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**IMPACT OF GANDHI JI AND HIS PRINCIPLES  
ON INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE**

Dr Devi Bhushan

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# **MAHATMA GANDHI JI AS AN INVISIBLE HERO**

## **IN *KANTHAPURA* A NOVEL by Raja Rao**

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Mahatma Gandhi as the name gives a great thought and had a deep effect on the Indian writers especially on the Indo Anglian novelists. Gandhi himself wrote in English. For the writers of this generation Gandhian consciousness became a powerful metaphor which evolved into a literary motif to represent ideal thinking and pure living. Gandhi was the most prominent figure and the main subject of discussion especially for Colonial and Post-Colonial writers. M.K. Naik also held the view that literary artists were greatly influenced by Gandhian thought. Similarly, Carlo Coppola's essay "Politics and the Novel in India" speaks of "the influence of both the Gandhian and Marxist ideologies on Post-Colonial novels". Using an analogy of the pot of clay we can say it is the clay, which is the most important. So we should know the clay: the clay out of which the Indo Anglian novelists of thirties and forties had created their novels. This clay was Gandhian thought. The novels based on the Gandhian thought express unique patterns and present a clear contrast to the novels written by the writers of 19th Century.

Gandhian thought gave power and force to Post Colonial Indian novels. Gandhi was their literary model and also the motivating moral force.

Gandhian thought served the intellectual and emotional need to discover National Identity. Furthermore, Gandhian thought brought together East and West as well as the traditional and modern. Gandhi was not a creative writer but a thinker's thinker, which in itself was a very important thing. The Indian writers were greatly influenced by Gandhi. Through his thoughts writers got intellectual and moral passion and also a new mode of thinking. Gandhi's political activities were linked with his notions of social reform. India's regional and linguistic boundaries were also influenced by Gandhi's thought. Post-Colonial Literature and Gandhi Ji are deeply associated with each other. Raja Rao is one of the pillars of Indian English Writing and we can't go further without any of the pillar.

Raja Rao prepares us for widening our outlook so that we could see contradictions within the village overcome by the Gandhian spirit that will soon sweep the whole village. The whole of India, discounting all divisions, all differences. Ramayya had also come to their village some two years ago; he had given up his boots and hats and had taken, to dhoti and Khadi and it was said that he had given up his city habit of smoking. And though a Gandhian in his outward form, he was no match to Moorthy, who unlike Ramayya was gentle like a noble cow, quiet, generous, serene, deferent and brahminic, a very prince, to say the least. Whatever the narrator may say

regarding Ramayya as a braggart and Moorthy as a noble cow, Raja Rao finds that the distinction between the sensed qualities as that of Ramayya and structural qualities as that of Moorthy, is based on appearance; in reality there is no such distinctions. Upon analysis it turns out that space, time, objects and selves are appearances, not realities. The two young men resemble each other and yet they differ in terms of space. Ramayya has developed Gandhism in the city, while Moorthy imbibed it while remaining in the village. Raja Rao creates a sthala-purana in projecting the dedicated and selfless deeds of the local Mahatma Gandhi, Moorthy.

“The impact of Gandhi” observes C.D. Narasimhaiah, “was that of a traditional religion” and many Gandhis emerged in the name of Mahatma Gandhi. To be a Gandhian was very heaven in those days. Moorthy is one such Gandhi who revolutionizes the whole village. Mahatma Gandhi, like Godot in Samuel Beckett’s play, *Waiting for Godot*, does not appear as a person but his influence is a pervasive force throughout the novel and the character of Moorthy, the village Gandhi, is mythicized and the rustics of Kanthapura spontaneously respond to Moorthy’s religious views. Range Gowda exhorts the villagers to follow Moorthy’s advice who is fit to lead the freedom movement in Kanthapura. The philosophy of these “soldier-saints”, known as Satyagrahis, is based on the doctrine of the selfless action as enunciated in the Bhagwat Gita. How a slumbering Indian village is galvanized into action is significant, no doubt, but what is of greater importance, as feels, is “the metaphysic of selfless action expressed through Satyagraha”.

Raja Rao seems to be of the view that our experience is often time of things beyond the material world. This prevents us from the extremes of crass materialism and dogmatic orthodoxy. If Krishna could kill demons, so could Gandhi, a mortal, brought about the fall off the British empire in India. We can better understand Krishna's godhood when read along the strength of frail Mahatma. One has only to widen one's outlook. That the glory of this world in the end being appearance makes the world more glorious, if we feel it is a show of some fuller splendor. The two stories thus melt into each other—the earthly is not a mere appearance, but carries with it something of the higher reality. So like Krishna as a child, Mohandas went about from village to village to slay the serpent of the foreign rule. Fight, says he, "but harm no soul" he also urged upon to love all Hindus, Muslims, Christians or Pariahs, for all are equal before God. He asked people to spin and weave, for our Mother is in tattered weeds. The Mahatma was a saint: he fasted and prayed. The story of the Mahatma made it possible for his audience to have an immediate experience of what is remote or what was remote from them. it is from the story of the Mahatma with which the story of Krishna begins to have meaning and though this story is transcended, it nevertheless remains throughout as the present foundation of our known world.

Immediate feeling thus is pure and simple. It does not consist of ourselves feeling something, for this involves the distinction between ourselves and our objects, which is the work of thought it is feeling as such, not somebody's feeling or a feeling of something. it contains diversity, but a diversity which is prior to relations. Consider the

experience of Krishna and Mohandas; they are not two distinct personages. Krishna was also known by many names, Mohan being one; they are linked by a relation; it is a feeling which is a unity and yet contains diversity.

The village women, too, think of Gandhi as the Sahyadri mountain, big and blue, and Moorthy as the small mountain. Moorthy's character is idealized in the novel to the extent of being regarded as a local Mahatma because a myth "necessarily deals with an idealized man or a man larger than life." Like Christ, Moorthy takes the sin of others upon himself, purifies his own soul through penance and conquers physical desires. The villagers speak of him as "our Gandhi" and "the saint of our village". Range Gowda, the village headman, describes Moorthy as "our Mahatma".

As the name "Moorthy" indicates, he is a true image of Mahatma Gandhi, who remains as invisible living presence throughout the novel and "the anti-hero hero arises as a crucible of experience - a local personality becomes a universal type." Even the hilltops of Himavathy echo of the ever-inspiring slogan "Mahtma Gandhi Ki Jai, Jai Mahatma Gandhi Ki" and Moorthy is an embodiment of Gandhism who echoes his master's voice, with perfect fidelity and devotion.

He carries the message of Gandhian principles of non-violence, truth and love, and the villagers venerate him so much so that in house after house in the neighboring villages, they have picture of Moorthy taken from the city papers, he says to himself, "I shall love even my enemies.

The Mahatma says we should love our enemies”. Again, he tells the elders of the village: “One cannot become a member of the Congress if one will not promise to practice Ahimsa, and to speak Truth and to spin at least two thousand yards of yarn per year”. He takes the lead in the performances of Harikathas and Jayanthis in the village, converts the pariah women into the followers of Mahatma Gandhi and inspires them to spin with Charkha. The Gandhian ideal of non-violence is practically preached by him at the time of his arrest when he exhorts his followers to contain violence. Moorthy goes through life like “a noble cow, quiet, generous, serene, deferent and ‘brahmnic’ as is evidenced in his exhortation to Rangama:

The Greatest enemy is in us. If only we would not hate, if only we would show fearless, calm affection towards our fellowmen we would be stronger.

To explain the nature of redemption suffering in human society, Raja Rao “takes the myth of suffering more directly self-imposed to absorb the evil of others.” 8 Moorthy, like Gandhi, feels that fasting is good for the mind and he undertakes fasts for the purpose of penance and self-purification.

He admonishes Ratna: “Pray with-me that the sins of others may be purified with our-prayers”. He thinks that he is not pure, that is why, so much of violence has taken place at the Skeffington Coffee Estate. He purifies himself through fasting which, he feels, would enable him to practice Gandhian principles of love, truth and Ahimsa. Not only this, he preaches the adversary’s conversion by



the concept of self-purification and considers it a non-violent weapon to fight the British.

Just as in a myth, “some of the chief characters are gods and other beings larger in power than humanity”. In Kanthapura, too, Moorthy is presented as an exalted being and his character as well as the whole situation is mythicized. In mythicizing the central character, Raja Rao adheres to the Indian classical tradition. By accepting obligations and higher values in an ideal character, man gains dignity and serenity. “The serious .... (work) ... which seeks enduring human significance should, thus, deal with the idealized man, because it seeks to make man nearer to the ideal.”

In Kanthapura, “the impact of Gandhiji is seen as mythological” 11 because he is described as the reincarnation of Rama who has taken birth to get back his Sita, i.e., political freedom. His psychological, rather than physical, presence in the novel lends a mythical aura around his saintly figure. As in Ravana’s Lanka, so in Kanthapura, the vices, greed and hypocrisy were rampant. Since 1857, the British had been sucking the blood of innocent Indians and the exploitation by the British was as immense as it was during Ravana’s regime. Like Ravana, the British had come to kidnap political freedom, strangulating all their emotions.

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# **THE INFLUENCE OF GANDHI JI AND HIS IDEOLOGY ON INDIAN WRITINGS IN ENGLISH**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Mahatma Gandhiji struggled for the sake of Indian liberty and advancement. The impact of Gandhian thoughts and principles on Indian English literature can never be overlooked. The life of Mahatma Gandhi was quite impressive, his saint-like austerity, limited needs that have instilled a new sense of pride and purpose for Indians and foreigners. After his return from South Africa in 1915, Gandhiji began to influence both national politics and national literature. Gandhian ideals like Ahinsa(non-violence), Satyagraha (insistence of truth) and non-violent ways of struggle like boycott of English things and life style have had a tremendous impact on the political movements of the world. Gandhi ji and his philosophy were unavoidable and inescapable for the Indian and foreign writers, philosophers, and scholars. Mahatma Gandhi bears the permanent stamp on Indian life and literature. His ideology or 'ism' is his principles of his life. The paper is a sincere attempt to know Gandhi's

influence on Indian literature in English. Some of the writers writing under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi are Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Ahmad Abbas and Nayantara Sahgal. This research paper focuses on examining the impact of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas on Indian writings in English in general. This research paper attempts to portray the basic tenets of Gandhian thoughts in terms of prevailing social, educational, political, religious, economic, and cultural issues and relate them with Indian English fiction.

