Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869 –1948) known for his laudable leadership of Indian Independence struggle was the great apostle of truth and non-violence. The great man in history lives in the minds of every human being through his universal teachings blended with the philosophy of ‘Humanism’. With the title ‘Father of the Nation’ accorded by the Government of India, Gandhiji lives in the hearts of every Indian. Gandhiji’s social vision of independent India was wrapped with the idea of religious pluralism. For Indians, religion and spirituality occupied a dominant place in the day-to-day affairs. For a vast diverse land like India, his thoughts with multi dimensions are highly appropriate.

1. INTRODUCTION
Gandhiji’s contribution to education was indeed his own life and the message of universal love. His philosophical thoughts gave contemporary India a new vision to enter the millennium. Before going in depth to the social dimensions of Gandhian thoughts let’s first glean into his educational perceptions. A Gandhian educational thought focuses for the wholesome development of personality, where the theoretical and practical components are equally emphasized. This model highlighted on placing responsibility, hardwork, dedication and entrepreneurship to the community of learners. Right from basic education to the highest pinnacle of learning, this saw great moving. His perception was to make every child empowered to empower others.

Human investment in education during the pre-independence period suffered a lot. This was more evident in the education of girl child. Poor enrolment in the age range (6 – 11) was one of the alarming issues. Gandhiji felt very pathetic on this situation. He warned against this, because it disorganized villagers and made them helpless and literally paralyzed. This led to poverty, unemployment and despair. It is here that ‘Nai Talim’ (Basic Education) got wide acceptance. Providing food, clothing and shelter are the three basic essentialities of human survival. Gandhiji’s educational framework was based on
this findings derived from scientific research theories of economic, political and child development. This he had successfully experimented during his life in South Africa. One of the radical changes was the shift of manufacture from households into factories and shops. The work done at home offered lifelong educational and vocational benefits to the family members. The seeds of socialization started sprouting.

Nai Talim envisages a unique role for the teacher. The teacher is not simply a professor limited by curricular and abstract standards, but rather a person relating directly with the student entering in dialogue. Here the teacher is a co-learner. The teacher establishes rapport with the taught, becomes one with them, and learns from them. Here a true teacher is regarded himself as a student of his students. The spirit of co-operation and team spirit grew up through this methodology.

2. CENTRAL TENETS OF GANDHIAN THOUGHTS

   If education is the corner stone of all the development, then the aims, objectives should be made clear in the curricular component. The syllabus and activities should cater to the stipulated educational goals. It was Gandhiji who recognized the inter connection between the theoretical and practical components of education. Keeping these entire he proposed the basic educational framework which focused to develop productive and social skills among the masses. Education should develop a scientific attitude of mind with intellectual curiosity to know the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of things. The courage and power to think for oneself and the intellectual, moral consciousness to adhere by all the facts are inevitable.

3. SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF GANDHIAN THOUGHTS

   Gandhiji remarked ‘By Education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and man, body, mind and spirit’.

   Real education is all round development of all the faculties be attained through educational process. Education should be concrete and interconnected. Concrete education allows the learners to articulate problems and study their relationships to arrive at solutions. It allows all domains of heart, mind and eyes to work simultaneously in correlated manner resulting in a harmonious and well balanced personality. For the child to develop and socialize education through mother tongue is highly advisable. Education should seriously relate to the socio-cultural environment of the child. A peace model education deep rooted in truth, non-violence and peace should be made as the cardinal principles of education. The child should grow as citizen with a new social order based on co-operative work with full understanding of their rights, duties and obligations to society.

   The social dimension of his philosophy is to transform the individual and society simultaneously in accordance with the principles of truth and non-violence. The mankind has to progress for a creation of non-violent, political, economic and social order by non-violent struggle. The social goal ‘Sarvodaya’ as envisioned by Gandhiji aims for the welfare of all without exception. The ideology behind this is to strive for the good of each individual in society which results in the effort to achieve the good for all. The welfare of
human beings irrespective of all the differences is the ultimate goal. Gandhiji’s thoughts aim for self-transformation. The individual has to make sincere efforts to live in accordance with truth and non-violence.

**The key features of social dimension are:**

- Resisting injustice
- Developing a spirit of selfless service
- Practicing self-discipline
- Simplicity in living
- Maintaining truthful and peace attitude in relation with fellow beings
- Clean and Healthy Living: This is one of the personal and social habits. The attitude of health, cleanliness and hygiene towards self and community, practice skills to carry out all types of proper cleaning and sanitation work efficiently.
- Self-Reliance: To focus on economic self-support for its own sake and for character training.
- Productive basic Crafts: To focus on the most suited crafts for children by age for developing intelligence and general knowledge. The basic crafts are the main center of correlation for the core subjects of Language, Mathematics, General Science and Social Science.
- Recreational and cultural activities: To focus on games, dance, music, drama, festivals relating to social, religious, historical and national significance.

Gandhiji’s model of education was directed towards the vision of a new social order. His basic education was an embodiment of his perception of an ideal society consisting of small, self-reliant communities. The ideal citizen should be industrious, self-respecting and generous individual living in a small co-operative society. Gandhiji’s concept of education is of utmost significance in the contemporary situation. It is entirely based on the development of human personality, to maintain discipline, to create manual work with learning and to develop the culture of peace. He was a great educationist par excellence. His educational ideas can be used as a major instrument of socio-economic progress, material advancement, political evolution and moral developments of an individual. He preached and practiced the doctrine of simple living and high thinking.

### 4. CONCLUSION

Gandhi through his life and teachings stood for the welfare of all in society. The educational system was greatly fostering and inculcating the spirit of hard work, human welfare, economic development, physical improvement and socio-cultural progress. To conclude, it is rightly seemed that Gandhiji’s social dimension view taught us ‘Equip one to empower society’.

### 5. REFERENCES

