



E-ISSN: 2664-603X
P-ISSN: 2664-6021
IJPSG 2024; 6(2): 335-344
www.journalofpoliticalscience.com
Received: 07-11-2024
Accepted: 08-12-2024

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Decoding the Gandhian enigma from the Gen Z Lenses

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26646021.2024.v6.i2e.408>

Abstract

Understanding Mahatma Gandhi's perception of social discrimination and leadership among Generation Z in India reveals a complex interplay of historical reverence and current relevance. Gandhi's teachings, particularly his emphasis on non-violence, inclusivity, and empowerment of marginalized communities, resonate with many young Indians today, even as they grapple with the nuances of his legacy. The leadership dynamics of Gandhi also play a pivotal role in influencing young generation, especially the Gen Zs. This paper aims to trace the Gandhian paradigm in present society especially focusing on Gandhian leadership and social discrimination and its impact on the Gen Z population in India.

Keywords: Gandhi, Gen Z, Leadership, social discrimination, nonviolence

Introduction

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the name itself is considered to be one of the most contrasting and interesting areas of study, not only for its political activism but also for its popular reflection and dynamics. It has been a long journey for the academic world to analyse Gandhi from different approaches which could have been due to either the complex nature of Gandhi himself or because of multi-dimensional perspectives. In fact, the dynamics of understanding Gandhi with his dichotomic nature always fascinates academic peers. Hence, this research intends to explore is to understand Gandhi from the Gen Z lenses and archive their responses. It aims to comprehend the reactions of the Gen Z people and pursue the true character of the relevance of Gandhi even in the 21st century.

Gandhi was a charismatic leader who fought against social discrimination and injustice through non-violent means. His inclusive leadership style and principles provide important lessons for modern leaders, especially for younger generations, especially the Gen Z's in India. The foundation of this research starts with the discussion on political and social activities of Gandhi and traces its core nature through secondary references. Gandhi united diverse groups in India's independence movement, empowering women and embracing linguistic diversity. He led by example, treating everyone with respect and empathy. Gandhi's aspirational and inclusive goals, celebration of differences, and radical transparency inspired millions.

In its nascent phase, the political discourse of Gandhi was well suited to its principles of Non-violence and Satyagraha (Simha, 2018) ^[23]. The best outcome can be seen in the case of Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad where Gandhi successfully led the mass and landed it to the final objectives. However, Jaques Pushpedas in his analysis remarked that Champaran was, prior to Gandhi, successfully managed by local leaders like Raj Kumar Shukla and Sant Raut but the arrival of Gandhi facilitated the Champaran Satyagraha further. With this initial success and managed the agitation of Champaran proved the efficacy of Gandhi as a leader.

Gradually, the Gandhian leadership transformed its nature and course, projecting a distinctive shift from the non-violent Gandhi in Champaran or Kheda to the rebel Gandhi during the Quit India movement. Gandhi used the same means of protest by fasting in both Champaran and Quit India but the nature, spirits and leadership techniques were different. Even, the pan-Indian movements under Gandhian leadership such as Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience had witnessed sharp changes in Gandhian leadership style. Gandhi's legacy was complex. Nevertheless, in the popular psyche, the acceptance of Gandhi and his stature remained somewhat the same as the saviour from the clutches of British colonization.

It triggers the academic as well as the popular mind that what led to the immense popularity of Gandhi from a mere political leader to the 'Father of The Nation' and beyond. Overall, Gandhi's non-violent approach and vision of an equitable, inclusive society remain highly relevant even in present day.

Gandhi's approach to social discrimination, characterized by principles of non-violence (Ahimsa) and pursuit of truth (Satyagraha), contrasts with the methods and motivations of current social movements among Gen Z. Gandhi's philosophy centered on peaceful resistance and the empowerment of marginalized communities (Biswas, 2018) [5]. He advocated for social equality, actively fighting against caste discrimination, racial injustice, and economic inequality. His methods included non-violent protests and civil disobedience, which aimed to unite diverse groups toward a common goal of independence and social justice. Gandhi emphasized the importance of character-building through education, arguing that true education should foster empathy and moral integrity rather than merely academic success.

In contrast, the paper also targets and is keen to understand the character of Gen Z's social movements that often leverage technology and social media to amplify their voices and mobilize support. This generation is known for its activism on issues such as climate change, racial equality, gender rights, and mental health. Unlike Gandhi's era, where face-to-face interaction was crucial, Gen Z utilizes digital platforms to organize protests, share information, and create awareness on a global scale. One of the major components of this paper is to evaluate and assimilate the Gandhian mode of non-violent protests and community engagement with the Gen Z's approaches to protests through online campaigns, hashtags, and viral content to drive social change.

Gandhi's activism was rooted in the context of colonial India and addressed specific social injustices of that time. In contrast, Gen Z tackles a broader range of contemporary issues, including systemic racism, climate justice, and LGBTQ+ rights (gender and sexual identities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) (Chib & Thakur, 2022) [7] reflecting a more globalized perspective. Hence, this paper intends to evaluate the pragmatism of Gandhian method of protest in 21st century and its acceptance among the Gen Z population. One of the similarities between Gandhi and the Gen Z in India is its inclusiveness. Gandhi's leadership style was inclusive, aiming to unite people across different backgrounds. Gen Z similarly values inclusivity but often emphasizes intersectionality, recognizing how various forms of discrimination overlap and affect individuals differently. Both Gandhi's teachings and Gen Z's activism highlight the ongoing struggle against social discrimination. Gandhi's emphasis on non-violence and moral integrity continues to resonate, offering valuable lessons for today's activists. However, the methods and contexts have evolved, with Gen Z adapting to a digital landscape that shapes their approaches to social justice. Integrating Gandhi's principles into modern activism could enhance the effectiveness of movements aimed at achieving lasting societal change. The authors emphasize this aspect by investigating whether the political personality or social activism or both play a pivotal role in making the 'Mahatma' relevant to the Gen Z population in India. This paper aims to trace the Gandhian paradigm in present society especially focusing on its relation with the Gen Z population in India.

