
UNIT 4 GANDHIAN VISION OF HUMAN SECURITY

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4.1 INTRODUCTION

The birth of the territorial state in Europe encouraged the growth of the doctrine of state-centred security. National security became synonymous with territorial integrity. Later, this definition was broadened to include other elements of national concern like economic growth and societal cohesion, but territorial sovereignty continued to remain the enduring premise of national security. It must, however, be admitted that the concept of security has always been a contested domain. In fact, the lack of an agreed definition and varied theoretical approaches to examining security raises the question of how one defines security. The act of providing a definition includes some aspects and excludes others. This Unit deals with what should or should not be included, and debate about security since the end of the Cold War has been about.

With the end of the Cold War, and the collapse of the bi-polar world order, the quest for a new international system has invigorated the debate on alternate approaches to security. Cold War definitions of security that are based on realism have privileged territorial sovereignty. They are now challenged by new theoretical constructs arguing for more representative cognitive structures of national and international security. The Cold War promoted a global arms race and the amassing of nuclear and conventional arsenals. It also marked the ascendancy of the military-industrial complex and military-bureaucratic structures in the national polity that dominated the policy making and resource allocation processes. Though technological progress of a kind was achieved in this process, the

human costs involved were heavy; they included such barbarous acts as the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II, and the efforts to annihilate Vietnam, including its ecology, in the Cold War period.

Aims and Objectives

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe the Gandhian Vision of Human Security.
- identify the difference between Traditional and Gandhian Vision of Human Security.
- Gandhi's internationalism for Human Security.

4.2 FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND ANXIETY

The ascendancy of the Realist school in international relations placed emphasis on the primacy of the state in the security discourse, which ensured that nation states became the building blocks of the international system. Since the *raison d'être* of the nation state is to survive and enhance its power in a conflict ridden international system, military security acquired special significance. Heavy investments in defence-related activities were invariably made at the cost of those aspects of governance that were concerned with human security or the security of the individual. If security is to be defined as the absence of threat to acquired values, as defined by Arnold Wolfers, then it becomes essential to reach an agreement on these values. In recognising these values, it is also important to differentiate between the impact of different facets of security on national and international security. This required the distinction being recognised between those areas of security that could yield to state action and to societal reform requiring the intervention of NGOs and citizens groups. For example, the objective of gender equality cannot be achieved only through state-intervention in the form of legislation but requires social reform as well.

The concept of security is firmly embedded in beliefs linking it to freedom from fear and anxiety; in fact, the thesaurus identifies its synonyms to be un-anxiety, certainty, and protection'. Further, the dictionary associates security with confidence in its adjectival sense, and with organisation for ensuring the safety of entities against espionage, theft or other dangers. Traditional international relations theory deifies the security of the state as the primary unit of the international system without according due importance to the security of the individual, and embodies the perception that, 'Two dominant themes stand out from the mosaic of international relations in our time, the struggle for power and the struggle for order'(Stoessinger, 1965, p.32). These related themes require further consideration. And it is in this context that the Gandhian Vision of Human Security becomes relevant and urgent. Gandhi tackled this problem in his own characteristic way. First of all let us see the main concern of human security and analyse how they fit in the Gandhian Vision.

4.3 THE SEARCH FOR PRINCIPLES

4.3.1 State: Threat to Human Security

The first and most basic principle applicable is that human security forms part of the international dialogue, and has to be subjected to the same criteria as have been used to promote this dialogue by tradition and general acceptance. This means state security and human security should not be put in opposition without good reason, that the first effort

should be to advance human security by cooperative means. Some have suggested that the state itself is the primary threat to human security. The creation and defence of the Westphalian state form is at the heart of regional insecurity (Swatuk and Vale, 1999). This view clearly goes too far in asking for intervention as the first choice, and is, at least, for the time being, not acceptable within the kind of paradigm that is taking shape. Further, power in international relations continues to maintain the salience it has enjoyed for centuries. While outlining the human security construct in a way that brings closer an agenda for action, we cannot pretend that in the post Cold War world, the role of the state, once expressed primarily through military, political and economic power, and now increasingly expressed as a supplement, through the power of the concept of human security, is about to be abandoned; or that the importance of power has disappeared. This is precisely what Gandhi argued.

State as an engine of Violence: Gandhi was suspicious of the power of the state. Gandhi regarded the state as the organisation of violence. While Marx and Engels regard the state as the agent of the exploiting classes, Tolstoy and Gandhi consider it as the engine of violence. Gandhi was the protagonist of a divine kingdom on earth and hence, necessarily, he was repelled by the resort to force by political institutions. He has in mind the ultimate vision of the perfection of mankind and therefore he is hostile to the modern state which, to him, is a mechanical structure representing organised and concentrated violence. Unlike St. Augustine and other Christian political thinkers, he did not regard political force as the divinely appointed punishment or remedy for the sins of man. Nor did he regard social and political associations and the state as the actualisation and objectivisation of universal reason or the revelations of an all-pervasive Spirit. He is not a conservative historicist so as to identify the existing institutional mechanism with the realised realm of free-will. Neither does he regard the state as being almost the second nature of the individual in the external world. Nor is he an exponent of the servile cult of state omnipotence.

