moreover his opposition was not based on any individual prejudice. On the other hand, it was his desire to work for the redemption of the poor and the weaker section that he discussed in the scheme of his economic order with which India villages could be re-modeled

When we search for Gandhian ideas on rural industrialization, it is observed that the quest is not a pure academic effort but the otherwise .And by industrialization we mean not the industrialization of the villages as it had happened in case of urban areas. He was not worried about the slogan of the instant raising of the standard of living of the neither people nor high production. Also he could not tolerate moral callousness of western economic.

His understanding of the rural mind rural society was enriched by his wide contact with poor. The peasant and other working laborer and further this helped him to assess the needs and aspiration of the rural folk.

He encouraged and inspired the Indian national congress to launch the non-cooperation movement in India in 1920-21 with the ultimate aim of driving away British power. And it was chauri choura incident that prompted Gandhi to withdraw the movement considering the fact that the people and the nation were not ready to shoulder the responsibility of Satyagrah campaign. Fact remains that the day he withdrew the campaign from its zenith, the stalwart leaders of the

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Congress and other nationalists –visionaries decried and devalued the step but little was known to them that it would provide a pause for Gandhi to devote rural reconstruction activities as a part of nation building and future freedom struggle programmes. Few could at that time fathom the deepest truth inherent in it.

The campaign of Charkha was by itself a mini revolution in the spheres, rural industrialization. By rural industrialization we need not mean installation of robust industries of gigantic structures of production or high energy consuming massive factories. On the other hand populism and the growth of cottage industries and development of awareness of the people to bank upon such type industrialization. The basic needs of rural human life were to be locally produced and procured as token of freedom from heavy dependence on outside production.

Each region and each location was to be model centre for economic self sufficiency that would fulfill the material requirements of the inhabitants without unnecessary dependence on outside production. Even though Charkha was the symbol of rural industrialization, he stuck to the theory that undue consciousness of standard of living was immoral. The campaign of Charkha which he innovated and organized for rural & urban welfare, was not the all and end all of rural industrialization.

Fascinated by Ruskin's 'bread labor' and Leo-tolstoy's ashramite settlement (very much akin to the little republic), he opposed the use of massive machines and the accompanying civilization problems. He sincerely appealed to develop faith in cottage industry which was to form as the main plank of rural industrialization in Indian villages with a view to giving them employment.

He did not have faith in the so called division of labor and perpetuation of professional rights and responsibility. Nonetheless he loved to call himself a bania.

To concretize to Gandhian economic order. It can be stressed that his concept of industrialization was very limited in its scope and nature. The production should be need-based and without the touch of consumerism.

The village units must have revived the village artisan's textile technology and the like. Apart from agricultural operations which are and has been the major source of rural economy, emphasis on rural industrialization was given by Gandhi with the unfolding of a perfect programming. His was not to encourage the revival of atavistic economic operations but establish the key cottage industries which could be managed by village artisans, craftsmen and semiskilled laborers. He circulated the message that the villages should be the fountain head of a new civilization of contentment with minimum wants, self sacrifice and service to fellowmen and above all Sarvodaya & co-operation. Simplicity in life & production & fulfillment of minimum wants at the very location of inhabitation will lead to self-sufficiency and growth of self esteem.

All that could be produced by hand should be left to the realm of human labour. And the little work that could not be accomplished through pure human labor that, the help of small industries be resorted to. Further, his theory & technology of rural industrialization was based on making provision for employment of all leading to sarvodaya. The contour of Gandhian ideas becomes categorical & clear with the description of the schemes or sarvodaya. Emancipation of poor is the prime factor behind sarvodaya. Human skills and labor is to be utilized. The main tenets may be discussed:

1. Production should be localized to meet the basic requirements
2. De-limitation of wants and non-dependence on goods /service from external locations.
3. No competitive production leading to duplications and misuse of resources'.
4. No aggressive advertisement for promotion of sales and marketing leading to an atmosphere of consumerism.
5. Minimum needs life style with no friendly environment with possession beyond requirement,
6. Provision of employment for all through labor oriented rural industrialization.
7. Prevention of use of machines in various sectors of rural life where human labor skill can serve the purpose.
8. Wants should not be proliferated for the sake of wants to onset consumption and production vicious circle.
9. The concept of bread labor which involves both individual involvement and societal involvement in programmes of rural reconstruction shall be the basis of rural industrialization.

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10. Promotion of the traditional skill/technology for intensification of interest in cottage industry
11. Regard for dignity of labor with a view to encouraging individual to contribute his physical labour and skill for the rural upliftment and discouraging land owners and other rural employers to avoid exploitation through under payment to laborers
12. Agricultural and animal husbandry to become the focal points of rural prosperity along with the cottage industry
13. Promotion of compatible village life and provision of indigenous infrastructure for rural industrialization.
14. The concept of sarvodaya remains to be the reigning theme of rural industrialization.
15. The cult of mechanization is condemned, excessive dependence of machine for normal and traditional functions opposed to Gandhian economics.

For example : Anand dairy firm which believes in centralization of marketing and production is an anathema to Gandhian ideas, On the other hand Gandhi would like to have thousands of such dairies at different locations where people and cattle relationships can be maintained in natural atmosphere with perfect ecological balance. Gandhi certainly objects to export of food articles when the place country is not self sufficient only with a view to increase the income to cater to other so called needs of modern life.

## 2. CONCLUSION

The core idea behind rural industrialization is to maintain a harmonies natural environment for elimination of poverty related basic problem of village life and provision of base needs of life. It need not be reiterated that Gandhi had no faith in the modern concepts of prosperity, possession of property beyond personal and family requirements, vulgar display of wealth in individual life. He understood self imposed poverty i.e austerity in life and consumption. He emphasized that unless the cult of consumption is condemned and contained through religious practice of self control, self denial and self sacrifice, service to fellowmen and cooperation for uplifting others village life could not be remodeled in the re-discovered lines of Indian civilization.

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