



Understanding Mahatma Gandhi's Nonviolent Communication from the perspectives of Indian Communication Tradition

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Received: 10 Oct., 2024

Revised: 26 Nov., 2024

Accepted: 05 Dec., 2024

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of growing intolerance and the weaponization of various communication tools across the world to fan mistrust, racism, and xenophobia is leading to increasing conflicts in different parts of the world. This, in fact is a challenge to communicators who are constantly engaged in finding alternative and healthy voices to these toxic communication patterns. An important pillar to change this toxic communication ecosystem is nonviolent communication. It needs to be promoted worldwide. While there are different perspectives of nonviolent communication, the approach of Mahatma Gandhi has major global traction. Indian traditions and spirituality had major impact on the philosophy and perspectives of the Mahatma. In his writings and speeches he often quoted from these deep Indian value systems. This paper, in this backdrop, is an attempt to understand the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication from the Indian communication tradition.

Keywords: nonviolent communication, Mahatma Gandhi, Indian communication thought

In the midst of a chaotic and conflict-driven world that we are living today where both inter-state and intra-state conflicts across the world is having debilitating effects on humanity, the weaponization of different tools of communication by conflicting parties is further contributing to the already grim situation. The increasing mistrust, intolerance, racism, xenophobia are contributing to enhanced trauma amongst the people in different conflict settings and also resulting in toxic communication ecosystems. In this backdrop, there is an emergent need to encourage nonviolent communication in all forms of communication process so that it contributes to the development of healthy and positive communication ecosystems.

This is critical in view of the challenges to communicators today which has been aptly

encapsulated by Senior Gandhian, Natwar Thakkar (Kundu, 2018 and 2024 a):

The need for communicators today is to challenge the attempts to divide people on the basis of class, religion, and race. ... So, right from a young age, we need to teach children to use communication to promote human values, which contributes to a spirit of solidarity. Communication education should integrate the values of pluralism, mutual respect, and inclusivity. It should not be a vehicle to sensationalize or incite passion but a lesson to practice self-restraint and principles of nonviolence in all aspects.

How to cite this article: Kundu, V. (2024). Understanding Mahatma Gandhi's Nonviolent Communication from the perspectives of Indian Communication Tradition. *Int. J. Peace, Edu. Dev.*, 12(02): 81-89.

Source of Support: None; **Conflict of Interest:** None



Nonviolent communication is a holistic communication approach with the essence of human interdependence being its fulcrum and it entails using nonviolence in all its processes and forms of communication (Kundu, 2022 a). It aims to build deeper connections not only with oneself but also with others, groups and communities and hinges on the essence of deep respect for human dignity. These are critical elements in the backdrop of the conflicts that we are facing, right from our own individual level to global level.

While there are different explanations and approaches to nonviolent communication and its different elements, Mahatma Gandhi's practical, action-oriented nonviolent communication principles offers a holistic and transgenerational guidepost for all generations to assimilate and practice it in our daily lives. Based on the Gandhian praxis, Thakkar offers his expansive explanation on nonviolent communication and its nature (Kundu, 2018, 2022 b & 2024 a):

To me nonviolent communication literacy would mean how our communication efforts should be nonviolent; how our ability and capacity to communicate not only with ourselves but with family and society be nonviolent in all aspects and overall, how the entire process of communication whether between individuals, groups, communities and the world at large should be nonviolent in nature. This would entail deep understanding of the art and science of nonviolence and its centrality in all our daily actions. It's not just verbal and nonverbal communication, nonviolent communication literacy would also include whether our thoughts and ideas are nonviolent or not. This would also mean how we can rid of our preconceived notions of individuals or groups with whom we want to communicate and stop evaluating them to suit our own ideas. More than often, we are attuned to think in terms of moralistic judgments which may be our own constructions. By developing deep understanding of the art and science of nonviolence and integrating it in our communication practices we could get over with biased and moralistic judgments; this in turn could contribute to emotional bridge building.

Given the expansive understanding of nonviolent communication based on the Gandhian praxis offered by senior Gandhian, Thakkar, it's transcendental action-oriented philosophy is underlined by Mahatma Gandhi's own life wherein he said 'my life is my message'. This reflects how the ideals and action-oriented philosophy furthered by the Mahatma transcends across generations and continues to be significant in all aspects of our lives (Kundu, 2024 b).

