

Revisiting Gandhi's 'India of My Dreams': Globalisation and Village Republics in the 21st Century

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Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi's 'India of my Dreams' is a compilation of his previous works, writings and speeches, published on various forums like Young India, Navjeevan, and Harijan. The text aspires to give a complete layout of Mahatma Gandhi's expectations of a free and independent India to the reader. In the foreword, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, writes that "in our hour of victory...we cannot ignore...the undying principles which have inspired him... the achievement of India of Mahatma Gandhi's dreams will be the fitting consummation of all that he has worked for and stands for."

This paper revisits Gandhi's India of My Dreams 73 years after independence in the year 2020 and looks for ways to conform the present Indian state to Gandhi's views. It deliberates whether we have deviated from the path our father laid for us so clearly, and considers whether it is feasible to step back and introduce reforms. It looks at India's dealings with its villages in the face of globalisation over the past few decades and compares these with Gandhi's instructions in the book.

Decentralisation policies, migration in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, women's safety and education policy in India are looked at in a village-globalisation lens to specifically analyse the effects of globalisation on Indian

villages in all these spheres of life, looking in equal parts at polity and social life- a fundamental tenet in Gandhi's writings.

Finally, an amalgamation of various ideas on a multitude of problems that have been posed to Indian society and polity in the 21st century are coalesced to attempt to derive a solution and offer a recommendation in the concluding note.

Technological advancements, the computer and the internet globalisation and western civilisation have facilitated the publication of millions of research documents on an eclectic range of pedagogical concentrations spanning every significant discovery made by humankind. However, it seems with research in general, and the contemporary academia on the social sciences in specific, there exists an insufficiency of viable and practically implementable solutions to the research problems. In stark contrast, 'India of my Dreams' manifests as a futuristic handbook for Indian governance, or rather, a practical manual of the Father of the Nation's vision for the motherland. It is most appropriate, in this context, to examine this striking piece of literature in the given theme: then and now.

'India of My Dreams' is timeless in conception and reception. A compilation of Gandhi's thoughts and writings amassed from pre-existent literature delivered by him over a span of many years, arguably, the most compelling part of this compendium of ideas is the preface note addressed "to the reader" which acknowledges any discrepancies that may be found in Gandhi's writing, advising the reader to consider the later published idea on the same subject. Gandhi insists that he, too, is human: an organic being, capable of growth and change (Gandhi, 1947, 1). However, the underlying theme of almost all 75 chapters of the book is coloured by the author's aspiration for India to evade the so-called "ill-effects" of globalisation, European culture, and Western Civilisation. This is, debatably, a fierce stand against change itself.

The dichotomy of the Mahatma's ideas about a globalised world and his advocacy of village republics is an intriguing feature of the book, especially when the time

period in which it was written is considered. Historian R.G. Collingwood declares contemporary history a myth, and considers a historian's task as a 're-enactment of past thoughts' (Smith 2012). Doing justice to Gandhi's thoughts "then and now" can only mean that one must study his beliefs in the setting of his time and ours. It is evident that his ideas cannot be assessed in a vacuum, but they are relevant now, more than ever, in the face of a global pandemic and the de-urbanisation it has caused in the country.

The representation of Gandhi's views on globalisation and villages is a vast ocean of knowledge in the given book. Applying interpretations of these views to contemporary India would prove to be an arduous task that may bear little fruit. Thus this paper deals with Gandhi's writings on these subjects in modern socio-political praxis relevant majorly to this crude juncture in human history brought forth by the present pandemic. Decentralisation, migration, and de-urbanisation during the COVID-19 pandemic, education and women's safety are examined under a village-globalisation lens in this paper.

Globalisation and Village Republics: Then and Now

While Ambedkar and Nehru treated the Indian village as a site of oppression and backwardness respectively, to Gandhi, the village was a symbol of authenticity. The former, much like the colonial administrators of their time, neglected the pulse of the Indian village as the soul of the nation and regarded it as an object to be liberated from social evils and transformed into urban suburbs, akin to those found in the west (Jhodka 2002, 3343-3344). We inspect globalisation in relation to Indian villages here forth, rather than examining them as separate entities.