Research Objective

- To analyse the perception of Gen Z on Gandhi's leadership style in present-day society.
- To explore the view of Gen Z on Gandhi's fight against social discrimination in the Indian caste system and other social inequalities and its relevance in present times.

Research Question

Influence of Gandhi's philosophies and leadership can be reinterpreted and applied through the lens of Gen Z to create a relevant and impactful framework for addressing contemporary social and political challenges.

Hypothesis

- **H₁:** Gen Z's innate focus on social justice, environmental sustainability, and digital connectivity can be aligned with Gandhian principles of non-violence, truth, and self-reliance to create a potent framework for addressing contemporary challenges.
- **H₂:** By reinterpreting Gandhian concepts through a Gen Z lens, we can develop innovative strategies for activism, leadership, and community building that are both authentic and effective.
- **H₃:** A deep dive into Gen Z's values, communication styles, and consumption patterns will reveal untapped potential for applying Gandhian philosophy in areas such as consumerism, technology and global citizenship.

Literature View

The academic world has tried to understand the Gandhian leadership from various spectrums. The most important aspect in this matter is the character and nature of Gandhi as a leader. Gandhi was very effective to attract the minds of Indians in his times and onwards even though he failed numerous times to conduct a pan-Indian movement. The intellectual world carefully examines the Gandhian movements and reveals numerous pieces of evidence that showcase the failure of Gandhi. Hence, the pertinent question arises regarding the efficacy of Gandhian leadership. The Non-Cooperation movement proved that Gandhi could have achieved what he wanted to aim for. At least. The intent and potentiality of the Non-Cooperation Movement was positive enough to strike a blow into the heart of the Colonial Rule in India. However, in the rural countryside, the masses, well aware of the Gandhian principle of non-violence, chose violence over the Gandhian non-violent path. In Awadh, Baba Ramchandra and his compatriots took the name of Gandhi for their political validation but undermined the principles of it. The same treatment had been followed in Andhra Pradesh where the tribals reiterated the image of Gandhi but walked down a violent path that never resembled non-violence. The Indian National Congress was so shaken by the nature of movement in the countryside that they had to send leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru to appease the peasants and convert them into Congress fold. A similar kind of nature can also be seen in the Civil Disobedience movement where the peasants and labour class aloof themselves from the Gandhian Satyagrahas. The emergence of the Communist Party of India in the 1920s made a fatal blow to the pan-Indian nature of the satyagraha that ultimately lost its track when Gandhi made the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Nevertheless, at the brink of the independence of India, Gandhi rushed to the

riot-ridden areas of Bengal and successfully appeased the situation.

Perhaps the major leadership trait that was ingrained into Gandhi's character was his populist nature. In the article, Moffitt and Tormey (2014) ^[15] articulated that populist has the ability to penetrate the minds of the masses and act accordingly. This nature of a populist leader can also be seen in Gandhi when chose to dress up like the common people rather than following the same steps of his elitist political seniors in India. As a matter of fact, Rao (2013) ^[20] talked about the soft leadership skills as a new dimension to the leadership trait. As per the article, a soft leadership skill accompanies influence, persuasion and negotiation with people by managing their emotions, egos and feelings. Gandhi can be a pure example of this trait as he often made balance between different class and communities across India. From his political standpoint, it is difficult to put him into one political banner. Presumably, he had a great ability to act according to the emotions of the masses.

In the article, Masciulli, Molchanov and Knight (2016) ^[13] articulated different leadership traits that exist in the modern world and presented the Gandhian leadership trait as being associated with the personality-centered approach. The most important aspect, as argued by the author, of this leadership approach is the conscience and trust that the leaders had developed throughout history in their leadership traits was primarily best fitted with success in their own world. In fact, Ofosu-Anim (2022) ^[16] also emphasised on the culmination of personality, behaviour and leadership traits while connecting the dots with different types of personality models and nature of leadership. However, the nature of the Gandhian leadership is somewhat different because even in his prime time Gandhi failed to taste success in his pan-Indian movements. The dynamics of the Gandhian leadership was beyond the nature of political leadership trait and further required more investigation.

The article of Joseph (2012) ^[10] tried to answer the enigmatic character of Gandhian leadership through an educational perspective. The educational approach leads to a direction of Gandhi's social orientation only where self-sufficiency and quality of character building through moral principles and nationalism were the main elements (Amanchukwu, Stanley and Ololube, 2015) ^[1]. Therefore, it can be argued that the Gandhian leadership was transformational. Mittal (2015) ^[14] also advocated the same characteristics where transformational leadership works through inspiration, ideals and emotions. However, this argument contradicts with the article of Barnabas and Clifford (2012) ^[3] where the author analysed the Gandhian leadership as a form of servant leadership. The servant leadership style functions for the betterment of the masses and welfare to the people. The leader treats himself as a servant to the people. However, the Gandhi as a servant leader sometimes deviated from his nature. For example, clash between Subhas Chandra Bose and M.K. Gandhi during the Tripuri Congress session (1939) turned into a personal loss for Gandhi at least in Gandhi's opinion. Even at its heyday in 1922, the Non-Cooperation movement was called off as Gandhi believed that the Satyagraha deviated from the Gandhian path of non-violence.