Mahatma Gandhi was open to looking at different philosophies and ideas from different cultures to develop his own understanding. While he assimilated the philosophies of western philosophers like Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau, he was majorly influenced by the deep Indian culture and tradition given his Sanatani upbringings and.

Gandhi's life work and action had deep impression from the Sanatani traditions of Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and the Puranas. He was also influenced by Jainism and Buddhism. Loho Choudhury (2022) articulates the deep assimilation of principles from Indian value systems by the Mahatma, "Gandhi could write that despite being born in Vaishnava religion (within Hindu broad fold), he followed his mother's egalitarian practice of Pranami sect (within Hindu fold where even the Koran was read alongside Gita, the sayings of Lord Krishna in temples and no deity was in shrine as is the practice of Vedic Dharma). Yet his Bhajans were drawn from Vaishnavsaint Narsi Mehta with few changes to suit the common chord of the country. That is the spirit of the civilization of which he was one of the greatest living embodiments in modern world."

About the influence of Vedas, the Mahatma noted, "The Vedas are divine and unwritten... the spirit of the Vedas is purity, truth, innocence, chastity, humility, simplicity, forgiveness, godliness, and all that makes a man or woman noble and brave (Young India, 19-1-1921:).

The Mahatma gave regular discourses on the Bhagavad Gita which was eventually published as his interpretation of the Holy Scripture. Regarding his deep reverence for the Holy Bhagavad Gita, on

July 28, 1925, he said: "...When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow" (Vol. 27, Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi).

In a similar context, Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent communication principles can be traced to the deep philosophies of Indian communication thought. This paper will precisely try to develop understanding of the Gandhian nonviolent communication principles from the lens of Indian communication thought.

Mahatma Gandhi's model of nonviolent communication and its interpretation from the framework of Indian communication thought

At this juncture it would be pertinent to encapsulate the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication (Kundu, 2022 b & 2024 a):

- (i) The Gandhian model of nonviolent communication necessitates use of nonviolence in all aspects of communication, whether verbal or nonverbal, our thoughts and ideas. It underlines how the mind, heart, and body remain disciplined at every stage.
- (ii) The Gandhian nonviolent communication model encompasses principles of human interdependence and its relevance in a holistic communication ecosystem. It talks on the importance of the cosmocentric approach to human nature.
- (iii) We learn the art and science of nonviolent persuasion and efficacy from the Gandhian approach. It explains how nonviolent persuasion is a key component of a nonviolent communication ecosystem.
- (iv) The Gandhian model teaches us the significance of self-discipline and self-restraint in all aspects of our communicative efforts.
- (v) Gandhi's nonviolent nonverbal symbolism, like fasting, tells us about its efficacy in nonviolent action. We learn how nonverbal symbolism aims at encouraging self-introspection.

- (vi) The Gandhian approach to empathy in nonviolent communication teaches us how to emotionally connect with the people, even the adversaries, and build bridges.
- (vii) Mahatma Gandhi's communication strategy was to reach the hearts of the masses through constructive work for social and economic emancipation. For instance, his Talisman is a powerful statement about how each needs to introspect on what they are doing for the last person of the society. It underscores the essence of empathetic connections.
- (viii) Mahatma Gandhi's five pillars of nonviolence - respect, understanding, acceptance, appreciation, and compassion - can be considered the foundational architecture of a nonviolent communication ecosystem.
- (ix) The Gandhian model of nonviolent communication entails the evolution of an individual to a higher plane of values and ethics and respect for human dignity.
- (x) His communication model underlines the importance of being morally disciplined, strictly adhering to the principles of ahimsa and truth.
- (xi) Openness and flexibility were the hallmarks of Gandhian nonviolent communication. These attributes are important for the constructive resolution of any conflict.

The other important dimensions of the Gandhian approach to nonviolent communication are (Kundu, 2024 a): (a) assimilation of the principles of Gandhian humanism; (b) essence of human dignity; (c) Practicing the art of patience, perseverance and resilience in our communication process; (d) significance of pure intentions; (e) Role of the heart and significance of trust in practicing nonviolent communication; (f) Positive verbal reflection and nonviolent communication; and (g) importance of the means and the ends.