## **KEYWORDS**

Gandhian Ideology, Impact, Indian Literature, Influence, Thoughts

## **INTRODUCTION**

Great men die physically, but continue to live in the memories of people by their actions and work. Mahatma Gandhi was one of such men among others. Like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, and Mother Teresa, he left an everlasting impact on the Indian politics and life that could hardly be erased. Mahatma Gandhi's influence was not limited to political arena only, but it influenced all spheres of life. Indian literature was not an exception to this. In fact, most writers relied to the themes of freedom fight struggle, independence of India and partition of India. Mahatma Gandhi and his ideology dominated literature of twentieth century and continued to have its presence even on today's literature.

Gandhian era in Indian writing in English began in 1920. Gandhi inspired everyone to develop a freedom consciousness and to

struggle for India's independence. He told people to be fearless and reject slavery. He suggested the path of truth and non-violence. He gave life to every segment of nation like politics, economics, education, religion, social life, language and literature. As a result, it enlightened the literary field along with the political arena. Gandhi ji inspired the common men to write on the social themes and they got a place in writers' domain of literature. Indian fiction in 1930s under the influence of Gandhi ji changed the literary scenario. The love for country, freedom, the problems of common men became the prime issues of the fiction. This came to be known as Gandhian literature.

Mahatma Gandhi is multi-layered personality. He became first a national and soon enough an international leader of immense political and philosophical significance during the pre-independence and post-independence phase of India. He struggled for the sake of freedom and development of the country. He became a huge source of writing and influenced different disciplines and writers from different fields like philosophy, politics, history, literature, sociology, and so on. The ideology of Gandhiji was the moving force for the national upsurge during this time. The ideology of Gandhi not only remained on the paper but it became the way of life. It became the hopes for the new future of India. A society undergoing resurrection and transformation provided a fertile soil for fiction. It created the self-awareness among the people during the British rule and it provided variety of themes to the novelists including social and national problems.

When Gandhi ji came on the literary scene, Indian society needed total change and reform. Gandhi ji very actively dealt not only with the economic and political problems but also with the social problems of the Indian society. Social reformation failed to clear the society of its deep-rooted evils. The image of India outside its national borders had been damaged and for a foreigner, India was a land of superstitions. Indian society was full of evil customs such as child-marriage and untouchability. Widow re-marriage was resisted in so-called upper castes and female education was not greatly encouraged. Poverty further had deteriorated the social conditions. It was in these circumstances that as a karma-yogi, Gandhi tried to pin-point these social evils and reform the Indian society. He was against the various superstitions found among the Indian people. He also strongly and forcefully condemned all evil customs of the society.

The Gandhian impact on contemporary Indian literature has brought about results at various levels, and in various directions. As regards the writer's choice of language, we have seen that one result of the Gandhian influence has been a general preference for the mother tongue or the regional language, and occasionally a purposeful bilingualism, the same writer handling with mastery his own mother tongue as well as English.

Gandhi's philosophy and life became an example and an ideal for most great people of the world to lead a comfortable life. Many great people like Nelson Mandela, Dalai Lama have confessed about the influence of Gandhian ideology and philosophy on them and their work. His

influence was all pervasive and inescapable. Gandhian ideals like 'Ahimsa' (non-violence), 'Satyagraha' (insistence of truth) and non-violent ways of struggle like boycott of English things and lifestyle have had a tremendous impact on the political movements of the world.

Even the life of Mahatma Gandhi was quite impressive his saint-like austerity, limited needs that have instilled a new sense of pride and purpose for Indians and foreigners.

Men are remembered not by how long they lived, but by the impact they leave on the people's mind. Many great scholars hold unanimous verdict about the greatness of the Father of India Mahatma Gandhi. It requires great sacrifice and selfless contribution towards one's nation and its people, then only one receives this kind of respect and honour from the people of the country. Mahatma Gandhi selflessly devoted his life for the wellbeing of his country people. His simple living a dhoti and a stick was his all asset. He stuck up to the principles he himself created all his life. Some of the writers writing under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi are Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Ahmad Abbas and Nayantara Sahgal.

The novel, 'Waiting for the Mahatma' by R. K. Narayan has a theme of Indian independence. The novelist has finely inter-woven two parallel stories: freedom fight and beautiful love story of Sriram and Bharati. Basically, the story revolves around the character of Sriram who is common man living with his grandmother. Till his meeting with Mahatma Gandhi, he was workless and purposeless. The speech of Mahatma Gandhi transformed him completely forcing him to join

the freedom fight. He met Bharati, who was already working with Gandhi in this noble cause and was one of the active freedom fighters and disciples of Mahatma Gandhi. Subsequently he fell in love with Bharati who also had same feelings for Sriram. When he asked for marriage, Bharati, under the influence of Gandhian thoughts answered him that she is ready to marry him when India gets freedom. Mahatma Gandhi had himself promised the couple that he will arrange their marriage. India, finally got independence, Sriram and Bharati were waiting for Mahatma to fulfil his promise. But before that Mahatma was shot dead by an anti-activist. Unfortunately, Sriram and Bharati had to marry without the blessings of Mahatma.

Nayantara Sehgal attempts to provide a solution of non-violence to the violence erupted in Punjab through her novel *Storm in Chandigarh*. She strongly outbursts her disgust at the insane violence erupted in newly divided states of Punjab and Haryana over the issue of Chandigarh. Non-violence, she thinks is the perfect solution if the society is to prosper and peace is to be prevailed. Thus, Nayantara Sehgal shows her attachment to the Gandhian ideals in *Storm in Chandigarh*. The novel brilliantly juxtaposes two worlds: the personal world of man-woman relationship through the stories of Inder-Saroj, Jit-Mara and Vishal-Leela, and the interpersonal world of politics. Sehgal characterizes the veteran Home Minister last surviving figure of Gandhian era, which exerts his policies to retain political prominence in new political scenario. The novel also deals with issues like incompatibility in human relations due to misunderstanding, extra-marital relations, and poverty. The novel edges on to the existential condition of human life. The



novelist defines Gandhism in these thought-provoking words. Vishal Dubey, the protagonist, mused over such thoughts and was happy to note that despite the darkness all around, there were believers like his associates, in the cult of non-violence.

## **CONCLUSION**

Mahatma Gandhi has exerted his indelible influence by his life and principles in India and abroad. He has set examples for the people to follow therefore his influence cannot be neglected by the writers. He is the need of every age. His life and philosophy ought to reflect in the literature of the world. If the world is to be progressed, if peace is to be restored, then Gandhian philosophy must be followed and observed by the nations of the world. Moreover, Gandhi as a political activist had taken some actions, appealed to people for some cause, these actions right or wrong have far-reaching influence in India and the world. Thus, Gandhiji continues to be reflected in Indian literature even in time to come. His principles of Ahimsa (non-violence), Asahkar (non-cooperation), Swaraj (self-rule), have been appreciated and followed by many great people over the world. His autobiography 'The Story of My Experiment with Truth' is a guideline charter for many living persons in the world. One can say that the novels of 1930s and 40s are based on Gandhian ideology and its impact on society. Thus, all his writings cherish Truth and high moral values. Gandhi ji created a wave social awakening through his ideology and works. Perhaps the most effective interpreter of Indian thought, Gandhiji is a man with an imperishable message to his own countrymen.

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# **GANDHI JI AS A RELIGIOUS TOOL IN RAJA RAO'S KANTHAPURA**

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Mahatma Gandhi was a man who inspired the learners with a new ideology which was based on personal purity and unselfish service for the creation of a new society based upon truth, love and non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi is such a socio-political figure who is barely impossible for someone to forget or ignore. He influenced every aspect of human consciousness and became a source of writing in different fields like history, politics, philosophy, literature, sociology and so on. Indian English Literature echoes 'Gandhian Consciousness' both in pre-independence and post-independence period. M.K. Naik comments, Indian writing in English Literature of the Gandhian age was inevitably influenced by these (the then political and social) epoch-making developments in Indian life. The novelists like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K. Narayan, K.S. Venkatramani, K.A. Abbas portrayed Gandhi's ideals and influence of Gandhi on Indian villages and towns. Their writings were immensely burdened with Gandhian idealism, life style, his teachings and anti-colonial stands. Gandhi was represented as a sage by the

Indian Congress in its political campaigns. He was considered as a saintly preacher and sincere freedom worker. Gandhiji appeared to be a part and form of literary genre and he appeared in many dramas, novels stories and poems. His social activities and idealism were democratic, rural and homogeneous in nature. He insisted on high thinking and simple living which was also reflected and highlighted by the literary English authors of the time. R.K. Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma* reflects Gandhian ideology and influence on the people of country. The hero Sriram in the novel is a blind follower of Gandhiji. He joins the freedom movement but without understanding it. Narayan goes further with Gandhi's concept of Non-violence.

“Before you aspire to drive the British from the country, you must drive every vestige of violence from your system... you must train yourself to become a hundred percent ahimsa soldier.” (52)

Gandhi in the novel asked Sriram to become a non-violent soldier. He considers ‘English as the language of our rulers. It has enslaved us’ (16). Mahatma Gandhi as the name gives a great thought and had a deep effect on the Indian writers especially on the Indo Anglian novelists. Gandhi himself wrote in English. For the writers of this generation Gandhian consciousness became a powerful metaphor which evolved into a literary motif to represent ideal thinking and pure living. Gandhi was the most prominent figure and the main subject of discussion especially for Colonial and Post-Colonial writers. M.K. Naik also held the view that literary artists were greatly

influenced by Gandhian thought. Similarly, Carlo Coppola's essay "Politics and the Novel in India" speaks of "the influence of both the Gandhian and Marxist ideologies on Post-Colonial novels". Using an analogy of the pot of clay we can say it is the clay, which is the most important. So we should know the clay: the clay out of which the Indo Anglian novelists of thirties and forties had created their novels. This clay was Gandhian thought. The novels based on the Gandhian thought express unique patterns and present a clear contrast to the novels written by the writers of 19th Century. Gandhian thought gave power and force to Post Colonial Indian novels. Gandhi was their literary model and also the motivating moral force. Gandhian thought served the intellectual and emotional need to discover National Identity. Furthermore, Gandhian thought brought together East and West as well as the traditional and modern. Gandhi was not a creative writer but a thinker's thinker, which in itself was a very important thing. The Indian writers were greatly influenced by Gandhi. Through his thoughts writers got intellectual and moral passion and also a new mode of thinking. Gandhi's political activities were linked with his notions of social reform. India's regional and linguistic boundaries were also influenced by Gandhi's thought. Post-Colonial Literature and Gandhi Ji are deeply associated with each other. Raja Rao is one of the pillars of Indian English Writing and we can't go further without any of the pillar.