The investigation further unfolds a new paradigm on Gandhian leadership style by the article of Bligh and Robinson (2010) ^[6] where the introspection gazed upon Charismatic Gandhi. One of the key aspects of the Charismatic leadership is that the followers believe in the

exceptional qualities of their leader. Gandhi had been treated by his followers the same. For instance, in his book 'Dhorai Charit Manas' mentioned the poor villagers of Purnia, Bihar envisaged Gandhi as 'Gandhi Baba' having exceptional qualities. In fact, the sheer presence of Gandhi at Noakhali during the Riot of 1946 resulted in end of violence. This perception perhaps surpasses the political identify of Gandhi and transcends to multi-dimensional leadership qualities of Gandhi.

The foundation of this research starts with the political activism of Gandhi and traces its core nature through secondary references. Previous researchers have put different emphases on this research perspective at different times. They emphasized Gandhi's remarkable contribution on a non-violent social revolutionary who fought against injustice, despotism and oppression of people. Gandhi's idea of social justice is directly related to his doctrine of Satyagraha and Ahimsa. He believes that social justice can be achieved in India only if the people regard it to be as their Karma Bhoomi (The Land of Duty) and not Bhoga Bhoomi (The Land of Enjoyment). He felt that people should be able to distinguish between requirements and wants. Gandhi's social ideology is progressive and different. His justice is not associated with law only but with morality and ethics also. In order to promote complete social justice, society has to change traditional undemocratic comprehensions regarding women and Dalits. To overcome the social problems the operation of Gandhian moral and ethical principles in day-to-day life will maybe come more and more applicable. However, Shalu Chib and Palvi Thakur (Chib and Thakur, 2022) ^[7] mentioned in their analysis remarked that Gandhi have told millions of people who actually come across him in person or have read about him. Gandhi is no longer with us, but his ideas are and continue to guide humanity with all-time applicable principles of love, verity and non-violence. Gandhi's idea of justice as the critic's courts of law but one can always be sure that whenever his type of justice is put to exercise, if not a palm at-least a mending takes place.

There is no denying the fact that whenever any section of the society is exorbitantly exploited, agitations and protests are a natural consequence and the agitation by the Dalits in India are no exception. Scholar Aayushi Sangharshree (2020) ^[21] identified the 1920s was the time when a number of Dalit movements came to the front line, nurtured by the rising observation to fight back against any kind of exploitation. This research article seeks to analyse Gail Omvedt's Dalit Visions (1995), which explores how various small Dalit movements surfaced under the larger Dalit movement and toiled to produce for themselves equal chances as other upper caste and class sections of the Hindu society had. Omvedt in her book addresses how different groups of society challenged the different aspects of the hegemonic Hindu society. If we assemble together all the various movements which come up under the larger Dalit movement, then we can see that though they all differed in their specific manners and goals, all had the common and more general docket of defying all kinds of exploitation and Hindu ascendance. However, the role of Gandhi in the Dalit movement was criticized by Gail Omvedt by stating his stance for the Dalits was diplomatic in nature (Sangharshree, 2020) ^[21].

Another important study on this topic, titled 'Gandhi & Untouchability' (Kaur, 2018) ^[12] showed that the caste system in India is a system of Social Stratification and

social restriction. At first the word “caste” is mentioned in Purusha Sukta in Rig-Veda. Later scriptures similar as Bhagavad Gita and Manu Smriti state that the four Verna’s (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras) are created by God. However, at the same time, Gita says that one’s Verna is to be understood from one’s particular qualities and one’s Karma, not one’s birth. The Brahmins, generally priests and scholars, are at the top, coming are the Kshatriyas, or political rulers and soldiers. They’re followed by Vaishyas, or merchants and the fourth are the Shudras; who are usually laborers, peasants, artisans and servants. At the veritably nethermost are those who considered the Untouchables. Those performed similarly as occupations that are considered sick and weakened like; scavenging and skinning dead animals are considered outcastes. Later this wrong was surrounding Hindu Indian Society. Buddha, Mahavira, Kabir, Nanak, Dayanand and others played their social religious role to remove this evil from Hindu Society. The work of removing Untouchability was undertaken in all earnestness by Gandhi during the Indian National movement. Gandhi began using the term, Harijans to refer to the untouchables in order to encourage a shift towards a positive attitude towards the lower castes. In this regards the authors also can include that the Harijan Patrika aimed to support the Harijan Sevak Sangh (The Servants of Untouchables Society) in its mission to abolish untouchability and promote social equality. It provided a platform for discussions on caste issues and included contributions from notable figures like B.R. Ambedkar and Rabindranath Tagore.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s philosophical odyssey, delineating the convergence of his philosophies with a focus on equity and social justice. It scrutinizes the transformative steps of Gandhi’s beliefs, charting their development from his constructive years in South Africa to his leadership during India's struggle for independence. The analysis encompasses Gandhi's commitment to peaceful resistance as a means to foster equity and social justice, examining the amalgamation of these principles in his advocacy for societal change. This paper explores the contemporary relevance of Gandhi's philosophical evolution, illuminating its influence on current discourses surrounding equity and social justice. Manas Kandi (ref) identified that it examines Gandhi’s loyal commitment to equity and social justice, tracing the development of his principles and their application in his strategies of peaceful resistance. The current paper scrutinizes this vital part of Gandhi’s philosophical evolution in shaping movements for equivalency and social justice worldwide, elucidating the

enduring relevance and impact of his education in contemporary societal frameworks. By dissecting Gandhi’s philosophical journey, this essay aims to provide insights into the enduring impact of his principles on fostering a more just and indifferent society.