The critical and significant pillar of the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication is the deep-rooted Indian tradition of human interdependence. Parekh (1997) aptly explains the cosmocentric approach to human nature followed by Gandhi:

The cosmos was a well-coordinated whole whose various parts were all linked in a system of yajna, or interdependence and mutual service. It consisted of different orders of being ranging from the material to the human, each governed by its own laws and standing in a complex relationship with the rest. Human beings were an integral part of the cosmos and were tied to it by the deepest bonds. In Gandhi's favourite metaphor, the cosmos was not a pyramid of which the material world was the base and the human beings the apex, but a series of ever-widening circles encompassing humankind, the sentient world, the material world, and the all including the cosmos."

Parekh explains the key dimension of Gandhi's idea of a nonviolent society which underlined, 'as human beings were interdependent, should discourage all forms of exploitation, domination, injustice, and inequality...and should find ways of institutionalizing and nurturing the spirit of love, truthfulness, social service, cooperation and solidarity'.

Gandhi himself underlined the essential unity of human beings on several occasions, he said ahimsa without this was not really possible. For instance, he said, "I do not believe...that an individual may gain spiritually and those who surround him suffer. I believe in advaita, I believe in the essential unity of man and, for that matter, of all that life's. Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent." (Young India, 4-12-1924)

In the context of Indian tradition, Chapter VI of the Maha Upanishad can be called the foundation stone of the idea of human interdependence in Indian tradition:

Ayam Nijah Paro Vetī Ganana Laghucetasam
Udaracaritanam Tu Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

(The World is a Family: One is a relative, the other stranger, say the small minded. The entire world is a family, live the magnanimous)

Further, Mantra Six of Sri Isopaniṣad notes:

yastusarvāṇibhūtānyātmanyevānupaśyati |
sarvabhūteṣucātmānaṃtatōnavijugupsate ||

It is explained as, "He who systematically sees everything in relation to the Supreme Lord, who sees all living entities as His parts and parcels, and who sees the Supreme Lord within everything never hates anything or any being" ((<https://vedabase.io/en/library/iso/6/>)).

The philosophy of human interdependence is also aptly described in Bhagavad Gita 5:18-19 which points out, "The wise see no difference between a learned and humble priest, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and an eater of dog-flesh. Here itself they have conquered the world whose minds are established in same sightedness; and since Brahman is stainless and homogeneous, therefore they are established in Brahman."

Similarly, the philosophy of human interdependence is a central pillar of Buddhism which underlines that all things in this universe develops through mutual interactions of different causes and conditions. The Buddhist tradition and the principle of pratīyasamutpāda, is translated as dependent origination or interdependence.

In this context, peace scholar, Daisaku Ikeda in his 1993 lecture in Harvard University pointed out:

Each living thing manifests the enlightenment of which it is capable; each contributes to the harmony of the grand concert of symbiosis. In Buddhist terminology, dependent origination describes these relationships. No person or thing exists in isolation. Every being functions to create the environment that sustains all other existences. All things are mutually supporting and interrelated, forming a living cosmos, what modern philosophy might term a semantic whole. (<https://www.worldtribune.org/2020/awakening-to-the-interconnectedness-of-life/#reference-1>)

The Vietnamese Zen Master, ThichNhat Hanh beautifully explains the concept of interdependence or inter-being as per Buddhist teachings. In Healing Ourselves, Healing the Earth, ThichNhat Hanh points out, "Your happiness and the happiness of other species inter-are. If you are healthy, if you are happy, then other forms of life can profit from you. If you are sick, if you suffer, then other species will have to suffer with you."

The idea of human interdependence is extremely significant in the context of communication interactions. When we realize the significance of human interdependence, our interactions with not only other human beings will be positive and respectful but also our symbolic communication with nature and all other living beings. In the context of conflicts around the world, such sensitivity in our communicative efforts are important. In fact, in this context, Kundu and Shah (2024) discusses on the importance to encourage human interdependence literacy amongst individuals across the world. They describe human interdependence literacy as:

Developing critical capacities to not only understand and assimilate the deep meaning of human interdependence, but also be able to act on its principles in our daily lives. It also means how we enhance our cognitive capabilities to comprehend the complexities involved in the micro and macro dimensions of the phenomenon of human interdependence and contribute to its realization at all levels of our life and society. It also entails developing our traditional, indigenous and cultural knowledge which underlined the essence of human interdependence. It is only then we will be able to promote peaceful coexistence in its real sense. Human interdependence literacy also underlines the development of critical awareness and deep realization amongst individuals across the world that they are all citizens of Earth and stewards to protect the planet through mutual and indissoluble bonds. A human interdependence literate individual recognizes these realities at the deepest level and ground themselves to strictly adhere to these transgenerational principles.

