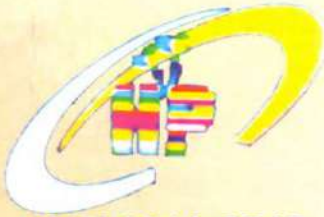


March-2019



ISSN 2319-9318

UGC Sponsored

International Multilingual Research Journal

Printing Area
Special Issue **Area** March 2019

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SWADESHI MOVEMENT ✓**Dr. Sujata N. Chavan**

I/c Principal
Govindlal Kanhaiyalal Joshi (Night)
Commerce College, Latur
Shri Marwadi Rajasthan School Premises,
Opp. Civil Hospital, Latur-413512
Mob. 9527974424
E_mail. : sujata_chavan79@rediffmail.com

The swadeshi movement known as Make in India campaign was officially proclaimed on August 7, 1905 at Calcutta Town Hall in Bengal. Boycott movement was also launched along with the Swadeshi movement. The movement included using goods produced in India and burning of British-made goods. The Swadeshi movement had its genesis in the anti-partition movement which was started to oppose the British decision to partition Bengal.

A very significant instrument of social change in Gandhi's view was the precept and practice of Swadeshi, which implied self reliance and self sufficiency at the level of the individual the village and nation. Thus all Gandhi's wide ranging activities whether in sphere of Hindu-Muslim relations or the removal of untouchability or khadi and rural uplift could be subsumed under his ideal of realizing swadeshi. However the importance of Swadeshi in the economic field was the greatest because the departure from the principle resulted in loss of independence and poverty for the nature.

Gandhi did not just conceptualize the instruments of change he also showed their efficacy by use. Bal Gangadhar Tilak also encouraged Swadeshi and Boycott movement after the British government decided the partition of Bengal.

Objectives of Swadeshi Movement:

The word swadeshi comes from Sanskrit words 'Swa' meaning 'own' and 'Desh' meaning 'Country'.

- To revive the use of domestic Indian goods and promote self sufficiency.
- To negatively impact the British Government by causing open manifestation like the burning of British goods to stop the Bengal partition.
- To impose Indian's economic conditions without the interference of the British rulers.

Timeline of Swadeshi Movement:

The British divided Bengal on the pretext of administrative difficulty due to its vast territory and large population. In reality, Britisher's would to divide Hindus and Muslims by applying divide and rule policy. Lord Curzon the Viceroy of India made an announcement of the Bengal partition in 1905, and this prompted the Indian National Congress to state a movement called "Swadeshi Movement" on a massive scale in Bengal. Swadeshi movement can be identified in five phases.

1905 to 1917: Began with and because of the partition of Bengal in 1905 by Lord Curzon.

1850 to 1904: Developed by leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale, Ranade, Tilak, G.K. Joshi and Bhagwat K. Nigoni. This was also known as first Swadeshi movement.

1918-1947: Swadeshi thought shaped by Gandhi accompanied by the rise of Indian industrialists.

1948 to 1991: Widespread curbs on international and inter-state trade. Indian became a location of obsolete technology during the licensed permit raj.

1991 onwards: Liberalization and Globalization foreign capital, foreign technology and many foreign goods are not excluded and doctrine of export led growth results in modern industrialism.

Gandhi's vision of Swadeshi Movement:

Gandhi described swadeshi as 'Law of Laws' ingrained in the basic nature of human being. According to Gandhi Swadeshi stands for the final emancipation of the soul from the earthly bondage in its ultimate and spiritual sense. The law of swadeshi demands that one should not take more than required to discharge the legitimate obligations towards the family."

Economic dimensions of Swadeshi:

Gandhi advocated that one who follows the spirit of swadeshi should use only things that are produced by our immediate neighbors and serve those industries by making them efficient and strengthen them in areas where they found deficient. Gandhi found khadi as the necessary and most important corollary of the principle of swadeshi in the spirit of universal love and service. A votary of swadeshi will give preference to local products even if they are of inferior grade or dearer in price than things manufactured elsewhere and try to remedy the defects of local manufacturers. Gandhi warned the votary of swadeshi against making it fetish.