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all divisions, all differences. Ramayya had also come to their village some two years ago; he had given up his boots and hats and had taken, to dhoti and Khadi and it was said that he had given up his city habit of smoking. And though a Gandhian in his outward form, he was no match to Moorthy, who unlike Ramayya was gentle like a noble cow, quiet, generous, serene, deferent and Brahminic, a very prince, to say the least. Whatever the narrator may say regarding Ramayya as a braggart and Moorthy as a noble cow, Raja Rao finds that the distinction between the sensed qualities as that of Ramayya and structural qualities as that of Moorthy, is based on appearance; in reality there is no such distinctions. Upon analysis it turns out that space, time, objects and selves are appearances, not realities. The two young men resemble each other and yet they differ in terms of space. Ramayya has developed Gandhism in the city, while Moorthy imbibed it while remaining in the village. Raja Rao creates a *sthala-purana* in projecting the dedicated and selfless deeds of the local Mahatma Gandhi, Moorthy. “The impact of Gandhi” observes C.D. Narasimhaiah, “was that of a traditional religion” and many Gandhis emerged in the name of Mahatma Gandhi. To be a Gandhian was very heaven in those days. Moorthy is one such Gandhi who revolutionizes the whole village. Mahatma Gandhi, like Godot in Samuel Beckett’s play, *Waiting for Godot*, does not appear as a person but his influence is a pervasive force throughout the novel and the character of Moorthy, the village Gandhi, is mythicized and the rustics of Kanthapura spontaneously respond to Moorthy’s religious views. Range Gowda exhorts the villagers to follow Moorthy’s advice who

is fit to lead the freedom movement in Kanthapura. The philosophy of these “soldier-saints”, known as *Satyagrahis*, is based on the doctrine of the selfless action as enunciated in the *Bhagwat Gita*. How a slumbering Indian village is galvanized into action is significant, no doubt, but what is of greater importance, as feels, is “the metaphysic of selfless action expressed through Satyagraha”.

Raja Rao’s novel Kanthapura echoes Gandhiji’s Swadeshi, anti-colonial protests, and need of eradication of social evils like untouchability, casteism, women backwardness and wine drinking. The coolies cry out; “Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai” .... And further “Gandhi Mahatma Ki Jai” as a source of inspiration, strength and will power. Moorthy, the central character echoes Gandhian mission. So Moorthy goes from house to house, and from younger brother to elder brother, and from elder brother to the grandfather himself, and what do you think? He even goes to potter’s quarter and the weavers’ quarters and the Sudra quarter .... We said to ourselves, he is one of these Gandhi men who say there is neither caste nor clan nor family, and yet they pray like us and they live like us. Only they say too, one should not marry early, one should allow widow to take husbands and a Brahmin might marry a pariah and a pariah a Brahmin. (15)

Gandhiji is portrayed as Lord Krishna in the novel. He is considered to be ‘a saint, the Mahatma, a wise man and a soft man’. All the village folk irrespective of their class distinction came up to the temple and swore the oath unanimously to serve the country “My master, I shall spin a hundred yards of yarn per day, and shall practice

ahimsa, and I shall seek for the blessings of the Mahatma and the gods, and they rose and crawled back to their seats” (81).

K.S. Venkatramani (1891-1957) well known for the Gandhian theme in his novel *Murugan, The Tiller* (1927) is in favour of Gandhian economic policies. His second novel *Kandan: The patriot: A novel of New India in the Making* (1932) is about the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930s. Raja Rao seems to be of the view that our experience is often time of things beyond the material world. This prevents us from the extremes of crass materialism and dogmatic orthodoxy. If Krishna could kill demons, so could Gandhi, a mortal, brought about the fall of the British empire in India. We can better understand Krishna's godhood when read along the strength of frail Mahatma. One has only to widen one's outlook. That the glory of this world in the end being appearance makes the world more glorious, if we feel it is a show of some fuller splendour. The two stories thus melt into each other—the earthly is not a mere appearance, but carries with it something of the higher reality. So like Krishna as a child, Mohandas went about from village to village to slay the serpent of the foreign rule. Fight, says he, "but harm no soul" he also urged upon to love all Hindus, Muslims, Christians or Pariahs, for all are equal before God. He asked people to spin and weave, for our Mother is in tattered weeds. The Mahatma was a saint: he fasted and prayed. The story of the Mahatma made it possible for his audience to have an immediate experience of what is remote or what was remote from them. It is from the story of the



Mahatma with which the story of Krishna begins to have meaning and though this story is transcended, it nevertheless remains throughout as the present foundation of our known world. Immediate feeling thus is pure and simple. It does not consist of ourselves feeling something, for this involves the distinction between ourselves and our objects, which is the work of thought it is feeling as such, not somebody's feeling or a feeling of something. it contains diversity, but a diversity which is prior to relations. Consider the experience of Krishna and Mohandas; they are not two distinct personages. Krishna was also known by many names, Mohan being one; they are linked by a relation; it is a feeling which is a unity and yet contains diversity.

The village women, too, think of Gandhi as the Sahyadri mountain, big and blue, and Moorthy as the small mountain. Moorthy's character is idealized in the novel to the extent of being regarded as a local Mahatma because a myth "necessarily deals with an idealized man or a man larger than life." Like Christ, Moorthy takes the sin of others upon himself, purifies his own soul through penance and conquers physical desires. The villagers speak of him as "our Gandhi" and "the saint of our village". Range Gowda, the village headman, describes Moorthy as "our Mahatma".

As the name "Moorthy" indicates, he is a true image of Mahatma Gandhi, who remains as invisible living presence throughout the novel and "the anti-hero hero arises as a crucible of experience - a

local personality becomes a universal type.” Even the hilltops of Himavathy echo of the ever-inspiring slogan “Mahtma Gandhi Ki Jai, Jai Mahatma Gandhi Ki”. And Moorthy is an embodiment of Gandhism who echoes his master’s voice, with perfect fidelity and devotion. He carries the message of Gandhian principles of non-violence, truth and love, and the villagers venerate him so much so that in house after house in the neighbouring villages, they have picture of Moorthy taken from the city papers, he says to himself, “I shall love even my enemies.

The Mahatma says we should love our enemies”. Again, he tells the elders of the village: “One cannot become a member of the Congress if one will not promise to practice Ahimsa, and to speak Truth and to spin at least two thousand yards of yarn per year”. He takes the lead in the performances of *Harikathas* and *Jayanthis* in the village, converts the pariah women into the followers of Mahatma Gandhi and inspires them to spin with *Charkha*. The Gandhian ideal of non-violence is practically preached by him at the time of his arrest when he exhorts his followers to contain violence. Moorthy goes through life like “a noble cow, quiet, generous, serene, deferent and ‘brahmnic’ as is evidenced in his exhortation to Rangama:

*The Greatest enemy is in us. If only we would not hate, if only we would show fearless, calm affection towards our fellowmen we would be stronger.*

To explain the nature of redemption suffering in human society, Raja Rao “takes the myth of suffering more directly self-imposed to absorb

the evil of others.”<sup>8</sup> Moorthy, like Gandhi, feels that fasting is good for the mind and he undertakes fasts for the purpose of penance and self-purification.

He admonishes Ratna: “Pray with-me that the sins of others may be purified with our-prayers”. He thinks that he is not pure, that is why, so much of violence has taken place at the Skeffington Coffee Estate. He purifies himself through fasting which, he feels, would enable him to practice Gandhian principles of love, truth and *Ahimsa*. Not only this, he preaches the adversary’s conversion by the concept of self-purification and considers it a non-violent weapon to fight the British.

Just as in a myth, “some of the chief characters are gods and other beings larger in power than humanity”. In *Kanthapura*, too, Moorthy is presented as an exalted being and his character as well as the whole situation is mythicized. In mythicizing the central character, Raja Rao adheres to the Indian classical tradition. By accepting obligations and higher values in an ideal character, man gains dignity and serenity. “The serious .... (work) ... which seeks enduring human significance should, thus, deal with the idealized man, because it seeks to make man nearer to the ideal.”

In *Kanthapura*, “the impact of Gandhiji is seen as mythological”<sup>11</sup> because he is described as the reincarnation of Rama who has taken birth to get back his Sita, i.e., political freedom. His psychological, rather than physical, presence in the novel lends a mythical aura around his saintly figure. As in Ravana’s Lanka, so in *Kanthapura*, the vices, greed and hypocrisy were rampant. Since 1857, the British

had been sucking the blood of innocent Indians and the exploitation by the British was as immense as it was during Ravana's regime. Like Ravana, the British had come to kidnap political freedom, strangulating all their emotions.

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# **ROLE OF GANDHIAN VALUES IN COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE**

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## **Abstract**

In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century India was imbued with the spirit of patriotism. The people were coming out of their houses; even the women were also taking active part in struggle for freedom under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi. He was a man of action. He practiced what he preached. When he asked the people to speak the truth, he himself became the embodiment of truth. He spoke the truth, whatever the cost. He acknowledged his weakness by writing “My Experiments with Truth”. He believed in *The Bhagwat Gita*. He led a simple life and tried to purge the Indian society of the evil of caste system. His dress was minimal, his requirements were the bare necessities and he preferred spiritual poise over materialism. He bore no ill will towards britishers and advocated the path of ‘Ahimsa’ for freedom struggle. His ‘Quit India’ movement was mainly responsible for the ouster of the British. He had a charismatic personality and he

influenced the masses. Whatever he said, people were ready to do. The writers of this era were also influenced by his philosophy. Raja Rao, R.K.Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand were the significant writers of this period and they were considerably influenced by the philosophy of Gandhi. Raja Rao's *Kanthpura* is testimony to this and R.K. Narayan's novels *Waiting for the Mahatma*, *The Financial Expert*, *The Vender of Sweet* and *The Guide* and clearly delineate the influence of Gandhian values, in the first the influence is seen clearly while in the last the influence is subtle.

