

Mahatma gandhi research paper

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Aroused by the massacre of Amritsar in 1919, Gandhi devoted his life to gaining India's independence from Great Britain. As the dominant figure used his persuasive philosophy of non-violent confrontation, he inspired political activists with many persuasions throughout the world (Andrews 23). Not only was Mahatma Gandhi a great peacemaker, but also his work to achieve freedom and equality for all people was greatly acknowledged. Gandhi's unconventional style of leadership gained him the love of a country and eventually enabled him to lead the independence movement in India.

Mohandas Gandhi, later called Mahatma Gandhi, was born on October 2, 1869 in Porbandar, which is the present day state of Gujarat, India (Andrews 17). He grew up in a very controlled family that had an alliance with the family ruling Kathiawad. He was engaged to two other women who both died, then he eventually married Kasturba at the age of 13. Gandhi sailed to England to attend University College in London to study law (Kamat's Potpourri). In 1891, he was able to practice in the British bar. Gandhi went back to India and tried to authorize a law practice in Bombay, with very little achievement.

Two years later, an Indian firm with curiosity in South Africa had an office in Durban where Gandhi was commissioned as legal advisor. This is where he lived for twenty years once he began his job doing labor on the sugar estates in South Africa (Moreorless). As soon as he arrived in Durban, he found himself being treated as if he was not human. The Africans forbade fundamental individual rights and political rights from the Indian immigrants. This conduct resulted in Gandhi's outburst in fury towards the African's reactions to Indian immigrants to South Africa.

He then began a civil right's campaign, which resulted in the development of his passive resistance policy, which eventually inspired thousands. The Union of South Africa government adjusted Gandhi's demands, which included recognition of Indian marriages and abolition of the poll tax (Kamat's Potpourri). When this man saw how terrible people were being treated because of diversity he said, "" There is nothing that wastes the body like worry, and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever," (Gold 231). By saying that, he meant that no one should worry about where they stand in society or how they are judged because in God's eyes everyone is perfect and everyone is equal therefore, no one who has any faith in God should be worrying about their so called " imperfections. " This great man struggled to gain the important rights for all Indians, and this is where it all began. Once Gandhi's mission in South Africa was complete, he returned to India and became involved in the home ruling movement. He was concerned with excessive land tax and discrimination, so he organized protests by peasants, farmers, and urban laborers to help them stand tall and fight for what they deserved (Gold 57).

During World War I, Gandhi had an active part in recruiting campaigns by launching his new movement of non-violent resistance to Great Britain (Byers 202). When Parliament passed the Rowlatt Acts in 1919, Satyagraha, which means insistence on truth, spread throughout India, recruiting millions of followers. British soldiers massacred Indians at Amritsar as a demonstration against the Rowlatt Acts. In 1920 the British government failed to make peace, which resulted in Gandhi organizing a campaign of non-cooperation (Andrews 103).

There was chaos in India as the public office resigned, courts were boycotted, and children were taken out of schools. Sitting Indians, who ignored police officers when told to move, even if they got beaten, blocked the streets. Gandhi was arrested, but the British soon were forced to free him. India's economic independence was made of Gandhi's Swaraj (self governing) movement. Because of this, India boycotted all British goods and British industrialists were left in extreme poverty across India. To save the country, Gandhi brought back cottage industries.

He started to symbolize the return of simple village life by using a spinning wheel. "Gandhi became the international symbol of a free India. He lived a spiritual and ascetic life of prayer, fasting, and meditation," (Andrews 126). He refused material possessions, and wore the lowest-class clothing and supported himself on only vegetables, fruits, and goat's milk. Fellow Indians looked at him as a God-like force, often referring to him as Mahatma (which means great-souled). Gandhi's ahimsa (idea of nonviolence), was essentially the way of life in the Hindu religion.

Since India followed Gandhi's ahimsa with such support, Britain would soon understand that violence is useless in this country and leave. In 1921, Gandhi received complete leadership from the Indian National Congress, the group that started the movement for nationhood. But, the Indian population could not understand why the whole world wasn't practicing and showing the ahimsa (Kamat's Potpurri). Because of this, many armed revolts broke out against the British. Gandhi eventually admitted that his campaign was a failure, and quickly tried to end it.

Gandhi was then seized and imprisoned by the British government in 1922. He was released in 1924, and distanced himself from being involved in any politics and instead focused on getting the Indian community closer (Gold 149). Unavoidably, he was brought back into the political forces. In 1930, a new campaign of civil disobedience was called to the Indian population saying they should refuse to pay taxes, especially on salt (Moreorless). The campaign was the famous march to the sea, where thousands of Indians followed Gandhi from Ahmedabad to the Arabian Sea, and made salt by evaporating sea-water.

Gandhi was again arrested, but released in 1931 as he stopped the campaign. In 1932, Gandhi started new civil-disobedience campaigns against the British. Since he was arrested twice, the Mahatma fasted for long periods many times. These fasts were very useful against the British because revolts would have broken out if Gandhi had died. In September 1932, while in jail, Gandhi performed a "fast unto death" in order to help the Hindu Untouchables. (Byers 202). The British considered the Untouchables as a separate part of the Indian government and tolerated their injustice.

Although Gandhi was a member of the upper caste, he strongly believed in removing this unjust caste system. In 1934 Gandhi resigned from politics, being replaced by Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhi continued teaching ahimsa and traveled across India. He was known for his dedication and political power. Since he was viewed with such great esteem, the British had to wait for Gandhi's approval to limit the home rule in 1935. In 1939 he returned to politics and designed his first act to manipulate the ruler of the state of Rajkot to change his autocratic rule (Moreorless).

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The colonial government had to intervene because the fast caused commotion across the country. When World War II broke out, the Congress party and Gandhi refused to support Britain in the war unless they were given complete independence. The British refused their proposal. When Japan entered the war, Gandhi still refused to allow India to fight in the war. He was imprisoned in 1942 but was freed after two years due to his bad health (Kamat's Potpourri). By 1944 the British agreed to allow Indian independence only if the two nationalist groups, the Muslim League and the Congress party, resolved their issues (Andrews 178).

Gandhi was strongly against the dividing of India but in the end had to agree, hoping that peace would be accomplished after the demand for Muslim separation was achieved. India and Pakistan split to two separate states when India gained its independence in 1947. Gandhi begged Hindus and Muslims to live together peacefully during the riots. Mahatma fasted until the riots stopped (Moreorless). He also fasted successfully on January 13, 1948, to bring about peace, but twelve days after that fast ended he was assassinated by a Hindu on his way to an evening prayer (Byers 203).

Gandhi's death was a worldwide devastation that left the population in shock. In the United Nations there was a day set aside to mourn for Gandhi and remember his acts of nonviolence for eternity. All countries sent their apologies and reassured that he would never be forgotten. The teachings of nonviolent movements were inspired in other countries, as well as the U. S. A. " under the civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. and in South Africa under Nelson Mandela," (Moreorless). Gandhi was the most inspirational

leader in the twentieth century because of his unique tactics of protesting and making peace worldwide.

The most persuasive ways of accomplishing change in social issues came from his idea of civil disobedience and nonviolence, which advised freedom movements around the globe (Moreorless). This political leader and peacemaker will always be remembered as a successful man who impacted many to be non-violent. This accomplishment is a great achievement because without this concept India may still have been fighting for independence. Gandhi said, “ The” (Moreorless) and that is what Gandhi chose to do. By doing favors for other people he was able to find out who he was, he found out he was the Mahatma because he truly did have a great soul.