Methodology

The research employs a mixed-methods approach to explore the Gen Z perspective on Gandhian philosophy. Qualitative data has gathered through in-depth survey analysis with a diverse sample of Gen Z individuals, delving into their understanding of Gandhi's key principles and their relevance to contemporary issues. This data has collected through a structured survey administered to a larger Gen Z population, measuring their familiarity with Gandhian concepts, their perceived impact on societal problems, and their willingness to adopt Gandhian principles in their own lives. The findings have analysed using thematic analysis for qualitative data, providing insights into the resonance of Gandhian thought among Gen Z and its potential to inspire future generations.

Data Collection & Data Analysis

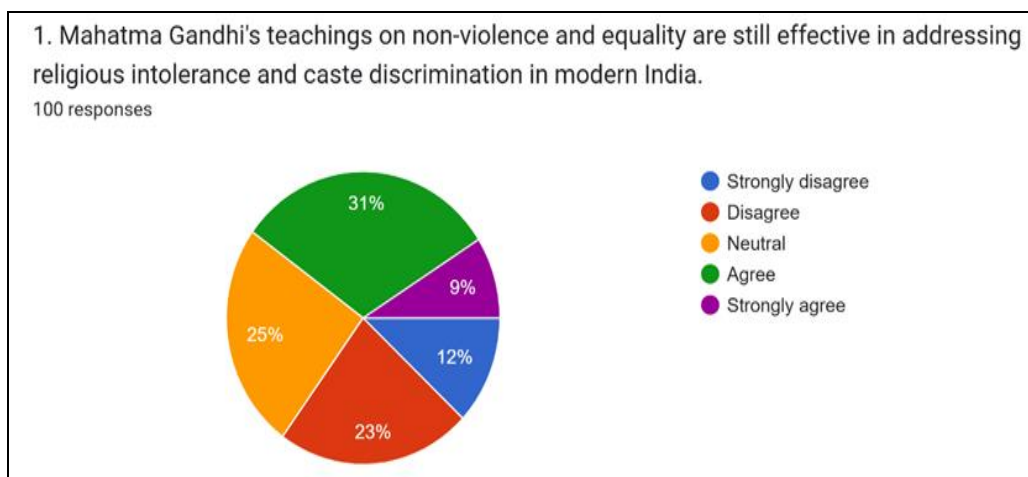
Section A (Demographics Analysis)

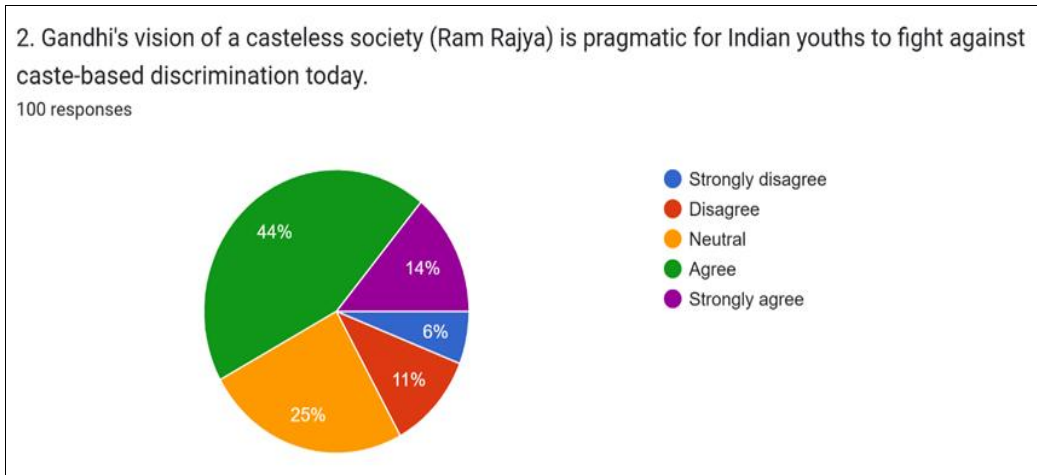
This study involved a diverse sample of 100 Gen Z participants, primarily students and young professionals. The average age was 21, with a range of 16-22 years. Participants hailed from various locations across West Bengal, including major cities like Kolkata and Krishnagar, as well as smaller towns and villages. The majority possessed school students and undergraduate degrees, with a few pursuing postgraduate studies and completed post graduate. While names were kept optional to ensure anonymity, their diverse backgrounds provided a rich tapestry for understanding the Gen Z perspective on Gandhian philosophy.

Section B (Survey Questionnaire)

Question 1

Analysis of Question 1: Data for Research Question 1 were analysed via descriptive statistics. As reflected in pie chart for QS NO.1, out of total sample size of 100, 09% of the participants strongly agree with the above-mentioned statement. 31% (most voted option for this question) of the respondents who indicated that they are agree with the statements. 25% of the respondents has selected Neutral option as their response. And 23% and 12% respondents from sample groups (GEN Z) selected Disagree and Strongly Disagree as their response.