**Keywords:** social issues, spirituality, karma, patriotism, materialism, self-realization.

The writer as well as common man cannot escape the social, cultural and political realities of his time. When R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao were writing, the struggle for freedom was at its peak. The people were participating in this struggle regardless of the consequences. To be imprisoned was no cause of the insult. It was rather a matter of pride. Women, children, old persons all participated in this "Mahayajaya". The story of *Waiting for The Mahatma* delineates the struggle for freedom and through the heroine Bharti and Sriram, Narayan depicts the common persons taking part in freedom struggle which forms the backdrop of romance between the two. Bharti is involved in Mahatma Gandhi's Movement. Sri ram loves her and join the movement in the course of time he comes in contact with anti-British extremists and lands in jail, after coming out of the prison Bharti and Sriram are reunited. The revolutionary ideas of Mahatma

Gandhi are contrasted with the conservative ideas of the locals. The locale is the same like his other novels i.e. Malgudi, the fictional town.

*The Vender of Sweets* depicts Jagan leading his life in accordance with Gandhian principles. Jagan is a man of high principles. He is proud of his son, Mali. He recites *The Bhagwad Gita* to his minions, spins the wheel. He goes by the word but not by the spirit. He thinks he is leading his life according to Gandhian principles. Later, he becomes aware of his shortcomings and tries to live by the message of *The Bhagwad Gita*. He says to his cousin “conquer taste and you will have conquered the self”, said Jagan to his listener, who asked, “why conquer the self?” Jagan said, “I do not know but all our sages advise us so.”(7). He tries to influence Mali to lead his life according to Gandhian philosophy but to no avail. He has to bear the consequences of his karma and he lands himself in jail for drunk driving. Jagan realizes that all his life he had been chasing false ideals. He realizes that his salvation lies in realizing the ultimate truth. Jayant.K. Biswal thinks that it echoes Rosie’s idea of karma and he must suffer for his Karma (27). Jagan may not be successful in his goal but he starts his quest for the truth. The theme of attachment and its consequences is prevalent throughout the story.

To spin, to wear Khadi, to use swadeshi things and to read *The Bhagwad Gita* all had become a part of Gandhian Philosophy and to take part in *kirtan* to participate in social reform activities, parbhat pheries all had become a part of struggle for freedom. Jagan firmly believes in all these things and practices these in his daily routine



which his son Mali does not like. Jagan is a living embodiment of Gandhian principles. *The Vender of Sweets* and *Waiting for the Mahatma* are steeped in Gandhian values. Even Jagan's appearance and his procuring hide for his shoes described by the author clearly demonstrate the influence of Gandhi ji.

He wore a loose jibba over his dhoti, both made of material spun with his own hands; everyday he spun for an hour, retained enough yarn for his sartorial requirements (he never possessed more than two sets of cloths at a time), and delivered all the excess in neat bundle to the local handloom committee in exchange for cash. Although the cash he thus earned was less than five rupees a month he felt a sentimental thrill in receiving it, as he had begun the habit when Gandhi visited the town over twenty years ago, and he had been commended for it (page 9).

*The Financial Expert* actually is not financial sound when the novel ends. He is poor in the beginning and end of the novel, but he has learnt his lesson towards the end of the novel. The wealth is important on to the extent when it helps one to fulfill the necessities of life. Otherwise it itself becomes only an obsession. One cannot use it for the well-being of others obsessed by the idea of collecting and hoarding it only for his own satisfaction. It ultimately leads to the undoing of a person. The excessive attachment to wealth leads to one's downfall. According to ancient wisdom of India and Margayya suffers the same fate, he however, comes out of the test fully chastened. The self-realization not in spiritual sense but in worldly

sense at least, puts some sense into his head and he is really to behave sensibly. He decides to lead his life based on religious and cultural values of India.

Raju of *The Guide* leads his life in materialistic pursuit of wealth in the beginning and he is fairly successful. He wants full satisfaction of his senses and in this process takes advantage of chink in conjugal life of Marco and Rosie, he seduces Rosie and establishes illicit relation with her. He is not troubled by any guilty conscious that he was having an affair with another man's wife but the basic goodness of his nature asserts itself towards the end is essentially religious in character. Every religious endorses some spiritual values.

*Kanthapura* a unique novel by Raja Rao written in the tradition of legendary history is narrated by Achakka a wise woman in the village. The Village Goddess Kenchamma and Lord Siva are remembered and story of *Kanthapura*'s transformation under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi is related. It is traditional caste ridden village of India where Brahmins have an upper hand the chief protagonist Moorthy, a Brahmin, discovers a 'linga' and a temple is built more. The traditional Hari Katha session is used by Jayaramachar to narrate Harikatha based on Gandhi and he is arrested. Moorthy leaves for the city gets familiar with Gandhian philosophy, follows Gandhian philosophy in letter and spirit, wears home spun khadi, discards foreign clothes and fights against untouchability. A village priest turns against him and complains to the swami, a supporter of foreign government. He is excommunicated. But he is not deterred.

Then Bade Khan, a police officer is brought in *Kanthpura* to subdue people. Moorthy is supported of non-violence. He is invited by the clerk to create awareness among the coolies of coffee estate. Bade Khan resorts to atrocities. The coolies stand by Moorthy but Moorthy is accused of creating disturbance in the village. The background of Indian freedom struggle and Dandi March are in full focus. Moorthy is sent to prison and the educated widow with whom Moorthy lived (Rangamma) leads freedom struggle in his absence. The atrocities on women become the everyday routine and the villagers of *Kanthpura* leave the village and settle at Kashipura.

Several novelists have exploited the magical touch of Gandhi's name and presence into their novels. In the novel *Waiting for The Mahatma* Gandhi's name is not used in background. He plays major role from beginning to the end. The influence of Gandhi is spread in the novel from beginning to the end in *Kanthapura* of Raja Rao, it is clear from the following example.

“Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai !” he rang the bell and spoke to them of spinning and ahimsa Truth. And then he asked, “Who among you will join the panchayat?” and the voices came from the Sudra Corner and the pariah corner and the Brahmin corner and the weavers' corner and to each one of them he said, “stand before the god and vow you will never break the law...”

In *Untouchable* Mulk Raj Anand gives Gandhi a place towards the end. According to K.R. Srinivasa Gandhi is too big to be given a

minor part; on the other hand, he is sure to turn the novel into a biography if he is given a major or a central part. The best thing according to him for the contemporary novelist would be to make his influence felt indirectly (372).

Mulk Raj Anand has delineated the plight of a person belonging to lower caste in his novel. *Gandhi ji* was agonist the exploitation of people in the name of caste. M.R. Anand has explored various ways of abolishing this evil but the protagonist finds Gandhi's solution to the problem the most acceptable. Gandhi called these people *Harijan* which means people of God and wanted that there should be no exploitation of people. He was against the caste system. The Gandhian principles and the direct and indirect influence of his philosophy finds place into the works of these novelist and gives an aura of historical authenticity to these works.

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# **“GANDHI’S DIASPORA” EXPLORING THE RELEVANCE OF GANDHI JI THROUGH THE SPECTRUM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The non-violent, tolerant, pacifistic and humanistic manner of Mahatma Gandhi is well-known. He accommodated in his personality many universal values such as love for his fellow humans, justice, peace, non-violence and freedom. Moreover, Gandhi ji has played the most crucial role in evoking the sense of belongingness to their motherland. It was his relentless battle in India and abroad that brought an end to the indentured system of recruitment and the year 1916 saw the last tranche of these labourers moving out of India. This paper seeks to explore the contribution of Gandhi in the construction of the diasporic consciousness of the scattered migrants. In doing so, it will also highlight the formation of “Diasporic Gandhi” before becoming a “Nationalist Gandhi”. Lastly, it will try and decipher if the image and principles of Gandhi are still relevant to the study of international relations in general and the shaping and casting of “Indianness” in the new diasporas in particular.

**Key words:** pacifist, humanistic, belongingness, diaspora, Indianness.

## **WHAT IS THE INDIAN DIASPORA?**

The Indian diaspora refers to people of Indian origin who have migrated and settled in other countries around the world. This diaspora is one of the largest and most widespread, with significant communities in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, the United Arab Emirates, and many others. As a critic says:

"Being Indian is not just a bloodline, it's a state of mind, a way of being in the world."

The Indian diaspora has been shaped by historical, economic, and social factors. Historically, Indian migration can be traced back to colonial times when Indians were taken as indentured labourers to various British colonies, particularly in the Caribbean, Africa, and Southeast Asia. Later waves of migration occurred due to economic opportunities, education, and political reasons.

One of the notable characteristics of the Indian diaspora is its diversity. It encompasses people from various linguistic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of India itself. This diversity is evident in the cuisines, festivals, and traditions that Indian communities maintain abroad. The Indian diaspora has made significant contributions to their host countries, particularly in the fields of science, technology, medicine, business, academia, and the arts. Indian professionals are highly sought after globally, and many

hold prominent positions in multinational corporations, research institutions, and universities.

Members of the Indian diaspora also face challenges, including issues of identity, assimilation, discrimination, and maintaining connections with their homeland.

### **Diasporic Consciousness: Role of Gandhi**

Mahatma Gandhi played a significant role in shaping Indian diasporic consciousness through his advocacy for nonviolent resistance and his emphasis on Indian identity and independence. His leadership in the Indian independence movement inspired Indians living abroad to engage in activism and support the cause of Indian independence. Furthermore, Gandhi's teachings of self-reliance and community empowerment resonated with Indian diaspora communities, influencing their sense of identity and connection to their homeland. His legacy continues to inspire Indian diasporic communities worldwide to uphold principles of justice, equality, and peace. Gandhi's influence on Indian diasporic consciousness can be elaborated in several key aspects:

#### **Nonviolent Resistance:**

Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolent resistance, or satyagraha, was central to his leadership in the Indian independence movement. His approach resonated with Indians living abroad, inspiring them to adopt similar methods in their activism for social justice and civil rights in their host countries. This approach not only aligned with the values of peace and justice but also provided a practical means for mobilizing communities and effecting change.



### **Promotion of Indian Identity:**

Gandhi emphasized the importance of Indian culture, language, and traditions as essential elements of national identity. This emphasis helped reinforce the connection between Indian diaspora communities and their homeland, fostering a sense of pride and solidarity among Indians living abroad. Gandhi's efforts to promote Indian languages, such as Hindi, and revive traditional Indian practices contributed to the preservation and celebration of Indian culture within diaspora communities.