The 'village republic' fashioned by Gandhi in his writings is not the one he created in idealistic or romantic imagination, but one that had existed as an "autonomous republic" for eons under various rajahs in the erstwhile kingdoms of what is today called India. It is hence that traditional Indian life is still conceptualised as one that resides in the village, which is regarded as the basic unit of Indian civilisation and social structure. However, the hegemony of the Zamindars, Ryotwars and

Mahalwars over the village economy only added fuel to the fire that was the plethora of social evils that haunted rural Indian society during colonial and post-colonial times (Jhodka 2002, 3350). Nonetheless, Gandhi, unlike his contemporaries, insisted that India was found, not in her cities but in her (then) 7,00,000 villages. He states that not only was the town dweller ignorant to the plight of his village brethren, he was also their greatest exploiter (Prasad 2001).

The idea of exploitation in the milieu of globalisation and village societies is an interesting one to analyse. Towns, in Gandhi's time, were said to be secluded havens of progress and industrialisation. Migration, and subsequently urbanisation, was a mandate if one aspired to partake in the so-called wonders of 19th century industrial revolution that was imposed upon the naïve Indian population by its colonial overlords. While towns thrived and, moreover, cities began to develop as urbane hubs of prosperity, Mother India bore a new child. The newly founded Indian middle class emerged to be a significant player in the Indian Independence Movement. However, the middle class' substantial influence on the Indian economy made it central to the tussle between upcoming Indian industrialists and the Colonial Raj (Oonk 2015, 43-47). The discernable chain of exploitation in 20th century industrialised India comes off as a nightmare of Marxian proportions as the industrial workers here, akin to their brethren in Russia, were plagued by social alienation- not only from the product and the process, but also from their people and government. However, it is questionable if the license raj born out of the subsequently adopted Soviet-inspired five year development plan model did much good to these industrialists either.

While the industrialists and other "town-dwellers" exploited the village people, they, in turn, were exploited by the colonisers who "supported" them, while simultaneously imposing trade restrictions, barriers and unreasonable taxation. This is reflected in Dadabhai Naoroji's 'Drain of Wealth' theory as well, that blamed the tax burden levied on the average Indian and the lack of immigration into India that grossly affected industrialisation as some of the many reasons for the failing Indian economy in the moderate era (Naoroji 1901, 628).

This exploitation is characteristic of erstwhile insular colonialists across the globe, and was probably indoctrinated in the Indian mind-set as well, especially in the cities and towns. Gandhi, in 1969, wrote of villages that were deserted for many months every year as villagers went to Bombay to work under “unhealthy and... immoral conditions” (Jhodka 2002, 3345). Upon return, they would bring with them corruption, drunkenness and disease to the villages. So impressionable was the mind of the lay Indian that exposure to the urban would cause him to absorb habits and behaviour that perhaps, were ill-suited for him. It is astonishing that this aspect of Indian thought and behaviour stands true even today, and is further explored in this paper under the lens of women’s safety.

Surinder Jhodka presents Gandhi’s changing points of focuses regarding Indian villages in three distinct phases. While, at the offset, the Mahatma concentrated on equating Indian villages to the west, his later writings sought to pit village life against urban life, offering the former as an alternative to modernity, and by extension, globalisation. The latter phase encompasses Gandhi’s focus on reforming the existing villages in India (Jhodka 2002, 3346). This is a predominant theme in the part of ‘India of My Dreams’ that deals with villages wherein Gandhi describes the idyllic village, outlining acceptable standards of health, sanitation, food and work. The creation of such utopian village republics is greatly dependent on globalisation, or lack thereof, especially in the current state of things. This idea is explored further in application to the migrant crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gandhi’s resentment of globalisation is established by his challenges to industrialisation, which he refers to as a “curse”. He declares that “this mania for mass-production is responsible for the world crisis” (Gandhi 1947, 36). However, what Gandhi neglects to express is that the values of liberty and fraternity that he preaches, his learnings from Thoreau and Tolstoy and the idea of democracy itself are all western inheritances and, for India, products of 18th and 19th century globalisation. Notably, world-wide anti-globalisation movements portray Gandhi as someone who shared their ideology, in spite of the fact that Gandhi, himself, was a “product of globalisation” having been educated in London and having started his political activities in South Africa (Mukherjee). Yet, it would be arrogant to assume that the Mahatma did not realise this. This aspect of the compilation of Gandhi’s philosophies is evidence to the multi-layered and multi-faceted nature

of his writings and the deliberate omission of specific ideas that may have been a hindrance to the realisation of his dreams for India.