Political dimension of Swadeshi:

Gandhi pleaded the need for internal governance as early as 1909 in his noted booklet *Hind Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule*. He wanted to empower the people through political self governance. His vision of decentralized political system was Panchayati Raj by which the innumerable villages of India were governed.

Social Dimension of Swadeshi:

Applying the spirit of swadeshi in the context of Indian social statutory Gandhi initially accepted the institution of varna associated with it. He welcomed the four fold dimension of the society purely based on duties performed by different sections of people. Gandhi considered all progressions as equally important. He opposed the prevailing casts system based on birth and the social status attached to it. That was the

reason why he launched one of the most relentless battles against the curse of untouchability which was a part and parcel of the casts system in India. He was deeply concerned about the problems and plight of the vulnerable sections of the society. He included the uplift of these sections in his 18 point constructive programme.

Swadeshi in Religion:

According to Gandhi conversion in the sense of self-purification, self-realization is the crying need of the law. His attitude was not of patronizing toleration but developing the spirit of fellowship. He believed in the fundamentals equally of all religions, what he called Sarvadharm Samabhava. Gandhi's swadeshi approach to religion has great significance in the context of growing command divide and religious fundamentalism in India and other parts of the globe. This approach is essential to promote harmony among the followers of various faiths and preserving the composite culture of a country like India.

Swadeshi in Education:

One of the major areas in which Gandhi applied his swadeshi ideal was the field of education for him education was meant for all-around development of personality and not purely as a means for earning one's livelihood. In *Hind Swaraj* he rejected the British education system prevailing in India. It was his firm conviction that the prevailing system of education does not serve the requirement of the country in any form or shape. He believed that education has to be rooted in the culture and traditions of the country. He placed before the nation an attentive system of education called *Nai Talim* or *Basic education*. He placed before the nations attentive institutions like Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Kashi Vidyapeeth and others during the struggle for independence. Later he broadened his concept of basic education and looked upon education as a lifelong process stating from cradle to grave.

Swadeshi in Health Care:

Gandhi's prescription for health was an application of principle of swadeshi it means to live according to the laws of nature. He strongly opposed the modern medical system. He rejected the modern medical system primarily on the ground that it is purely curative and not preventive. He advocated a new system of medical care wherein one follows the laws of nature with regard to diet, physical exercise, hygiene and sanitation and a new life style based on self restraint. He favored the system of nature cure to prevent the disease rather than finding a purely drug based cure for them. In this he put emphasis on the proper use of earth, water, air, sunlight. He primarily emphasized a holistic approach to health care where it will primarily be governed by disciplined way of life. It is also notable that health care was one of his passions since his South African days. He experienced with different kinds of nature cure including the inexpensive and nutritious food which people could easily avail. He was instrumental in establishing a nature cure centre at Urulikanchan near Pune and even started practicing nature cure. During the last years of his life a new dimension to nature cure practice was added in the form of Ram Nam. For him Ram nam was not like an ordinary mantra to be chanted. It was an integral part of his spiritual sadhna based on his firm belief that a man with total internal purity would not fall sick or even he would require no medicine other than Ram nam. That was the reason he refused to take medicine in the end of his life including the Noakhali Mission. Ram nam was nothing but a spiritual means for self purification thereby eliminating all possibilities of illness by keeping the body pure.

In short it may be said that the goal of Gandhi's swadeshi programme was to make India self-sufficient as far as her needs of food and cloth were concerned and to provide an adequate means of livelihood for the needy. This believe would pave the way for the real emancipation of the masses and

provide the basis for building a dynamic nation. Gandhi successfully demonstrated that the swadeshi spirit could be integrated in every walk of our national life. He suggested concrete institutional set up in most of the areas of his concern.. As stated earlier Gandhi's life was holistic and indivisible and hence he presented an integrated plan covering virtually all aspects of human life and that is the most distinctive nature of his thought which could really become a guiding principle for human resurgence.

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Harshwardhan Publication Pvt. Ltd
At. Po. limbaganesh, Tg. Dist. Beed - 431 126
(Maharashtra)

₹ 700/-
ISSN 2319-9318