### **Advocacy for Indian Independence:**

Gandhi's leadership in the Indian independence movement galvanized support from Indians living abroad, who actively contributed to the cause through financial assistance, political lobbying, and raising awareness about the struggle for independence. Indian diaspora organizations played a crucial role in mobilizing support for the Indian National Congress and lobbying British authorities for Indian self-rule.

### **Empowerment and Self-Reliance:**

Gandhi's emphasis on self-reliance and community empowerment resonated with Indian diaspora communities, many of whom faced challenges of discrimination and marginalization in their host countries. Gandhi's teachings encouraged diaspora communities to cultivate self-sufficiency, resilience, and solidarity, empowering them to confront social injustices and advocate for their rights both locally and globally.

**Conclusion:**

In the conclusion, we can say that Gandhi's principles of nonviolence, promotion of Indian identity, advocacy for independence, and empowerment of marginalized communities profoundly influenced Indian diasporic consciousness, shaping the collective identity, values, and activism of Indians living abroad. His legacy continues to inspire diaspora communities worldwide to uphold these principles in their pursuit of social justice, equality, and peace

# **IMPACT OF GANDHIAN IDEOLOGY – A STUDY OF THE NOVEL *KANTHAPURA***

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## **ABSTRACT**

Gandhian Ideology has a major effect on Indian writing in English. He became an immense source of writing and influenced different disciplines and writers from different fields like philosophy, politics, history, literature, sociology, and so on. Indian English literature has a great impact of Gandhian philosophy. The great Indian trio- R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao have explored Gandhian thoughts in their novels. Their novels follow Gandhian ideology and his principles of Non-violence, Truth, Brotherhood, Satyagraha and his views on Untouchability. The present paper is an attempt to study Gandhian impact in Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*. Raja Rao holds a prominent place in the realm of Indo-Anglian fiction. *Kanthapura* is widely considered one of the best works of Raja Rao where he has tried depicting the influence that Gandhi and his ideology had on the masses- the mass which were bound in the rigid shackles of existing

evils. The plot of the story is interspersed with Gandhian Ideology. This novel can be called a tribute to Gandhi and his philosophy. This paper is an attempt to analyze Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* in the light of the Gandhian ideals of non-violence, removal of untouchability and love for humanity.

**Key words:** Kanthapura, Gandhi's ideology, Non-violence, Untouchability

A writer is first and foremost an individual with a personal vision. At the same time, he/she is a personality living in a particular period of time, in a particular place, in a particular social environment. He/she is an individual and a member of the society. Therefore, society inevitably plays its part in his/her works. The writer may be in sympathy with his or her social environment or in rebellion against it, he or she may try to reject it or may only try to share his/her experiences in this environment, but its influence will be there. Things and events depicted in his/her works might not have happened to him/her, but he/she invents them camouflaging it as real to bring in the reader's total participation.

One such novel *Kanthapura* written by Raja Rao is the microcosm of the Indian traditional society which, under the aegis of Gandhi, united to fight for the freedom struggle. Raja Rao himself was impressed by Gandhian philosophy and hence, the Gandhian philosophy of 'ahimsa', equality for all, Satyagraha and economic transformation all find place in this novel. The novel explicitly deals with the fact how Gandhian philosophy nurtured the common people

at grass root level so that they can rise above their restricted, orthodox and limited ideologies. They rose above all that for a larger cause – the freedom of their nation. The novel can be considered Gandhi-epic. The beauty of the novel lies in the fact that Gandhi never appears all through the novel but his ideologies seep all through the story. Thus, emphasizing on the fact that it's not the man that needs to personally reach out to each and every one. The ideology has to be strong enough to inspire the masses as was the case with Gandhian ideology that brought about national awakening in Indians with his non-violent struggle for freedom movement which was strengthened by non-cooperation and civil disobedience. This has been well brought out by Raja Rao in his novel *Kanthapura* which becomes symbolic of the national struggle movement of India under the able leadership of Gandhian philosophy.

There was a great impact of Gandhi's ideology on the people of Kanthapura - a slumbering society unaware of the fact that the nation was bleeding under the oppression of its colonial master. Raja Rao himself was influenced by Gandhian ideology which gave birth to Moorthy, the central character of the novel. The exploitation of the millions of Indians by the colonists and the hardships they encountered during the colonial rule had led to the formation of the Gandhian movement. Through Moorthy, Raja Rao shows how Gandhi made freedom struggle a mass movement in the remote village of Kanthapura. Kanthapura, in fact, is symbolic of the villages of India. It represents India in its miniature form. What

happened here, in fact happened all over India. Gandhi had realized that revolution was not possible unless the people of the nation joined the freedom struggle. He knew that the change had to be brought from the grass root level. So, he set out to awaken the nation. But the movement couldn't be a reality till the slumbering nation could be brought to a point where its people could rise above the petty distresses and think about the nation as a whole and be aware of the atrocities of their colonial master. In his course of struggle to arouse national consciousness, he influenced millions of Indians and turned the entire nation into freedom fighters. From their awakening, to rising above their vested interests, to enlarging their perspective and their understanding of the problems of the nation as a whole was a very tedious and long journey. But eventually it did become a reality.

Kanthapura is a typical Indian village with all primitive structure of an Indian society, cocooned from the rest of the world. This slumbering village is awakened by Moorthy, who spreads amongst them the Gandhian philosophy. Raja Rao has set the novel from 1919 to 1931 when Mahatma Gandhi had become the central figure in the fight for freedom. This initially causes upheavals of all sorts—social, political and religious but gradually subsides after Moorthy is able to instill national consciousness in the people. The story is narrated in a flashback technique from the perspective of an old woman, Achakka. Moorthy, she says, was influenced by Gandhi whom he met once during his visit to the city. He was influenced by his ideology so

much that it brought upon him spiritual awakening. He returned to his native village and started spreading Gandhian ideology. The action in the novel begins with the celebration of Shankara Jayanti.

This ceremony marks the villagers' introduction to the Gandhian ideology which finally influences the whole village. Although during the struggle for freedom, the village is fully destroyed physically but its spirit remains intact, it wins. In this novel, Mahatma Gandhi is symbolic of celestial power.

He becomes the incarnation of Krishna who will mitigate the agonies of the Indians. As Krishna had killed the snake Kalia, Gandhi would kill the snake of British rule. In the novel, Gandhian movement is paralleled to a mythological plan. Rao illustrates a fine analogy of Ram and Ravana – Ram for Gandhi and Ravana for the British Government; Mother India or freedom is compared with Sita. Just as in the Ramayana, Rama left his palace so that he could kill Ravana and rescue Sita, Gandhi also leaves his home, roams across the country and finally rescues Mother India from the confinement of British rule. The novelist alludes to Gandhi's exiled existence. It is a struggle between the divine and devil. Iyenger rightly observes:

“The reign of the Red-Man is as Asuric rule, and it is raised by the devas, the satyagrahis. The characters sharply divide into two camps: The rulers on the one hand and satyagrahis on the other.” (Iyengar, 391)

The novel is about how people became cognizant of Gandhi's ideology, adapted it, made it a part of their existence and finally rose to confront their colonial master. He mobilized people from all sections of the society to rise and fight for freedom. Under his influence the villagers rise above casteism.

A specific social hierarchy was practiced in the village. Mixing of the inter-caste was strictly prohibited. Moorthy understands that Gandhi believed that freedom of the nation could never be a reality if the people of the nation are divided. Gandhi writes:

“...I want to say something about untouchability. If you want to do some real service, and want to save your Hindu dharma, you must remove this. If you fail to get rid of this, be sure that Hinduism itself will be rid of you. That religion cannot be a holy religion in which hatred is taught against even one man.”  
(Gandhi 69)

Moorthy takes up to himself the task of eradicating the caste system. He worked diligently for the betterment of the Pariah community of the village. He himself goes from house to house to awaken the ignorant people.

However, since he is a Brahmin, he is excommunicated and his own mother disowns him but Moorthy doesn't deter for he believes as does Gandhi that righteousness has to be upheld at all costs. He continues his work despite all odds.



Gandhi considered the joining of women folk in the freedom struggle as inevitable. Following his ideology, Moorthy ensures that women of Kanthapura also join the freedom movement. He seeks help from a rich widow Rangamma. She renders him full support and when Moorthy is behind bars, she establishes the Women's Volunteer Corps along with Rangamma and Ratna, the other two women of Kanthapura. Gradually all the village women also up rise and join their menfolk in their fight for freedom. In India women were limited to the four walls of their home. This uprising of women of Kanthapura was an extraordinary event.

The villagers never get to see Gandhi in person but through Moorthy they are well versed in Gandhian philosophy. He goes from home to home, to all the people of all castes, men and women and reasons with them the significance of Gandhian philosophy and the cause for which he had initiated the struggle. They consider him larger than life, someone who can drive the foreign oppressors. This sense of Gandhi gives them an inner strength, the driving force to stand against the colonists. They make supreme sacrifices for the great cause of the nation and waived by the doctrines of Gandhi; they remain non-violent even at the atrocities wreaked on them by the British colonists. They practice ahimsa and Satyagraha, the two major and founding principles of Gandhi as means for gaining swaraj. When, to oppose the Gandhian movement in Kanthapura, the government sends Bade Khan (policeman) to control the situation and keep eye on the miscreants. However, things turn for the worse when the people of

the village oppose the exploitation of the coolies and Skeffington Coffee Estate. Police lathi charges and doesn't spare even women and children. However, the villagers stand their ground and remain nonviolent. They even participate in the non-cooperation movement (a call given by Congress) and refuse to pay taxes and land revenues. As a result, they are forced to leave their village. They lose their lands and home but not their spirit. The spirit kindled by Gandhian ideology remains unfazed.

Moorthy and the people of Kanthapura exhibit all the traits of a martyr and adhere to the path shown by Gandhiji. Civil Disobedience Movement (Dandi March and Satyagraha), Non-Cooperation Movement (by non-payment of taxes and defiance of British Government), the grass root programme of Congress Committee campaign against ill practices (like untouchability, drinking, child marriage, widowhood, illiteracy, communal feeling, sexual exploitation, etc.) and finally the unification of the whole society for a singular nationalistic cause, that form an intricate part of Gandhian ideology have found their way into the very fabric of the plot of Kanthapura as they up rise towards formation of their sense of nationhood and their fight for its freedom.