The central philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi are truth and ahimsa. For Gandhi, truth was God. This adherence to truthfulness is reflected in all his interactions and communication. Truthfulness in communication has been an important part of Indian civilizational ethics. In this context, Rao (2023) points out that the 'exhortation to speak the truth is contained in a variety of ancient Indian texts'. They underline that it was the dharma of individuals to speak the truth, and to avoid caustic talk. For instance they analyze the sutras or aphorisms of Dharmasutras under the heading of

anger, harsh speech, slander/calumny, speech, and truth. Further the essence of truth in communication has been beautifully described in Manusmriti 4: 138 which says, "*Satyam Bruyat, Priyam Bruyat, NaBruyat Satyam Apriyam.*" (One should speak the truth and speak it pleasantly. However, speaking an unpleasant truth should be avoided, and likewise, speaking a pleasing falsehood should also be avoided.) Further, Kirkwood (1989) underlined that truthfulness was a significant standard for speech in ancient India.

At this juncture it would be pertinent to reflect upon the different dimensions of Gandhian nonviolent communication in the context of the axioms of Indian communication thoughts. Loha Choudhury (2023) in their expansive work on Indian communication thoughts culls out four axioms of communication. These includes: (a) communication is ubiquitous and endless; (b) communication is ever-mutant; (c) communication is the enlivening core of every activity that makes us human; and (d) communication is consciousness. For instance, in the context of Natyasastra, they note, "The Natyasastra, by describing vast expanse of communication realm and its application, identifying traits of each type including akasavacana (communication with the unseen or mass communication), has proven its all-pervasiveness."

If we look at the Gandhian model, we can describe it as a mass-line communication where he connected with the masses using the available communication tools at that the time. However, his aim was to reach the heart of the masses speaking in their own language, and extensively quoted from the sacred texts like the Bhagavad Gita, and Ramayana. In order to deeply connect with the masses, Mahatma also used different religious and cultural symbols and rituals which they were familiar with. In the context of the Natyasastra, this can be understood as Vibhava, the stimuli like the story, the stage or actors who are responsible for the awakening of the latent sentiment of the audience. The sixth chapter of Natyasastra has been devoted by Bharata to the theory of Rasa where the model spectator is a 'sahrdaya', an individual who empathizes with the actor or the author. The spectator is the

vital ingredient of the play as the success of the performance is essentially measured by the specific experience (rasa) of the audience. In the case of Gandhi and his usage of nonviolent communication, he was successful in awakening the latent sentiment of the masses towards the path of freedom struggle. He could develop emotional bridge with the audience, i.e., the masses of India.

Mahatma Gandhi's model of nonviolent communication aptly describes the third axiom of Indian communication thought as stated by Loha Choudhury (2023) which talk about how communication is an enlivening core of every activity that makes us human. Gandhi's principles of humanism was the defining feature of his nonviolent communication. He talked about self-restraint and self-discipline in communication. This aspect of self-restraint in communication has been delved in different texts of ancient India. For instance Chapter 1, Verse 2 of Prasna Upanishad states:

tānhasarṣiruvācabhūyaevatapa
sābrahmācaryeṇāśraddhayā
saṁvatsaraṁsaṁvatsyathā
yathākāmaṁpraśnānprcchatayadi
vijñāsyāmaḥsarvaṁhavovakṣyāmaiti

(The rishi said to them: Stay with me a year more, practising austerities, chastity and faith. Then you may ask questions according to your desire. If we know we shall tell you all.) <https://vivekavani.com/pru1v2/>

Pointing out on essence of restraint, Loha Choudhury and Bhattacharya (2023) talks about this verse from the Prasna Upanishad, "It thus recognizes discipline, restraint, and faith as demonstrable attributes of the communicator before proceeding to the subsequent stages of any interaction."

In the same context, Mahatma Gandhi talking about Indian Opinion in his Autobiography or My Experiments with Truth notes:

I cannot recall a word in those articles set down without thought or deliberation, or a word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed the journal became for me training in self-

restraint, and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts. The critic found very little to which he could object. In fact the tone of Indian Opinion compelled the critic to put a curb on his own pen.