Dr. Tabassum Sheikh speaks of 'Gandhi and globalisation' in relation to economic development, which she deems unimportant if it fails to uplift the impoverished and those from the lowest rungs of society. Her contention is that each man who contributes to or participates in economic development has the right to reap the benefits of the same and fully realise their fundamental and human rights. Therefore, "development" that favours the elite's narrow interests in society then, or the already developed global north now, at the cost of denying rights to the underprivileged or the global south respectively, is not development at all (Sheikh). In fact, the application of the Marxian theory of alienation may be fitting to this form of economic un-development, wherein the working class is alienated from the product of its hard work and denied the right to participate in making decisions about the process of production. To this end, Gandhi says that when production and consumption are both localised, one would see the temptation to speed up production at any price disappear. (Gandhi 1947, 35) While he insists that such localisation would bring an end to all the perils of the modern economic system, this equilibrium of production and consumption is a feature of perfect competition that economists have been vying to establish practically for decades. This is a pertinent example of the aforementioned gap between theory and practice in social science research that 'India of My Dreams' has inevitably fallen prey to as well.

Gandhi's characterisation of western industrial society vis-à-vis the Indian village society and economy as 'one man's food is another man's poison' is aptly representative herein as well (Gandhi 1947, 35). Indeed, the marvels of industrialisation, globalisation and development have been incredibly gainful for western civilisation in the colonial and post-colonial periods, at the cost of nurturing Indian village economies. Many a study about the decline of economies in colonies around the globe have indicated that "the white man's burden" was a façade that masked the undertaking of mass plundering by European colonisers and overlords. Of these, the most eminent in recent times is Dr. Shashi Tharoor's speech titled 'Britain Does Owe Reparations' delivered at the Oxford Union. Herein, Dr. Tharoor illustrates how India was governed for the benefit of Britain and that

the latter's rise was financed by the depredation of India. Gandhi's charkha and khadi, which Nehru called "the livery of India's freedom," are symbols of protest against British industrialisation which led to the complete fall of the traditional Indian handloom. The entire premise of toxic colonialism in contemporary times can be equated to this aspect of 19th and 20th century industrialisation – and while the colonialist, under his garb of nobly endeavouring to civilise the native people of the colony, fooled the masses into serving his every wish and command, the burden of silently accepting and painstakingly managing his off-cuts fell on the poor colony. Needless to say, this is a widely prevalent phenomenon that can be observed in most erstwhile colonies and present-day third world nations alike, including Vietnam, which was a French Colony and The Philippine Islands: Rudyard Kipling's inspiration for his poem titled 'The White Man's Burden'.

The British colony of India was an agrarian economy. Over 75% of the Indian population was made of agriculturists who lived in villages in the 1900s. Inadvertently, these village dwellers faced the brunt of Britain's aforementioned conscious de-industrialisation of India. In this light, Gandhi's emphasis on village industries and mill industries and discouragement of the passive or active exploitation of villagers was highly relevant to his time. Mechanisation, according to Gandhi, is good when the hands are few but evil when there are more hands than are required for the work, like in India (Gandhi 1947, 101).

Herein, one can recognise the visionary that Gandhi was as India, in the present-day, is plagued by the ills of disguised unemployment, which is most rampant in the primary sector in India today. To Gandhi, decentralisation and focus on the village republic could solve many of the problems that we still face today. Hence, it is only fitting to analyse Gandhi's ideas of decentralisation from the 20th century and ascertain if the same could be viable in 21st century India.

Decentralisation and Public Policy in Globalised India

Economic development, in Gandhi's eyes, would only be possible if the state achieved complete decentralisation. To him, "independence must begin at the

bottom' and so, decentralisation was essential to the establishment and the sustenance of the village republic system. In 'Non-violent Economy,' Gandhi insists that the establishment of said non-violent economy is impossible if the gap between the rich and the impoverished persists and advocates dignity of labour. He states that India must adopt a policy of decentralisation to evolve around non-violent lines, and in doing so proposes a system of socialism that he advertises as a 'Ram Rajya,' commonly perceived as the ideal form of society in Hindu philosophy (Gandhi 1947, 72-74).