The success of the illustrious novel *Kanthapura* lies in the successful assimilation of Gandhian doctrines of swaraj, women's upliftment, eradication of untouchability and communal harmony into the fabric of the novel. It is not Gandhi but his ideology that contributes towards the development of the novel.

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# **A RESEARCH STUDY OF THE DIFFERENT FACETS OF RELATIONSHIPS IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S NOVEL "*THE KITE RUNNER*"**

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**Abstract:** Humans are classified as social animals, which is a fitting designation. Because of this, it is necessary for human beings to be a part of society and to be dependent on the capabilities of other people in order to maintain their existence and make a living.

The multilayered novel through different perspectives including trauma ridden narrative, allegory and subjectivity, nihilism, and desperate hope at times of turmoil, are studied in this piece of research. There are numerous types of connections and relationships that need to be maintained with society, family, and most importantly, God. These can be maintained with the assistance of connections and communication between individuals and masses.

**Keywords:** Redemption, Morality, Culture, War, Relationship, Trauma, Existence, Trust.

**Introduction:** Throughout his fiction, Hosseini discusses domestic life and the institution of marriage as primary themes and relates these themes to the actual position of women in Afghan society. The other reason for discussing home and domestic life in Hosseini's fiction is that they play a vital role in cherishing Afghan cultural and traditional values where the majority of the women stay at home. Khaled Hosseini is a renowned Afghan-American author who is part of the diaspora. He is renowned for three exceptional books: *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, and *The Mountains Echoed*. The books take place during the Afghan conflict and focus on the protagonist's horrific experiences. He has addressed the challenging truths of the contemporary world in his publications. Hosseini has explored crucial subjects relevant to the contemporary era. His personalities are predominantly autonomous and impartial. His characters form relationships regardless of socioeconomic levels, statuses, races, and ages. Trust, mutual understanding, care, and sacrifice are present. Some of his works also explore the issue of conflict and its influence on human relationships.

He has portrayed the chaos in various ways. His works predominantly take place in Afghanistan and depict the nation's history, culture, ideals, social structure, and political circumstances. Expressions relating to a variety of concerns, sufferings, traumatic experiences, and disturbing events are common in present-day Afghanistan, which is one of the severely impacted battle zones. *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini is a bildungsroman novel that has been an enormous success around the globe for its painfully true

depiction of the horrifying tale of war that hit Afghan society. The novel became an instant hit with the audience when made into a film in 2007. The story traverses three decades of Afghan society, from profound peaceful days to the bloodthirsty decade of the 1990s, recounting intriguing themes including friendship and betrayal, peace and war, carefree childhood and psychological traumas, migration and child abuse, violence and tyranny, and authoritarian law of land. *The Kite Runner* is structured into three parts, with the initial part set in Kabul. This part chronicles Amir's childhood. It depicts events that appear to take place in the early and mid-1970s. This part centers on the evolution of the bond between Amir and Hassan. The latter part commences in 1981 with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. As a result of this event, Amir and his father are compelled to leave the nation and establish themselves in California as part of the Afghan immigrant community. The part includes information about Amir and Soraya's marriage and the death of Amir's father in 1989. The narrative's third and final segment commences in 2001. It describes the Amir's journey back to Afghanistan through Pakistan.

*The Kite Runner* is a historical fiction novel. The story takes place during significant events in Afghanistan's history, starting from the decline of the monarchy to the emergence and decline of the Taliban. It focuses on a particular region and the socioeconomic circumstances of the era. The arrival of the Soviets prompts the main characters Amir and his father Baba to move to America. The Taliban's rule leads to Hassan's death and leaves Sohrab orphaned. These two violent deeds are crucial for advancing the plot of *The Kite Runner*.

Hosseini has included several tiny details of Afghanistan to give an authentic representation of his hometown. Various types of events and descriptions have been created to emphasize the true nature of the descriptions. The musty-smelling markets of Kabul, winter kite-fighting competitions, and blood red pomegranate trees provide striking insights into a mostly unfamiliar setting and era for a primarily Western audience. Rebeca Stuhr's observation is noteworthy and deserves to be quoted for emphasis.

Hosseini writes compelling stories through which he questions assumptions and breaks apart stereotypes through the strengths and weaknesses of his characters. He interweaves into the action of his stories the details of history, culture, and daily life in Afghanistan. He challenges his readers to reflect on discrimination and political abuse within their own experience in light of instances of such abuses in a different and unfamiliar country. (Rebecca Stuhr 77-78)

*The Kite Runner* contains characteristics of bildungsroman. It chronicles Amir's development from childhood to maturity in terms of moral and psychological dimensions. The majority of the incidents have been portrayed using the flashback technique. From the beginning, it is evident that Hassan's rape significantly affected twelve-year-old Amir's life. Amir grapples with his failure to prevent a crisis for a significant portion of the novel. There is a need to make amends for his lack of action. Rahim Khan, Amir's boyhood instructor, contacts adult Amir and informs him that there is a path to redemption. Amir chooses to abandon his life and business in

America to go back to Afghanistan and make amends for his past deeds by rescuing Hassan's child, Sohrab. Amir states that he is "fully recovered."

The work depicts the contradictory nature of human affairs. The book portrays the wealthy lifestyles of the Afghans against the terrible and distressing living conditions of the unfortunate victims of the Taliban. The book offers insight into the Taliban's civilization and examines the beliefs and practices of the Afghan people. Amir's phone call from Rahim Khan, asking him to return, symbolizes a journey for Amir to seek penance and salvation from his past transgressions. The novel's narrative is presented in first person, consisting of a series of memories recounted by the protagonist Amir. Throughout the story, Amir is always burdened by regret and holds himself accountable for abandoning his loyal childhood companion, Hassan. B. Charlie's comment on this matter is worth quoting:

A gripping and emotional story of betrayal and redemption, *The Kite Runner* had me thrilled and moved, both at the same time. It tells the story of Amir and Hassan, the closest of friends, as good as brothers, and also experts in the art of kite flying. The two young boys live in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and this year they are going to try harder than ever to win the local kite-fighting tournament—a popular Afghan pastime, and this is Amir's one hope of winning his father's love. But just like the kites battling in the sky, war comes to Afghanistan, and the country becomes an extremely dangerous place. (Charlie, B)



The main topic of the work is Amir's need for redemption and atonement for past actions. Amir possesses a strong ability to carry out his responsibilities with diligence and sincerity. He always desired to receive Baba's mercy with a feeling of forgiveness. He has been troubled by his mother's death during childbirth. He feels a strong sense of shame and seeks redemption. To improve his relationship with Baba, Amir contemplates winning the kite tournament and returning the lost kite to him. Both of these ambitions are provocative and inspiring actions that maintain the momentum of the novel's plot from start to finish. Amir's remorse for Hassan is the driving force for his journey to seek forgiveness. Amir's travel from Kabul to find Sohrab and his encounter with Assef in the final part of the narrative are motivated by his feelings of regret and shame. Early in the story, Baba states that a young person who does not take initiative and work for themselves would grow into an adult who is unable to assist others. These inspiring ideas and words guided Amir's moral journey towards achieving redemption. Amir lacks the ability to stand up for himself as a child. As an adult, he can only restore his reputation by showing the courage to defend what is morally correct.

The work portrays a variety of complex and superficial relationships between people like Amir and Hassan, Baba and Amir, Baba and Hassan, and others. All of these relationships are significant and crucial to the novel's plot. Each relationship a reader comes across is significant in its own unique way. Baba, the father of Amir and Hassan, is a wealthy entrepreneur. He is skeptical of religious fundamentalism yet adheres to his own moral principles and behavior.

He displays remarkable courage and confidence. He hides the fact that Hassan is his own blood clotting in human shape throughout his life since he was born to a Hazara lady with whom he had an illicit affair. Baba refrains from openly showing affection for Hassan, therefore he maintains a respectful gap between Hassan and Amir, despite his deep love for him. Ali serves as both Hassan's surrogate father and a servant in Baba's household. He is primarily known for his modesty and diligent labor as a servant of Baba. Hassan is Amir's fraternal half-brother and closest companion. Hassan demonstrates his loyalty to Amir by consistently protecting him whenever he is in danger. Sanaubar is the mother of Hassan and the wife of Ali. She was infamous for her immoral behavior in her younger years and left Hassan soon after he was born. However, later in the story, she is depicted as a kind grandma to Sohrab, Hassan's son. Soraya, Amir's wife, is depicted as an exemplary spouse who consistently supports him when he requires assistance. Rahim Khan is portrayed as a paternal figure to Amir in the story. He consistently gives Amir the attention he craves and fills the emotional emptiness caused by Baba's absence in Amir's life. Assef, the antagonist in Hassan and Sohrab's lives, fulfills the function of a rapist in the narrative. He symbolizes all the negative aspects and injustices that have taken place in Afghanistan.

Hosseini has intricately woven a complex network of father-son relationships in this story. The bond between the lover and the beloved has been skillfully integrated into the narrative of the work. Amir yearns for his father's love and attention in the story but is

consistently disregarded by him. He desired to spend time with his father, who consistently neglects him in favor of spending time with his friend. Rebecca Stuhr's book *Reading Khaled Hosseini* explains how the novel's plot and events are significantly shaped by this relationship.

There are many ways to describe this novel, but Hosseini calls it a love story. It is not a conventional love story, however. It is the story of love between two friends who are also servant and master; the sins of commission and omission that tear the friendship apart; and the loyalty and altruistic love that survives in spite of everything. It is also the story of the love between father and son, husband and wife, and parent and child. the novel takes place across generations and continents, offers adventure, and provides a fresh look at the country and culture of Afghanistan. (Rebecca Stuhr 25)

The novel also delves into the intricate relationship between Baba and Hassan, which grows more complicated as the story progresses. Baba keeps the truth hidden in his heart till Rahim Khan discloses it later in the tale. Hassan and his father Ali hold a higher status than mere servants in Baba's household. Ali and Baba have matured alongside each other and, similar to Amir and Hassan, they are childhood friends. Ali had been acquainted with Baba since he was a young child. Baba held Hassan in high esteem and generously showered him with gifts and toys. He even organized for Hassan to undergo surgery to correct his cleft lip. Amir frequently felt envious when his father treated Hassan with equal care and fairness. The individual states:

Baba would buy us each three identical kites and spools of glass string. If I changed my mind and asked for a bigger and fancier kite, Baba would buy it for me--but then he'd buy it for Hassan too. At times, I desired that he refrained from doing that. Wished he'd let me be the favorite. (The Kite Runner 40)

Despite their socioeconomic and cultural differences, their lives are interconnected and cannot be separated. Although Hassan was a servant in Amir's household, he thoroughly enjoyed every moment they spent together. Upon Amir's return from school, they would proceed to a hill where they would sit and engage in conversation. After school, Hassan and I rendezvoused, picked up a book, and walked up a bowl-shaped hill immediately north of my father's land in Wazir Akbar Khan. There was a pomegranate tree near the entrance to the cemetery. One summer day, I inscribed our names, "Amir and Hassan, the sultans of Kabul," on Ali's kitchen knife.