Question 2

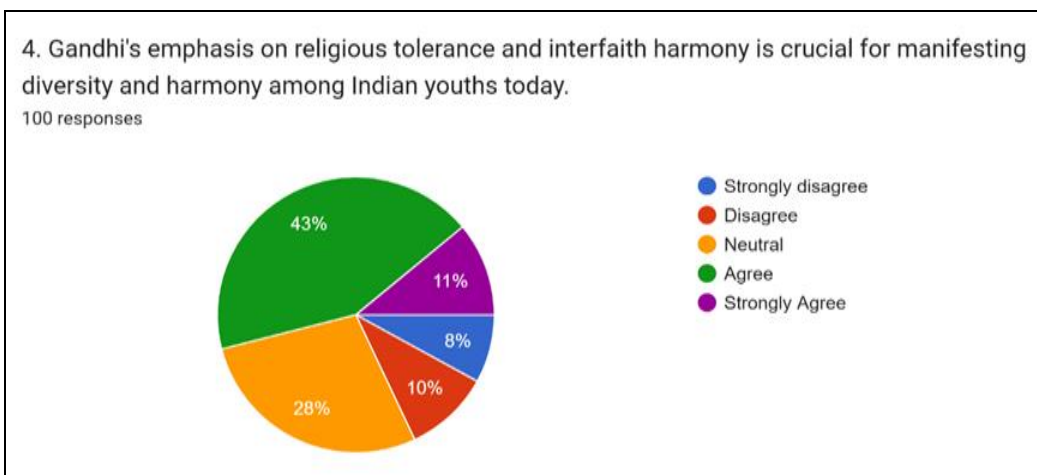
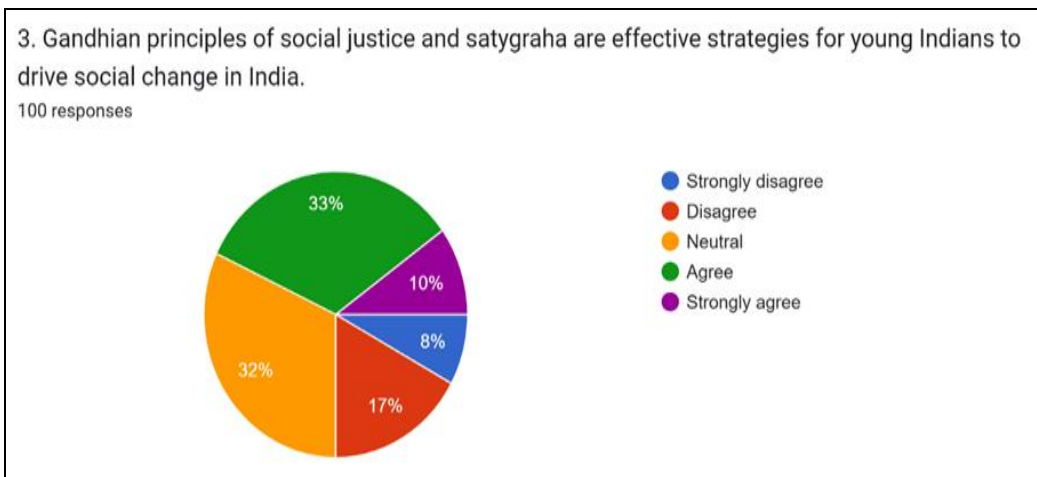
Analysis of Question 2: Data for Research question 2 was calculated in the same way. Basically, this statement is related to Gandhi's vision of a casteless society, articulated through the concept of "Ram Rajya", presents a pragmatic framework for contemporary Indian youth to combat caste-based discrimination. This ideal state, as envisioned by Gandhi, emphasizes moral values such as justice, equality, and truth, which are essential in addressing the deep-rooted issues of caste discrimination in India today.

In this statement 14% of the total participants has selected strongly agree. As a response, Agree was selected by 44% (most voted option for this QS) the participants. Same as previous statements, 25% of the respondents has selected

Neutral option as their response. 11% and 6% students have selected Disagree and Strongly Disagree as their response

Question 3

Analysis of Question 3: Gandhi's principles of social justice and satyagraha offer effective strategies for young Indians aiming to drive social change in contemporary India. These principles, rooted in non-violence and truth, provide a framework for addressing social inequalities and fostering a more just society. In this research QS 10% participants has selected strongly agree. Agree was selected by 33% of respondent. 32% respondent has selected neutral as their opinion. 17% and 8% participant respondent has select disagree and strongly disagree.



Question 4

Analysis of Question 4: Gandhi's emphasis on religious tolerance and interfaith harmony is increasingly relevant for fostering diversity and unity among Indian youth today. His philosophy centered around the idea that all religions share fundamental moral principles, which can serve as a foundation for mutual respect and understanding. As a response for this question scholars received 11% reply in strongly agree section and 43% (most voted option for this question) as agree. 28% participant has selected neutral option as their response and 10% and 8% has select disagree and strongly disagree.