On the significance of self-restraint in our communicative efforts, the Mahatma further writes in his My Experiments with Truth:

To be true to my faith (in Satyagraha), therefore, I may not write in anger or malice. I may not write merely to excite passion. The reader can have no idea of the restraint I have to exercise from week to week in the choice of topics and my vocabulary. It is training for me. It enables me to peep into myself and make discoveries of my weaknesses. Often my vanity dictates a smart expression or my anger a harsh adjective. It is a terrible ordeal but a fine exercise to remove these weeds.

This important dimension of self-restraint and the endeavor of the communicator not to excite passion can be explained within the framework of the Bhagavad Gita Chapter 17, Stanza 15 which says:

anudvega-karāṁvākyaṁ

satyaṁpriya-hitaṁca yat

svādhyāyābhyasanaṁcaiva

vāṅ-mayaṁtapa ucyate

As explained by Gandhi (2011) it means, "Words that cause no hurt, that are true, loving and helpful, and spiritual study constitute austerity of speech."

Further, Rao (2023) draws from different portions of the Mahabharata on the ethics of communication which can be important pointers of how Gandhi shaped his communicative efforts. They quote the Anushasana-parva (104.33) which says, "The trees pierced by arrows or cut by the axe grow again, but the dreadful wound by nasty words does not ever heal." They continue to quote from the parva, "Ear-shaped arrow, or the spear, or the arrow made of iron, can still be removed from the body, but it is impossible to remove the arrow of hurting words, for it gets embedded in the heart." Toxic or unhealthy communication does great damage

as it can fuel conflicts or ends relationships. It is in this context, Mahatma Gandhi was underlining the essence of nonviolent communication wherein elements of complete nonviolence, self-restraint, self-discipline, and deep respect are important dimensions.

The goodness of individuals and enhancement of one's personhood through values of humanism are further important dimensions of Gandhi's nonviolent communication. The Shanti-parva, 287.18 of the Mahabharata is a guidepost to this aspect of nonviolent communication, "To be gentle to others, to be simple and straightforward in one's conduct, and to speak sweetly and kindly, are without doubt the way to the good."

The Gandhian model of nonviolent communication entails the transformation of relationships in situations of conflicts. In this context, Kundu (2022 b) argue on how Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha offers the fulcrum of his model of nonviolent communication. In fact the cardinal principle of Satyagraha underlined that adversaries should not be considered as eternal enemies but essentially as potential friends. Further, there was no place of bitterness towards others or any trace of violence in speech or action. On Satyagraha, the Mahatma had said, "Satyagraha is gentle, it never wounds. It must not be the result of anger or malice. It is never fussy, never impatient, never vociferous. It is the direct opposite of compulsion. It was conceived as a complete substitute for violence." (Harijan, 15-4-1933) This explanation again has its framework from the ancient Indian tradition. For instance Chapter 1 of Shandilya Upanishad talks in this aspect, "Ahimsa is not causing pain to any living being at any time through the actions of one's mind, speech or body."

Further, Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent communication can be described as nonviolent persuasion. Pelton (1974) describes nonviolent persuasion, "An essential ingredient of nonviolent persuasion is the honest and straightforward dissemination of information...the withholding of information, the making of unsubstantiated charges...the packaging of an issue, and appeals

to greed, prejudice and hatred cannot under any circumstances be reconciled with the philosophy of nonviolence." The Natyashashtra can be described as an elementary form of persuasive communication. LohaChoudhury (2009) in this context points out, "The Sadharanikaran perspective from the Natyashashtra stresses on sampriti(bonhomie) between the communicator and the communicatee so that no alienation takes place between them." This is an important qualifying nature of nonviolent persuasion.

The fourth axiom of Indian communication thought as elucidated by Loha Choudhury (2023) is 'communication is consciousness. Gandhi was clear that one's self-purification was essential before working towards purifying one's surroundings. In this context, the Mahatma said:

"Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of ahimsa must remain an empty dream; God can never be realized by one who is not pure of heart. Self-purification, therefore, must mean purification in all the walks of life. And purification being highly infectious, purification of oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings. But the path of purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion." (My Experiments with Truth)

This dimension of self-purification is an integral part of nonviolent intrapersonal communication. Practicing nonviolent intrapersonal communication is important for coming out of one's inner prisons and help in inner transformation. For instance, a study on nonviolent intrapersonal communication by Kundu and Shah (2024 b) underlines how its assimilation by individuals has a healthy impact on their self-talk and inner dialogues. They note:

"An important highlight has been how practicing nonviolent intrapersonal communication helps in managing inner conflicts, builds inner resilience and aids in shaping positive self-concept." It was found that if inner conflicts can be managed and

inner resilience is built then it becomes much easier to manage interpersonal conflicts. Nonviolent intrapersonal communication contributes to inner peace, our well-being, reduces stress and anxiety. It helps individuals to remain calm and patient even in difficult situations. In this backdrop, developing skills of nonviolent intrapersonal communication helps in constructive resolution of interpersonal disputes."