Gandhi's evident fear of economic divide between the top 1% and bottom 20% or so of society, and his distress regarding lack of dignity of labour destroying society and economy are more than justified in the 20th century setting (Gandhi 1947, 75-79). The discussed trend of migration to cities and the growing perils of a capitalised, industrialised economy led to the creation of an Indian bourgeoisie. While this new Indian industrialist class flourished in the city lights, the failed crops in the drought-stricken villages pushed farming families over the edge. A grand divide was born. The then-town dweller was ostentatiously wealthy, whilst the average farmer was impoverished and hungry (Madhumati 2011, 63-64).

The famines of 1896-1897 and 1899-1900, both caused by drought, struck particularly hard on the Indian village economy, but hardly affected the towns. However, in context of creating a 'Non-violent Economy' in Gandhi's Ram Rajya (Gandhi 1947, 72-75), one must note the controversies surrounding the officially recorded mortality rates of the Bihar famine of 1966 and the Maharashtra famine of 1972-73. Here, it is pertinent to question the socialistic ideals that were adopted by Nehru, and further promulgated by Indira Gandhi, since the bureaucratic and institutional apathy exhibited by the government during these famines is arguably nothing short of violence in the economy. Moreover, the present politico-economic standing of a post-industrialised and largely centralised India is characteristic of what the Mahatma feared for India's future. The lack of decentralisation and the limitations and shortcomings of the comparatively recently introduced system of local self-governance, along with the legacies of the licence raj have marred the Indian economy with rampant corruption, gross

economic inequality and most recently, the risk of foreign invasion in urbanised India that Gandhi seemed to dread the most (Sharma, Singh, and Singh 2008, 729-731).

A reconstruction of the entire social order is recommended in the writings as the way to equal distribution (Gandhi 1947, 75-78). While this system does not deny each man what he wants, it provides him only with how much he needs. This was the case for the Indian middle and lower classes who sustained themselves on the ration administered by the government for many decades post-independence. However, present-day India, with its system of 'federal governance with a central bias' is a confused, yet overly centralised economy when looked at in a Gandhian lens (Chakroborty and Pandey 2009, 10). This is evident in the Indian State's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, for while the centre issued a certain set of guidelines, each state issued other guidelines that rarely ratified the former. Interestingly, the centre, in its guidelines for September, censured this behaviour by mandating that no state shall issue separate orders contrary to the ones released by it. On the other hand, such a system is essential in a land as vast and varied as India, not just in this scenario but in all situations. Then again, one cannot ignore the inherent contradiction with regard to centralisation and, indeed, decentralisation herein.

The recent uproar regarding the Central Board for Secondary Education's next edition of textbooks for its higher secondary social science students was majorly concerned with the elimination of concepts like federalism and decentralisation from the texts. For many, this move was seen as an aggressive shift towards a more centralised system of governance in the future, taking a departure from the legacy of the Gandhian values discussed here.

Wilfred Wellock takes an interesting stand on the internationalism of decentralisation in 'Is there a Nonviolent Road to a Peaceful World?' wherein he submits that a world peace order could be established by following a two-sided revolution leading to personal resistance of all war and nuclear armaments, along with a social and industrial decentralisation that fulfils each individual's right to responsibility, expression and cooperative participation in an industry (Wellock, 261-264). One may identify the roots of this interpretation, once again,

in Gandhi's counsel on running a village industry. The 'Khadi mentality' speaks of decentralisation of production and distribution of the necessities of life and the simultaneous nationalisation of heavy industry, striking a balance while also providing 'choice before labour' and fundamental worker's rights to the village workforce (Gandhi 1947, 106).¹

COVID-19 Migrant Crisis and the Village Republic System

The focus on the village workforce and its rights manifests in Gandhi's discourse on unemployment and migration as well, both in 'India of My Dreams' and in 'My Experiments with Truth.' It is thought-provoking to assess the continuing dominance of the migrant population in the urban economy and the psycho-social relevance of migration in colonial India and in the 21st century modern nation.