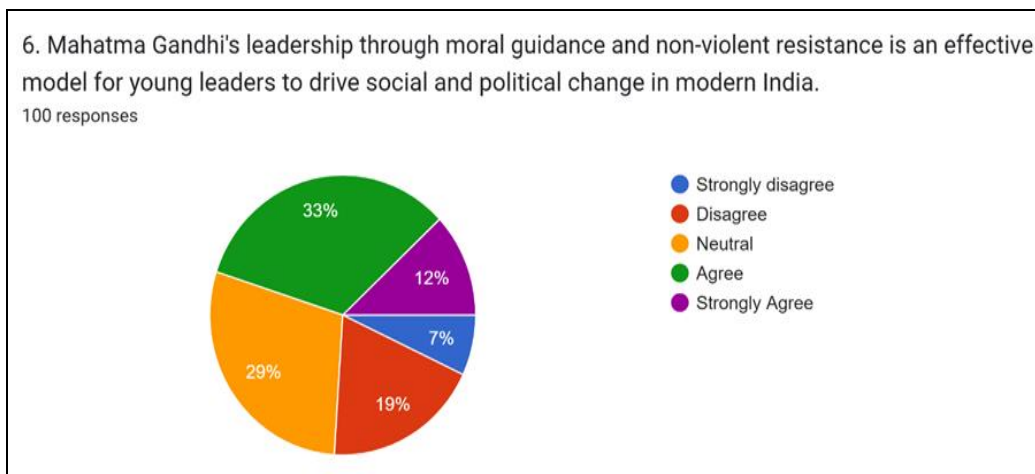
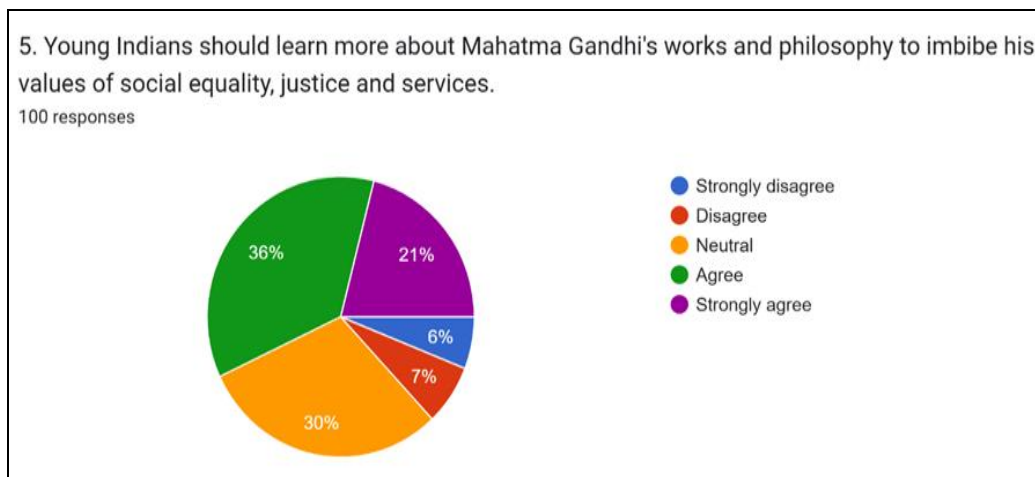
Question 5

Analysis of Question 5: Gandhi's philosophy is a timeless treasure that holds immense value for young Indians today. By learning about his works and ideas, the youth can imbibe his core values of social equality, justice, and service to

humanity. 21% and 36% of the respondents has selected strongly agree and agree as their response. 30% participants have selected neutral as their option. And surprisingly 7% and 6% respondents have selected disagree and agree as their response.

Question 6

Analysis of Question 6: 12% of total participants has select strongly agree option as their response. And 33% (majorly selected answer) participants agree with Gandhi's leadership through moral guidance and non-violent resistance serves as a powerful model for young leaders aiming to drive social and political change in modern India. His principles and methods remain relevant today, providing a framework for ethical leadership and effective activism. 29% participants have selected natural as their option. 7% and 12% participants have given their opinion in disagree and strongly disagree.

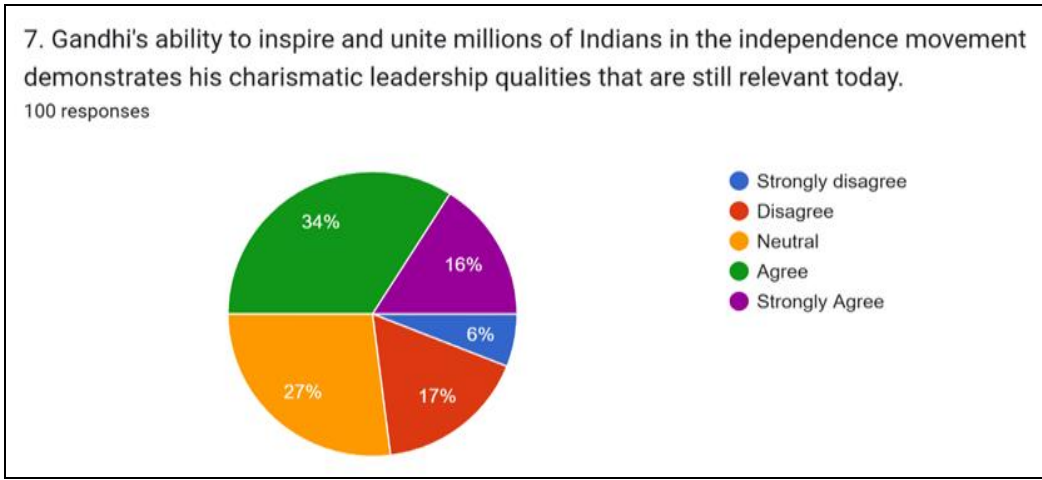


Question 7

Analysis of Question 7: Gandhi's ability to inspire and unite millions during India's independence movement exemplifies his charismatic leadership qualities, which remain relevant today. His approach to leadership was characterized by several key elements that resonate with contemporary leaders. As a response participants has selected according 16% strongly agree, 34% agreed, 27% gave neutral opinion and 17% and 6% participants has selected disagree and strongly disagree as their response.

Question 8

Analysis of Question 8: Gandhi's leadership principles leading by example, empowering followers, and adapting leadership styles to different contexts offer valuable lessons for effective leadership in the 21st century. His approach not only inspired millions during India's struggle for independence but also provides a timeless framework for contemporary leaders across various fields. In this question 15% and 40% of participants has agreed with the statements. 33% of respondents has select neutral as their option. And 7% and 5% responses get vote on disagree and strongly agree.