(The Kite Runner 26) Amir frequently read numerous stories to Hassan. Hassan significantly influenced Amir's literary career in a favorable way. Hassan values the books that Amir reads to him. Throughout the narrative, Amir's domination is prevalent, creating a dynamic that resembles a master and slave relationship rather than a friendship. Amir created a narrative and eagerly woke Hassan in the middle of the night to read it to him. Hassan, being a loyal buddy, woke up to listen. Amir states:

I shook Hassan awake and asked him if he wanted to hear a story, He rubbed his sleep- clogged eyes and stretched. "Now?" What time is

it?” “Never mind the time. this story’s special. I wrote it myself,” I whispered, hoping not to wake Ali. Hassan’s face brightened. “then I have to hear it,” he said, already pulling the blanket off him. (The Kite Runner 25)

During the kite competition in the narrative, a horrific tragedy takes place that changes the course of Amir and Hassan's friendship. Amir prioritizes pleasing his father over being a loyal friend, causing him to overlook the issue and betray Hassan. Amir deceived his loyal supporter who had always stayed by him and was willing to go to any extent to be committed to him. After the contest ended, Amir cut the final kite, and Hassan quickly ran to get it for Amir. Amir went in search of Hassan after failing to find him at home. He roamed the streets of his hometown, inquiring with pedestrians if they had saw a Hazara youth chasing a blue kite.

Relationships are a vital aspect of life. Our interactions and relationships with others provide us joy. Sometimes, relationships can impede our progress and prompt us to reassess our connections with others. Amir, the main character in *The Kite Runner*, discovers that partnerships are not always advantageous. Hosseini illustrates how betrayal and suspicion may fracture relationships through Amir's encounters with Hassan, Baba, and Sohrab. We all have our own viewpoints and the right to assess our judgments, but sometimes such decisions might have deadly consequences.

The work posits that friendship transcends race, social status, age, and religion. It depicts the relationships spanning multiple generations,

including those between Baba and Hassan, Amir and Hassan, and Amir and Sohrab. One notable aspect of the novel is Baba's excessive kindness towards his servant's son, prompting the reader to contemplate the concept of "true humanism."

This perception is altered when it is disclosed that Baba is actually Hassan's biological father, making Hassan and Amir siblings. Despite differences in age, religion, and social level, Baba and Hassan share a common understanding. Baba is a member of the esteemed Pashtun ethnic group, while Hassan is from the marginalized Hazara community. Baba is not religious, unlike Hassan. Baba is a member of the respected Pashtun ethnic group.

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# **GANDHIAN IDEOLOGY'S INFLUENCE ON INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE**

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Gandhian ideas have inspired Indian English literature of the 20th century. Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915 and immediately started to have an impact on both national politics and literature. K.S. Venkataramani, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Amil Ali, Ahmad Abbas, Nayantara Sahgal, and K. Nagarajan are the most prominent Indian novelists in English who wrote under Gandhi's influence.

This research study aims to investigate how Mahatma Gandhi's ideals have influenced Indian writing in English generally. In light of current social, political, educational, religious, cultural, and economic difficulties, this research paper will aim to depict the fundamental ideas of Gandhianism in great detail and relate them to Indian English fiction.

**Key Words:** Gandhian Ideology, Influence Study, Indian Literature in English



Indian texts translated into English reflect the historical interaction of two cultures—Western and Indian—for about a century and a half. Indians were exposed to the influence of Western civilization through this. With the founding of four universities and the adoption of the Western educational system, the great blow allowed writers to express their emotions and experiences in English. The first Indian novelist, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, authored *Rajmohan's Wife* which was serialized as "Wife" in the Calcutta weekly *The Indian Field* in 1864. In book form, it was released in 1930. Charles Dickens and Sir Walter Scott, two British novels, had a significant effect on Bankim Chandra. In book form, it was released in 1930. Charles Dickens and Sir Walter Scott, two British novels, had a significant effect on Bankim Chandra. The middle-class woman Matangini suffers at the hands of her husband Rajmohan in the novel "Rajmohan's Wife". The novel was released during a period of social reform, thus it is not surprising that it is a social novel. It is clear that Bengal served as the setting for these early novels since writers from Bengal and Madras published most of their works up until the end of the nineteenth century.

In English-language Indian writing, the Gandhian era began in 1920. Gandhi motivated people all across the world to fight for India's independence and to cultivate a liberation consciousness.

The novelists of the 1930s and 1940s owed their inspiration and the conditions for their emergence to two contexts: the social and political upheavals of the Gandhian whirlwind and the era of late-modernism in Europe. (Mehrotra 191)

The way of truth and non-violence was recommended by Mahatma. Every aspect of the country, including politics, economics, education, religion, social life, language, and literature, was given life by him. Consequently, it illuminated both the political and literary spheres of India. K.R. Srinivas Iyengar writes: To Gandhi, national realization included the ending of political subjection and economic degradation, the removal of social inequalities and abuses like untouchability, caste arrogance, occupational prejudices, etc., the reform of education, and giving new life to language and literature. (258)

Gandhi gave average people the motivation to write about social issues and gave them a platform in the literary world. Gandhi's influence on Indian writing in the 1930s altered the literary landscape. The main themes of the story become love of country, freedom, and common man's difficulties. This literature was later dubbed Gandhian literature. In the words of M.K. Naik,

Novels became an instrument in the hands of writers focusing on the society with its values thus Indian society, galvanized into a new social and political awareness, was bound to seek creative expression for its new consciousness (Naik 57)

A lot of novels set in this era have been published about the independence movement. Gandhi did not write in the mainstream, but his writings had a profound impact on and fascinated a vast number of people worldwide. Gandhi's autobiography, "Experiments with Truth," published in 1925, is a timeless masterpiece that details his austere lifestyle and profound ideas. Gandhi wrote several books, the

best of which is Hind Swaraj, which presents his ideas on education, politics, economy, and ethics. He also expressed his opinions to the general public through the periodicals "Young India" and "Harijan." What set him apart from other leaders was his unwavering adherence to nonviolence. He was, therefore, the man of wisdom and simplicity who drew readers and founded Gandhian literature.

The influence of Gandhi on modern Indian writing has had a variety of effects that go in different ways and at different levels.

As regards the writer's choice of language, we have seen that one result of the Gandhian influence has been a general preference for the mother tongue or the regional language, and occasionally a purposeful bilingualism, the same writer handling with mastery his own mother tongue as well as English. (Iyengar 278)

It is believed that the Independence movement in India "was not merely a political struggle, but an all-pervasive emotional experience for all Indians in the nineteen twenties and thirties.... That was an experience that was national in nature" (Mukherjee 14).

There isn't an Indian writer who could miss this countrywide trend. The driving reason for the national uprising at this time was Gandhiji's beliefs. Gandhi's beliefs not only persisted on paper but also evolved into a way of life. It turned into the aspirations for India's new future. Fiction found fertile ground in a culture undergoing resurrection and transformation. During British control, it helped individuals become more self-aware and gave novelists a wide range of themes to work with, including social and national issues.

During this Gandhian Era Indian English novel discussed some of its most significant themes – freedom struggle, East-West relationship, quest of identity, the exploitation of the underdog, the search for justice and fair play, the treatment of the rural life etc. (Kumar 25)

Gandhi entered Indian literature at a time when the country required radical reform. Gandhiji actively addressed the social issues of Indian society in addition to its political and economic issues. Social reformation was unable to eradicate society's ingrained vices. For a foreigner, India's reputation had been tarnished outside of its borders. India was a superstitious country at that time. Child marriage and untouchability were two of the many wicked traditions prevalent in Indian society. In the so-called upper castes, widow remarriage was frowned upon and female education was not strongly promoted. The state of society had further deteriorated due to poverty. Gandhi attempted to identify these societal ills and change Indian society in these conditions as a karma-yogi.

In conclusion, it can be said that Gandhian ideology and its effects on society serve as the basis for the novels written in the 1930s and 1940s. Gandhi opposed creating art for its own sake. He held the view that "Art for Life's Sake." To him, the only things that might elevate men were art and literature grounded in truth. That's why all of his publications uphold moral principles and the truth. Gandhi's ideas and deeds sparked a wave of social awakening. Gandhi, who is arguably the best exponent of Indian philosophy, left an enduring legacy for his fellow citizens.

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# **GANDHI AND HIS IDEOLOGY: A FEMINISTIC STUDY**

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## **Abstract:**

Mahatma Gandhi is widely known for his leadership in India's struggle for independence from British colonial rule. However, he is also recognized as a feminist who advocated for women's rights and gender equality. Gandhi believed that women were equal to men and that they should be given the same opportunities and rights as men. He actively worked to improve the status of women in Indian society, especially in the areas of education, economic independence, and political participation. One of Gandhi's most famous quotes on gender equality is, "To call women the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then, indeed, is woman less brute than man. If strength is meant by moral power, then woman is immeasurably superior to man's superior." Gandhi also advocated for women's right to vote and run for political office, and he worked to eliminate discrimination against women in the workplace. He believed that women's empowerment was essential for the development of a just

and equitable society. In addition, Gandhi supported the idea of nonviolent resistance as a means of social change, and he believed that this approach could also be applied to the struggle for women's rights. Overall, Gandhi's beliefs, ideas and actions demonstrate his commitment to gender equality and his status as a feminist. His contributions to the women's rights movement have had a lasting impact on Indian society and continue to inspire feminist movements around the world. The paper covers the ideology of Gandhi regarding feminism and what different celebrated Indian women had views about him.