In keeping with Dadabhai Naoroji's assessment of the economy in 1867 (Naoroji 1901), migration into India was sparse at this time. On the other hand, emigration was widespread. In 'My Experiments with Truth,' the Smuts-Gandhi agreement and Gandhi's general displeasure with the system of indentured emigration are brought to light along with his activism for the immediate abolition of indentured labour comes to light (Gandhi 1927, 447-450). UNESCO observes that the first Indian indentured immigration was recorded in the 1830s. Nearly 12 lakh Indians were relocated to 19 countries over a span of 100 years since then (UNESCO). Gandhi made his first petition against this 'semi-slavery' in 1894. His actions, at Madan Mohan Malviya's bequest, warranted a blanket ban on the indentured labour system that was levied by the English in 1917 (Gandhi 1927, 447-450).

On the other hand, his disapproval of migration from villages to towns and cities is also evident in his many writings. His model of village republics promulgated in 'The Gospel of Swadeshi' promotes the inculcation of an attitude for every Indian to prefer an indigenous good to a foreign-made one, and moreover, a good produced by a village industry to one made in the mills. However, he

does not wish for the extinction of landlords and capitalists, who facilitate most migration (Gandhi 1947, chap. 31) . In 'Class War,' Gandhi writes that he wishes for a transformation in the existing relationship between the capitalists or landlords and the masses into something purer and healthier as the idea of a class war does not appeal to him (Gandhi 1947, chap. 8) . However, from his writings, one can infer that Gandhi wants labour, and indeed good labour, to be brought to the labourer who must continue living in his sovereign, independent village republic. Astonishingly, the idea of bringing the labour to the labourer has taken tangible form as the 'Work from Home' policy that global society has been forced to adopt in the present pandemic. Unfortunately, however, such policies in 21st century India are financially viable to the upper and upper middle class and deprive the lower class that migrant labourers belong to of financial, social and psychological support.

The Hindu Business Line, in June 2020, looked back at Gandhi's 'gram swaraj' in light of the migrant crisis that emerged due to the spread of COVID-19. It called for an independent village with self-governance that was built on the principles of sustainability. Indeed, the exodus of the migrants and their plight pushed the nation to realise that these workers are the backbone of the modern Indian economy. Many thousands of these labourers, stranded in cities without money or transport, began making long inter-state journeys home on foot during the global pandemic (Chandurkar 2020). The World Economic Forum reported that India had 139 million internal migrants in 2017. In the same report, the forum urged that these internal migrants 'must not be forgotten' (Krishnavatar 2017) . COVID-19 has reminded India of the role that migrant labourers play in our society, despite their low income sustenance. Adopting Gandhian socialism and de-centralised village republic governance would certainly have benefitted this section of the population greatly in the past 73 years. However, sustaining a village republic economy in a globalised world would have proved to be a challenge in the long run.

Feminism and Village Globalisation: Bane of the Glocalised Indian Village

Once again, Gandhi admired the Indian village as a symbol of authenticity. The village republic was, once, the innocent playground of traditional Indian life and the cradle of culture, values, customs, languages, clothing and administrative systems, often unique to each specific village. Pre-colonial villages were independent units, governed with minimum intervention from the monarchical seats of power. The village heads held legislative and judicial functions and while there was rampant caste and gender-based bias in society, these were the realities of those times and must not be judged in the light of present socio-cultural progress. However, the tenacity of the village culture in compromising with certain “traditions” mandates criticism in the era of glocalisation, which takes into consideration both global and local practices.

The advent of globalisation was fatal to the independent realm of village culture. The emergence of the global village diminished the sovereignty of the local one. The penetration of western sociological thought, the values of liberty, equality, fraternity and democracy were borrowed hand-me-downs acquired by modern India, worn out, and lent in the form of shreds to glocalised village systems. It is no wonder, in this scenario, that the village society became prone to the sociological theory of culture lag. Acquired knowledge of modern, western ideas that were pitted against age-old traditional values imparted by misinterpreted religious texts in addition to the arrival of modern technology proved lethal to one particular section of society: the women.