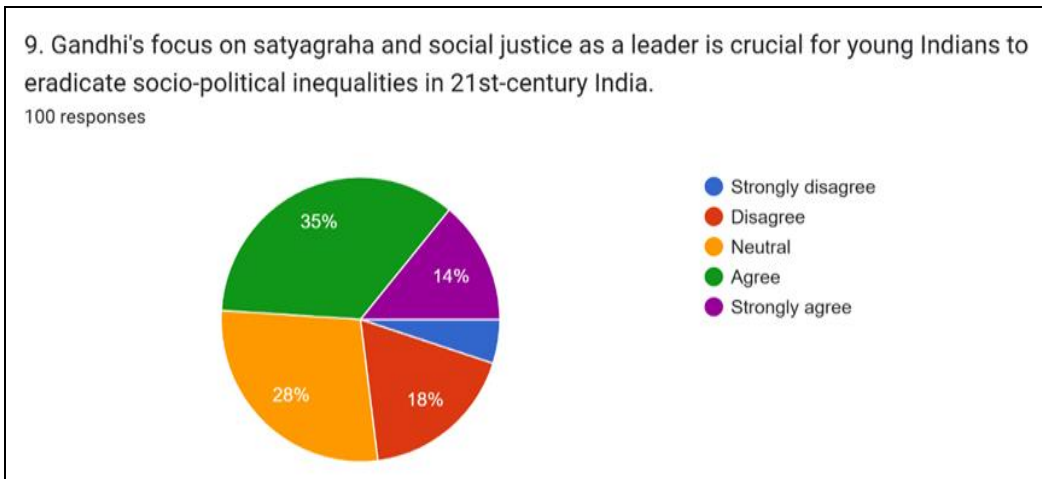


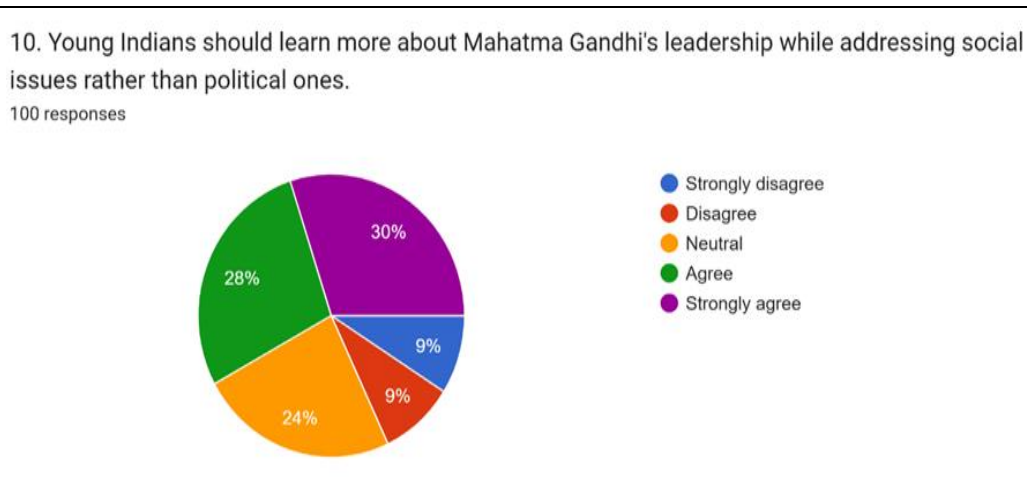
Question 9

Analysis of Question 9: Gandhi's emphasis on satyagraha (non-violent resistance) and social justice provides a vital framework for young leaders in 21st-century India to address socio-political inequalities. His principles of truth, non-violence, and equality remain highly relevant today as the nation grapples with complex challenges of caste discrimination, religious intolerance, and economic disparities. 14% and 35% respondents have selected their option as strongly agree and agree as their response. 28% participant select neutral as their opinion.

Question 10

Analysis of Question 10: 30% and 28% participants has selected strongly agree and agree as their opinion. 24% of participants have given importance in the natural option. 9% (for both case) Gandhi's leadership principles and social reforms remain highly relevant for young Indians today as they seek to address pressing social issues. While Gandhi's political leadership was crucial in India's independence struggle, his work in tackling social evils and promoting equality deserves equal attention and emulation by the youth.





Discussion

Gandhi's Relevance to Gen Z

Gandhi's legacy continues to inspire, particularly among Gen Z, who share his concerns for non-violence, truth, and social equity. His ideas resonate with their passion for climate justice, social change, and ethical consumption. However, many Gen Z individuals have a limited understanding of Gandhi beyond popular stereotypes or political rhetoric. While some are sceptical of his non-violent approach, believing that more aggressive tactics would have been more effective, his core principles of truth, non-violence, and social justice remain relevant and inspiring for a new generation.

Gandhi's Views on Social Discrimination-

Gandhi was a vocal opponent of social discrimination, especially the caste system and untouchability. He worked to uplift marginalized communities and emancipate women. However, some Gen Z thinkers argue that Gandhi's views on issues like vegetarianism and rural lifestyles promoted subtle casteism. The Gen Z population believe that religious tolerance is necessary to bring interfaith harmony and the presence of Gandhian philosophy is the best suited to this cause.