In India, Mahatma Gandhi, also known as the "Father of the Nation," is widely regarded as a supporter of nonviolent resistance and the fight for Indian independence from British colonial rule. Despite his vocal support for women's rights and his role in empowering women in India, Gandhi's legacy as a feminist is often overlooked or minimised.

He inspired generations of Indian feminists to fight for gender justice and equality through his advocacy for women's rights and promotion of gender equality.

Gandhi recognised the importance of women in Indian society and believed that they deserved equal rights and opportunities. He emphasised the importance of women's education and encouraged them to get involved in politics. Gandhi also spoke out against practices that he saw as harmful to women, such as child marriage and dowry.



He believed that women should be able to vote and collaborated closely with women's organisations to advance women's political rights. Gandhi also believed in the power of nonviolent resistance to challenge oppressive social norms and practices. Furthermore, Gandhi's vision of Swaraj, or self-rule, included not only political freedom but also social and economic freedom. He believed that true independence could be attained only when all members of society, including women, were given equal rights and opportunities. Gandhi's emphasis on women's empowerment was aimed not only at combating gender inequality, but also at creating a more just and equitable society for all.

Today, feminist movements in India and around the world are inspired by Gandhi's ideas and legacy. His emphasis on nonviolence, self-sufficiency, and social justice provides a compassionate and effective framework for feminist activism. Gandhi's vision of an inclusive and egalitarian society in which women are empowered and free continues to serve as a beacon for those working for gender justice and equality. He made a significant and far-reaching contribution to the Indian feminist movement. His support for women's rights and gender equality inspired generations of Indian feminists to challenge oppressive social norms and practices. Gandhi's legacy continues to inspire and guide those who strive for a more just and equitable world in which women are empowered and free.

While Gandhi did not explicitly identify as a feminist, his views on gender equality and actions show a dedication to women's rights and

empowerment. His legacy continues to inspire feminists and social justice activists worldwide.

Gandhi's advocacy for women's education was one of his most significant contributions to the feminist movement. Gandhi believed that education was critical to women's empowerment, and he frequently argued that educating girls was a waste of resources. He argued that women's education was critical to the development of Indian society and that women should have equal access to knowledge and skills as men. Gandhi also emphasised the importance of women's health and hygiene, and he encouraged women to take physical and emotional care of themselves.

Gandhi believed that education was a fundamental right of women and that they should have access to education just like men. He believed that education would empower women and enable them to become leaders in their communities. And the more the women get educated, the more they would further be able to teach women.

Another aspect was economic independence which Gandhi believed in. He encouraged women to work and earn a living and believed that this would help them gain respect and equality in society. Also it will empower them with dignity and a sense of self pride and they won't be any more dependent on their husbands which will lead to a flourishing future of the country as a whole because a woman would contribute to the growth of the country as any other citizen.

Political participation was another one of the things which Gandhi wanted. He believed that women should actively participate in politics and should have the right to vote. He was a strong supporter of women's suffrage and believed that women's voices should be heard in the political arena. Because according to Gandhi, it is only a woman who can understand the needs of another woman and can provide them with a solution. It is only a woman who can bring a revolutionary change at a national level for the women of the country only if they are active in the politics. Gandhi was also an outspoken advocate for women's participation in the Indian independence movement. He recognised the critical role that women could play in the fight for liberty and encouraged them to join the cause. Gandhi believed that women had a unique perspective on social and political issues, and that their participation could contribute to the development of a more just and equitable society. Many previously excluded women were inspired by Gandhi's message and became active in the independence movement.

His feminist philosophy was also notable for its emphasis on nonviolence and the rejection of patriarchy. Gandhi believed that violence and oppression were inextricably linked, and that true freedom could only be obtained through nonviolent means. He also acknowledged patriarchy's role in perpetuating violence against women and advocated for a more equitable and compassionate society. Gandhi's emphasis on nonviolence and equality laid the groundwork for a feminist movement that sought to challenge oppressive power structures.

Yet, Gandhi was not without flaws, despite his significant contributions to the feminist movement. Some of his statements and actions towards women have been called sexist and paternalistic, and his sexuality views have been called into question. However, it is critical to consider Gandhi's legacy in the context of his time and acknowledge the strides he made in advancing women's rights in India.

Gandhi's views on feminism were shaped by his commitment to nonviolence and equality for all human beings. He believed that women should have equal access to education, employment, and political participation as men. His approach to feminism was founded on his belief in women's inherent strength and ability to lead and have a positive impact on society. He saw women's roles as not only domestic, but also as active participants in the public sphere. He did not criticise feminism with some claiming that he did not do enough to address the unique challenges and issues that women face. His advocacy for women's rights and commitment to equality, on the other hand, have left an indelible mark on India and the world.

He famously stated, "Woman is man's companion, endowed with equal mental abilities. She has the right to participate in the most minute details of man's activities, and she has the same right to freedom and liberty as he does." He also advocated for women's education, believing that it would equip them to be change agents in society.

He encouraged women to be self-sufficient and active participants in their own lives, rather than relying on men for survival. Many Indian feminists saw self-reliance and self-respect as essential for women's empowerment, and Gandhi's emphasis on these values resonated with them. Few of the women who backed Gandhi were

Sarojini Naidu, also known as India's Nightingale, was a prominent figure in the Indian independence movement and a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi. Naidu had a deep admiration for Gandhi's philosophy and nonviolent resistance methods, and she expressed her feelings about him on numerous occasions.

Naidu believed that Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence and Satyagraha (truth-force) was the most powerful weapon in India's independence struggle. Gandhi was seen by her as the embodiment of Indian values and traditions, and his ideas were based on the ancient Indian philosophy of Ahimsa (non-violence). As she once stated, "Gandhi has become synonymous with peace and nonviolence. His powerful and inspiring message of truth and nonviolence is resonating around the world."

Gandhi's leadership style, which was based on simplicity, selflessness, and sacrifice, was also admired by Naidu. She saw Gandhi's leadership style as a model for future generations of leaders. As Naidu once stated, "Gandhi's leadership represents a challenge to the modern world, which is obsessed with power and materialism. His

leadership is founded on moral authority, and he derives his power from the people."

According to Naidu, he was also a unifier of India's diverse communities. She saw Gandhi's message of unity in diversity as the key to India's future advancement. As she once stated, "The message of Gandhi is one of brotherhood and unity. He aspires to build a new India free of discrimination based on caste, creed, or religion. He aspires to build an India in which all communities coexist peacefully."

She not only stood beside Gandhi in the Indian Freedom Movement but also supported him but was a close associate of Gandhi and worked closely with him to advance the cause of women's rights.

Finally, Sarojini Naidu's opinions on Mahatma Gandhi were heavily influenced by her own values and beliefs because she herself was a feminist. Naidu's admiration for Gandhi's leadership, message of unity in diversity, and commitment to social justice with women is still relevant today and serves as an inspiration to millions of people worldwide.

Another prominent figure was, Kamala Nehru who was the wife of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. She was also a close friend of Mahatma Gandhi, with whom she shared his vision for an independent India. An India where every gender, community and religion can breathe with dignity. Kamala Nehru admired Gandhi and

his philosophy, and she expressed her feelings about him on numerous occasions.

Gandhi, according to Kamala Nehru, was a ray of hope for India's future. She believed that his nonviolent philosophy of Satyagraha (truth-force) was the only way to free India from British rule. Gandhi's leadership style, which was based on simplicity, selflessness, and sacrifice, was also admired by Kamala Nehru. She regarded Gandhi as a true servant of the people, putting their needs ahead of his own. As she once stated, "Gandhi's leadership is founded on moral authority rather than force. Because of his integrity, honesty, and selflessness, he is a leader who inspires people to follow him."

Gandhi was also viewed as a unifier of India's diverse communities by Kamala Nehru. She saw Gandhi's message of unity in diversity as the key to India's future advancement. As she once stated, "Gandhi demonstrated that we can collaborate as a united India. He has brought people from all castes, religions, and regions together to fight for a common cause. His message of unity in diversity serves as an example for all of us."

Few other examples are, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit who was a prominent figure in the Indian independence movement and the country's first female cabinet minister. She was also a close friend of Mahatma Gandhi, with whom she shared his vision of an independent and just India. Another one is, Annie Besant who was

a social reformer, women's rights activist, and a leading figure in the Theosophical Society. She was also a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi and shared his vision for an independent India. Aruna Asaf Ali who was known to Gandhi was involved in a variety of nationalist activities and shared Gandhi's vision of an independent and just India. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya another a social reformer, freedom fighter, and feminist who was known for her advocacy of women's rights and the revival of traditional Indian handicrafts. She worked closely with Gandhi and was instrumental in the establishment of the All India Women's Conference.

The first and only female Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi was known for her strong leadership and commitment to social justice. She was deeply influenced by her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, who was a close associate of Gandhi. And the very wife of Mahatma Gandhi Kasturba Gandhi who was actively involved in the Indian independence movement. She was a strong advocate of women's rights and played a key role in the struggle for India's independence.

Looking at all the above examples it shows that it was the ideology and the perspective of Gandhi which brought all the support to Gandhi of women. They genuinely felt that Gandhi was the one who believed in equality and wanted to bring a real change in the society.



**Conclusion:**

Mahatma Gandhi played an important role in the Indian feminist movement through his advocacy for women's rights and his promotion of gender equality. He recognized the important role that women played in Indian society and believed that they should have equal rights and opportunities. He promoted women's education and encouraged them to participate in political activities. He also spoke out against practices such as child marriage and dowry, which he saw as harmful to women. He supported the suffrage movement and worked closely with women's organisations to promote women's rights. He also believed in the power of nonviolent resistance, which he saw as a means of challenging oppressive social norms and practices. Gandhi's emphasis on the importance of self-reliance and self-respect also resonated with many Indian feminists, who saw these values as essential for women's empowerment. Overall, he played a significant role in promoting gender equality and empowering women in India, and his ideas and legacy continue to inspire feminist movements around the world today. Mahatma Gandhi was a feminist because of his support for women's education, participation in the independence movement, rejection of patriarchy, and emphasis on nonviolence. While his legacy is not without controversy, his contributions to Indian women's empowerment are significant and should be acknowledged. Gandhi's message of equality and justice continues to inspire feminists worldwide, and his legacy serves as a reminder of the value of intersectionality and the fight for social justice.

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