A glaring evidence of this phenomenon is the Indian saga of prenatal ultrasounds, popularly known as the sex determination test. While Indian customs entailed traditions like dowry and child marriage that led to a preference for the birth of a male child who could “carry the family name forward” and simultaneously earn for the family, technological advancements facilitated the opportunity to completely eliminate the “burden” of the female child by murdering her before birth itself. Female foeticide became so rampant by 1994 that a legislative ban on prenatal ultrasounds was imposed in the country. Amrita Tripathi traced the history of the male-female ratio in the nation alongside the introduction of

affordable ultrasound technology in India. She notes that while in 1982, the female to male ratio was 962:1000, it dropped to 945 females in 1991, 927 in 2001 and 918 in the 2011 census. (Tripathi 2016). The preference for male children resulting in this skewed ratio of male to female population in the country is notably documented in 'No Country for Young Girls' funded by the United Nations Population Fund that portrays the struggle of a young woman who must choose between staying with a man who does not wish to have a girl child or leaving him to live a life of difficulties in abject poverty. Indeed, the ever-dipping male female ratio only substantiates the claim that India is no country for young girls.²

Here, one must note that the gruesome 2020 Hyderabad Vet Gang Rape Case was compared to the 2012 Nirbhaya Gang Rape Case that made world headlines at the time because of the socio-economic and geographical backgrounds of the rapists. The fact that the alleged and convicted rapists respectively were migrants from villages was highlighted by the media. The underlying message herein is another proof of the pervasiveness of culture lag in glocalised Indian society. Free access revenge pornography and child pornography, in addition to sexualisation of children and the sensationalised and grossly misogynistic depiction of the "woman of the city" in Indian films seem to have birthed misconceptions about "modern" city life in the mind of the impressionable village dweller. These are products of globalisation that have penetrated the narrow-minded outlook of traditional village society, constructing an unsafe environment for women and children.

This complicated web of socio-cultural realities conform to Gandhian ideas to some extent. However, the internet would have permeated the hypothetical 21st century village republic just as easily as it has the 21st century globalised republic. In fact, what little gender equality that India can boast of would have been negligible without globalisation.³

The looming truth of the 21st century, as reflected in the 2011 census, is that female foeticide and, by extension, dowry and child marriage are still extremely prevalent in Indian society. Moreover, The Hindu noted that the coronavirus induced lockdown led to a significant rise in the cases of child marriage with more than a 100 cases between mid-March and July occurring in the Mysore district alone

(Khan 2020). One can only imagine the hidden realities of rape within families as the country celebrated a drop in reported rape cases during the lockdown. Reports suggest that cases of domestic violence, which is often a consequence of unmet dowry demands, are also at an all-time high at this time. This is evidence to the fact that a glocalised system of education is the need of the hour in order to combat these social evils in 21st century physical India that mentally resides in the 18th century.

Assessing the National Education Policy (2020): A Glocalised Lens

Globalisation is always relevant to education. Education is always relevant to the village lifestyle. Gandhi believes that education should be capable of connecting children of both, cities and villages to all that is “best and lasting in India.” He opines that physical, intellectual and moral development should be the objects of basic education. Moreover, he states that all education must be imparted in the provincial language and that college education should be revolutionised to fit national necessities. He recommends practical learning and apprenticeship alongside theoretical studies, especially at the side of certified luminaries in the concerned fields. Additionally, despite his belief that knowledge of religious books is no equivalent of that of religion, he makes a powerful case for the involvement of religious studies, if not in the school curriculum, then as a co-curricular or extra-curricular undertaking. Lastly, he strongly wishes to oust any influence of the west from the Indian Education System (Gandhi 1947, 178-188).

Fascinatingly, these are some of the major aspects of the revolution of education that seems to be set in motion with the advent of the National Education Policy (Government of India 2020). In fact, the National Education Policy is a champion of Gandhi’s views on education. However, the imposition of the provincial language as a medium of instruction, the incorporation of religious studies in the curriculum and the introduction of apprenticeship at the primary school level have all been questioned by the critics of this new education policy as well. It is evident to the city-dwelling, English-speaking privileged student that being

educated in a provincial language shall be depreatory to one's opportunities to work in a world that is dominated by English speakers. The measure of success in the 21st century globalised world is to be gainfully employed by multinational corporations or international organisations after being educated outside one's third world nation, and this is true of both city and village dwellers. These modern aspirations shall be gruesomely hit if the average school-goer is deprived of his English education, even if he finds that being educated in the provincial language is more convenient at that time. Even so, one must not assume that learning in the provincial language shall necessarily be easier, more so when one considers the high numbers of internal migrants in the country.