Gandhi's Leadership Qualities

Gandhi's leadership was characterized by a unique blend of qualities that enabled him to mobilize the masses and lead India to independence. His clear vision, coupled with his courage, compassion, and unwavering determination, inspired millions. His effective communication skills and organizational abilities allowed him to galvanize support and coordinate non-violent protests. His magnanimity and self-assurance further solidified his position as a revered leader, capable of inspiring trust and loyalty among his followers. In fact, the survey reveals that the charismatic leadership quality is still relevant today. His leading by example style of leadership motivates the Gen Zs to follow the pathway while addressing the 21st century socio-political inequalities. However, the survey participants found Gandhi relevant more in social issues than combating political ones.

Engaging Gen Z with Gandhi's Legacy

To resonate with the tech-savvy Gen Z, advocates should leverage digital platforms and interactive methods to introduce Gandhi's teachings. Encouraging user-generated content on social media can spark engaging discussions around his principles. Gamifying the learning process through educational content can make understanding his life

and impact more fun and accessible. Finally, organizing collaborative service projects inspired by Gandhi's vision can empower Gen Z to actively contribute to society and embody his values.

Decoding the Gandhian enigma through the lens of Generation Z reveals a complex interplay between historical ideals and contemporary values. For many in this demographic, Gandhi represents a figure of moral authority whose principles of non-violence, truth, and social justice resonate amid today's pressing global challenges, such as climate change and social inequality. However, Gen Z's perception is often nuanced; while they acknowledge Gandhi's contributions to India's independence and his advocacy for communal harmony, they also critiqued aspects of his ideology that seem misaligned with modern sensibilities, such as his views on caste and gender roles. This generation, characterized by its digital fluency and commitment to social justice, seeks authenticity and relevance in Gandhi's teachings. They are inclined to reinterpret his legacy in ways that allies with their values of inclusivity and equity, often advocating for a more participatory approach to leadership that reflects Gandhi's vision of decentralization. Engaging with Gandhi's thoughts through modern mediums such as social media campaigns or community-driven initiatives can help bridge the gap between his historical significance and the aspirations of today's youth, fostering a renewed understanding of his relevance in the 21st century.

Gen Z's emphasis on diversity and inclusion aligns closely with Gandhi's principles of equality, reflecting a shared commitment to social justice and human rights. As the most ethnically diverse generation, Gen Z is acutely aware of societal inequalities and actively advocates for marginalized voices, mirroring Gandhi's dedication to uplifting the oppressed. They view diversity not merely as a corporate buzzword but as a fundamental aspect of any organization, encompassing various dimensions such as race, gender, and neurodiversity, which resonates with Gandhi's vision of an equitable society. Furthermore, Gen Z's insistence on equity-demanding transparent opportunities and fair treatment-echoes Gandhian belief in justice for all individuals, regardless of their background. Their desire for inclusivity, where every voice is valued and respected, reflects Gandhi's ethos of community and collective empowerment. Thus, both Gandhi's ideals and Gen Z's values converge on the importance of fostering an inclusive society that champions equality and justice for everyone.

In a nutshell, Gandhi's legacy remains relevant but for engaging Gen Z requires acknowledging their unique

perspectives and finding innovative ways to communicate the enduring value of his ideas on non-violence, truth and social justice. By understanding Gandhi's multifaceted personality and leadership qualities, Gen Z can critically evaluate his relevance in today's world.

Conclusion

Decoding the Gandhian enigma from the perspective of Generation Z reveals a multifaceted understanding that intertwines reverence with critique. For many young Indians, Gandhi symbolizes the ideals of non-violence and social justice, principles that resonate deeply in a contemporary context marked by social discrimination and environmental challenges. However, this generation also grapples with the complexities of Gandhi's legacy, questioning aspects of his philosophy that may seem incompatible with modern values, such as his views on caste and gender roles. While some Gen Z individuals celebrate Gandhi's commitment to peace and communal harmony, others are sceptical about his relevance in today's fast-paced, often tumultuous world. This duality reflects a broader trend among youth to seek authenticity and inclusivity in leadership, prompting a re-evaluation of historical figures through a contemporary lens. Engaging with Gandhi's teachings particularly his emphasis on localism, sustainability, and empowerment of marginalized communities can inspire Gen Z to adopt innovative approaches to activism and leadership. Ultimately, decoding the Gandhian enigma requires not only an appreciation of his contributions but also a critical examination of how his ideals can be adapted to address the unique challenges faced by today's youth.

Limitations of the study

The research on "Decoding the Gandhian Enigma from the Gen Z Lenses" faces several limitations that impact its comprehensiveness and effectiveness.

- **Diverse Perspectives within Gen Z:** The generation itself is not monolithic; there are significant variations in beliefs and values based on socio-economic backgrounds, urban versus rural upbringing, and exposure to different cultural influences. This diversity complicates the task of forming a cohesive understanding of Gandhi's ideals among Gen Z, as individuals may interpret his teachings through vastly different lenses shaped by their unique experiences.
- **Limited sample size and demography:** The sample size and demography can be extended further in order to trace more layered views of the Gen Z on Gandhian leadership and social discrimination.
- **Lacuna of restricted sources:** This research paper only encounters with information available in the public domain. It will be better to access various archival records and restricted sources for further introspection and study.

Acknowledgement

The researchers would like to express sincere gratitude to respective workplaces, such as Krishnagar Public School and Swami Vivekananda Institute of Modern Science for invaluable support, which made this study possible. Additionally, the authors appreciate their seniors for collaborative spirit and encouragement during challenging times. The authors are indebted to their mentor, Mr. Debiprasad Ghosh for his immense support, valuable

comments and suggestions that guided them to shape up the article. A great thanks to the participants who were committed to this survey and gave invaluable time to meet the objectives of this paper. Finally, an extended heartfelt thanks to family and friends for their unwavering support and cooperation throughout this journey.

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