

Mahatma Gandhi and Indian Opinion

Dr. Shraddha Vinod Kothavale, Associate Prof. & Head, Dept of Political Science,
Sahakarbhushan S.K. Patil College, Kurundwad, Tal – Shirol, Dist – Kolhapur.

Mahatma Gandhi was outstanding personalities in the 20th Century. He was a prophet of Non-Violence. Gandhi wrote prolifically and spoke frequently during his long carrier as a social reformer and political leader. Drawing upon writings speeches letters and recorded conversations of Gandhi. Gandhi edited Six weekly newspapers in a Journalistic carrier, covering more than 30 years.

Gandhi said about journalism as, ‘In the very first month of Indian Opinion, I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countryside and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this line of reasoning is correct, how many of the journals in the world would stop those that are useless? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil generally, go on together, and man must make his choice (An Autobiography or the Story of My Experiments with Truth, P.211)

Mahatma Gandhi for the first time took the responsibility of a weekly “Indian Opinion” as an editor in 1903 with the purpose of representing the grievances of South African Indians to the ruler. Indian Opinion it also provides an invaluable record of the political life of the Indian Community. His experience in South Africa helped him in his work for Independence movement. He focused Satyagraha would have been impossible without Indian Opinion. They have emphasized how the newspaper highlighted the major issues and recorded the activities of those offering passive resistance and also how it become an active agent in mobilizing and organizing resistance.

The Indian Opinion also published news about activities of the Indian Political Organization and news stories obtained from a variety of Indian newspaper and also took the position on Political events happening in Indian.

The Indian Opinion was issued on every Saturday in 4 Languages namely English, Hindi, Tamil and Gujarati, The publication was an important tool for political movement led by Mahatma Gandhi and the Natal Indian Congress to fight racial discrimination and win civil Rights for the Indian immigrant community in South Africa. His letters to the editors of South African dailies were a lesson to all Journalists on how to fight injustice in a country where the laws were loaded against one section of the people without giving offences to the rules themselves. Mahatma Gandhi openly agreed in this writings and told the Indian in South Africa that the Indian Opinion was certainly a most useful and potent weapon in their struggle. He guided and unified the Indians in South Africa through the Indian Opinion largely.

Ethics is a branch of Philosophy concerned with actions that are morally permissible and actions that are not. Ethics in media constituted normative science of conduct applied voluntarily tools of communication for changes and for development of deprived masses struggling against the structures of oppression, self-restraint, character, truth, accuracy, objectivity, fairness, balance and impartiality are the premise of Satyagrah, Journalistic ethics. Gandhi was of the opinion that newspaper should not be used as means of livelihood. Satyagrahi Journalism stands for popular participatory process of sustainable social, spiritual, material advancement for emancipation and empowerment. Satyagraha was weapon to the deprived masses and Satyagrah Journalism and alternative model of development communication. Selfishness, anger, lack of faith or impatience have no room. Infinite patience, firm resolve, single mindedness of purpose, perfect calm are essential qualities for Satyagrah journalist. Gandhi emphasized the Role of Spirituality in the development and communication process.

The objective of Indian Opinion was to express the grievances of Indian racial prejudice and discrimination. The idea of Satyagrah was development in the era.

Gandhi was influenced by the philosophy of Ruskin and Tolstoy. Indian Opinion was successful in mobilizing the masses it pressurized the British Government for the abolition of certain taxes imposed on Indians and withdrawal of inhuman laws. The roots of the freedom struggle led by Gandhi can be traced to the Indian Opinion. Thus Gandhi self-restraint. Mantra is relevant in today's journalism. How important the journal was to Gandhi is seen from his own statement in his biography. My experiments with truth "Indian Opinion" Was a part of my life. Week I poured out my soul in its columns and expounded the principles and practice of Satyagraha. As I understood it also he wrote it is wrong to use a newspaper as a means of earning a living. There are certain spheres of work. Which are such consequence and have such bearing on public welfare that it undertakes them for earning once livelihood will defeat the primary aim behind them. He was of the opinion, newspapers are meant primarily to educate the people.

Conclusion:

Gandhi had done awareness in Indian people in South Africa about their rights. He learned many things through 'Indian Opinion'. He said about Indian Opinion that, 'Indeed the journal (Indian Opinion) became for me a training in self-restraint, and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts. In fact the tone of *Indian Opinion* compelled the critic to put a curb on his own pen...For me it became a means for study of human nature in all its casts and shades...It made me thoroughly understand the responsibility of a journalist (*An Autobiography, p. 286*). He also observed that, 'The Journal *Indian Opinion* was a powerful weapon in the armoury of Passive Resistance and continues to be the only recorder of accurately sifted facts about our countrymen in South Africa and of Passive Resistance movement. It is in no sense a commercial enterprise' (*Letter to Mr. J. B. Petit, Secretary, South African Indian Fund, June 16, 1915*). Gandhi successfully aware the Indian people lived in South Africa about their rights through 'Indian

Opinion' journal. Thus Gandhi's thoughts of Journalism are very useful to today's Journalism.

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