Next, the incorporation of religious studies in the curriculum as a mode of moral education (that has also been encouraged by Gandhi), while excellent on paper, raises questions about the capability of those who impart such knowledge and their commitment, not to secularism but to pluralism, for Gandhi would also agree with the fact that pluralism is the most fundamental feature of a truly glocal society.

Lastly, in a third world nation like India wherein the standard of both, education and skills of teachers are questioned, and where a negligible portion of the national budget is pledged towards education, the layman has been found asking himself if the National Education Policy, especially in terms of its ultramodern ideas like primary school apprenticeship, could stand the tests of lack of funds and incompetency of educational authorities.

Concluding Notes: Endeavouring to Provide Solutions

"To the preliterate man of integral vision a fable is what we call a major scientific truth...our own self-amputations can today provide the beginnings of a new science of man and technology."

-McLuhan, War and Peace in the Global Village

Gandhi's writings indicate that he understood the consequence of a western form of industrialisation as destructive of Indian society. Such destruction, in his views, would purge decentralised rural industries and effectively obliterate village lifestyle. The emphasis he lays on reviving, improving, encouraging and conserving various facets of the village republics effectively rejects centralisation, globalisation, industrialisation and, by extension, technology and progress. Of course, Gandhi probably never imagined the impact of technology on the village republics. Foreseeably, technology, if not anything, would have coaxed these village republics out of their sovereign, independent cocoons, only a few decades later than globalisation primarily did.

A systemic revolution, akin to the National Education Policy, must be initiated in order to pander to the socio-economic and political issues born out of globalisation and industrialisation. Moreover, the environmental impacts of the same must be tackled in a mindful manner, keeping all the concerned stakeholders in mind while making any decision and consulting them while framing laws. This can only be done by mastering necessary skills of management and governance. Hence, the root to all solutions can be traced back to reforming the system and standard of education being imparted in the country.

The National Education Policy is not a liability, but an opportunity to incorporate these values in future lawmakers and citizens. In keeping with Gandhi's belief that college education should be designed with national interests in mind, this new policy has already shown the inclination to impart humanitarian and sociological lessons to all students. Moreover, the policy's intention to focus on the positive use of technology can be a turning point in guiding the youth of the nation to make meaningful use of technology and the internet of things, lest technology itself be the ruin of the 21st century. More importantly, a focus on making young Indians educated and not just literate must be adopted in order to truly host progress on the various fronts discussed in this paper.

While it may be too late to completely reform the structure of Indian society to accommodate Gandhi's village republics, there is still the opportunity of investing time, money and concentration on the villages themselves. The social evils discussed herein are still widespread in rural India and have proved to be

immune to the educational aspects of globalisation. Hence, the most feasible solution to the impacts of industrialisation and globalisation in the Indian village is a reformed, all-inclusive, modern, comprehensive, practical, and pluralistic educational system.

Notes

1. In 'India of My Dreams,' Gandhi speaks of tanning industries and other industries as separately from the khadi industry. He illustrates the practical implementation of his ideas under the heading 'how to begin.'
2. 'Son Rise' and 'The Unwanted' are more documentaries that have been made on the subject of gender ratio in India. However, despite widespread media coverage, the sex ratio has only depreciated over the years and globalisation has not aided women.
3. At this time, the divide between the so-called city and village mentalities is so great that for the "modern" city-dweller, exposed to the full brunt of globalisation, the very notion that sex on the pretext of marriage can be awarded with legal punishment seems outlandish. On the other hand, in more conservative societies, sex before marriage is aptly a punishable offense and, moreover, a sin. The difference in opinion on such an essential question of law runs so deep in the globalised urban and the conservative rural, that one speculates that each village republic, having a separate ideology, would require not just a separate civil code but also a separate criminal code, making the Indian Constitution itself, along with the Indian Penal Code and the Civil Procedure Code etc. null and void.

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