In Indian communication thought, intrapersonal communication is considered as the foundation of all external communication. The importance of intrapersonal communication stems from the four stages of speech manifestation as described in the Vedas. Loha Choudhury (2023 a) points out, "The four stages of speech manifestation within the communicator's self- para, pasyanti, madhyama and vaikhari. Of these, the first three, para, pasyanti and madhyama, remain an internal mind-process but the last stage of speech manifestation, vaikhari, can be experienced by all."

Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts and philosophy was also greatly influenced by Jainism and Buddhism. The model of nonviolent communication according to the Gandhian praxis essentially can be linked in the framework of the Buddha's right speech (*sammāvācā*). The right speech has four components (Kundu, 2020):

- ⊙ It should be well-intended – comes from goodwill, not ill will; constructive; aimed to build up, not tear down
- ⊙ It should be true in nature – not overstated, taken out of context, or blown-up out of proportion
- ⊙ Aimed as the result should be beneficial – helps things get better, not worse (even if it takes a while)
- ⊙ It should not be harsh – It could be firm, pointed, or intense; it could confront mistreatment or injustice; anger could be acknowledged; but it is not prosecutorial, nasty, inflammatory, dismissive, disdainful, or snarky

Also for instance, verse 361 of the Dhammapada notes:

Right is restraint in the body,

*restraint in speech is right,
right is restraint in the mind,
everywhere restraint is right.*

Further, verse 362 notes:

*With hands controlled and feet controlled,
in speech as well as head controlled,
delighting in inward collectedness
alone, content, a bhikkhu's called.*

It can be noted from these two verses that the Buddhist tradition gives great importance to restraint in speech and action. It points out that restraint is important for having control on oneself and inner development. The Gandhian approach can be aligned with these perspectives.

Further, as noted above openness and flexibility were the hallmarks of Gandhian nonviolent communication. This has echoes in the Buddhist tradition. In several places the Buddha stresses that those who are wise they are not rigid and do not hold their narrow perspectives besides getting into unnecessary disputes. For instance, in Saddhatissa, p. 104, Sutta-Nipāta v. 894, it is said:

*Standing rigidly to his own view and depending on his own criteria, he enters into dispute in the world.
Desisting from all theories the wise one does not enter into dispute in the world.*

Gandhian nonviolent communication while underlining the essence of respecting all cultures and traditions encourages looking at an issue from different perspectives. Gandhi stressed, "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave (Young India, 1-6-1921).

This perspective of the Mahatma can be said to be assimilated from the Jain tradition of *anekantvada* (many sidedness or relative pluralism). This Jain doctrine helps us understand the principles of pluralism and the significance of multiplicity of viewpoints. The Gandhian approach to nonviolent communication can also be explained the second *sruta-skandha Ācārāṅga Sūtra* which is called *Bhāājāta*. It starts citing the types of speech that should be avoided," (1) Speech inspired by anger/wrath; (2) Speech inspired by pride/hubris; (3) Speech inspired by deceit/deception; (4) Speech inspired by gain/greed; (5) Speech with harshness both knowingly or unknowingly regarding the situation or position the individual who is listening is; (6) Speech reflecting positive/certain hope regarding uncertain things.

CONCLUSION

This chapter is an attempt to understand the Gandhian nonviolent communication through the framework of Indian communication thought. It tried to traverse the key elements of the Mahatma's nonviolent communication and how they got reflected from the backdrop of different Indian treatise and texts. This endeavor to delve his nonviolent communication principles from the standpoint of Indian communication thoughts could be a guidepost for understanding the communication principles of other Indian thinkers and philosophers.

The chapter also delved from the view point of the four axioms of Indian communication thought and tried to assimilate how Mahatma Gandhi used different philosophical and spiritual texts from Indian tradition to frame his action, ideals and writings.

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