Gandhi argued that there is no element of moral spontaneity in the state. Therefore Gandhi had no love for the organised institutions of political power. He accepted, instead, the worth of the plasticity and spontaneity generated by non-violence. The compulsiveness of the commands of the state leads to the destruction of the plasticity and subtlety of personality. Hence Gandhi said : “ I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress”. This is what a large number of exponents of human security are advocating.

4.3.2 Security vis-à-vis other Disciplines

The second principle is that while setting the borders, there should be just a few simple rules about the way security intersects with the other disciplines involved like humanitarian law, human rights, gender studies etc,. There is so far no sign of inter-subjective agreement on such rules. When does poverty, for instance, become a human security problem? There needs to be some recognisable features of traditional security analysis in the effort to securitise anything. There has to be a present existential or a real future anticipated threat in the field concerned, and the threat should be sufficiently grave for emergency action of an extreme kind to be taken; normal methods should not apply.

In the economic sector, for example, should the possible closure of an industry be treated as a matter of security? The liberal economy treats the rise and fall of the private corporate sector as part of the day-to-day business of life, something which cannot be

securitised, but if a large and important sector is affected, for example if the power supply substantially shuts down, there is a case for securitising. While the inter-subjective process is the basis for threats we may also include the threat to the survival of the collective unit concerned, for example, the minority community, tribe or linguistic group, or to an integral element of their being, such as their economy, culture or way of life. In other words, seasonal water shortages, a temporary fall in the availability of food grains, sporadic incidents of crime and similar problems which are common to many societies also have to be included because they can threaten the existence of vulnerable communities. Another difficult issue is how to prioritize threats, for example, whether the environment should get more attention than poverty, health than education, and so on. These are the key issues on which Gandhi has a definite opinion similar to those expressed by human security experts.

	Traditional Security	Human Security (Gandhian Vision)
Referent	Traditional security policies are designed to promote demands ascribed to the state. Other interests are subordinated to those of the state. Traditional security protects a state's boundaries, people, institutions and values.	Human security is people-centered. Its focus shifts to protecting individuals. The important dimensions are to entail the well-being of individuals and respond to ordinary people's needs in dealing with sources of threats. Man should be the Supreme consideration.
Scope	Traditional security seeks to defend states from external <u>aggression</u> . State security is about a state's ability to deter or defeat an attack. It makes uses of deterrence strategies to maintain the integrity of the state and protect the territory from external threats.	In addition to protecting the state from external aggression, human security would expand the scope of protection to include a broader range of threats, including environmental pollution, <u>infectious diseases</u> , and economic deprivation.
Actor(s)	The state is the sole actor, to ensure its own survival. Decision making power is centralised in the government, and the execution of strategies rarely involves the public. Traditional security assumes that a sovereign state is operating in an anarchical international environment, in which there is no world governing body to enforce international rules of conduct.	The realisation of human security involves not only governments, but a broader participation of different actors, viz. regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations and local communities.
Means	Traditional security relies upon building up national power and military defence. The common forms it takes are armament races, alliances, strategic boundaries etc.	Human security not only protects but also empowers people and societies as a means of security. People contribute by identifying and implementing solutions to insecurity.

4.3.3 An International Locus

The third principle is that the concept must have an international locus. The promotion of human security in a particular situation should be susceptible to agreement by the international community that has a responsibility in the matter. There is in fact, a widening spectrum of developments which happen in one country but which concern others through a number of ways. For example a conflict or natural disaster in one country spills over to its neighbours and can have international effects. These require international relief efforts, or the work of NGOs or a donor-recipient relationship. But the areas of disagreement are also wide, human rights, refugees, and the use of resources being examples. Hence, two things are required for this international locus. A set of universally acceptable values, and an agreed pattern of implementing international action, through fire-fighting or long term peace building is therefore necessary.

This leads one from nationalism to internationalism. Gandhi was intensely attached to the concept of Indian Nationalism. But he was also an internationalist and always emphasised his role as a citizen of the world. He was a great national leader but was also unsurpassed for his love of humanity. In Gandhi, despite his nationalist preoccupations the dominant concepts were truth, non-violence and purity. Therefore, as a believer in positive love for mankind he believed in internationalism and in the essential unity of man. The South African and Indian politics had been the laboratories in which he “experimented” with his formulae of truth and non-violence which are indeed universal values. There is, thus, indeed, a supreme humanitarian standpoint in Gandhi. He was a great fighter for Swaraj and also considered human welfare to be a matter of greater concern. He fought against the British Empire but he loved the British people. He considered no person to be an enemy because beyond the sovereignty of the nation he looked to the categorical imperative of human brotherhood. He absolutely believed in a union of hearts of all men and women of the world.

Gandhi’s internationalism was only a sociological and political application of the great norm of Ahimsa which means universal non-hatred and non-violence. Buddha and St. Francis showed the tender care for the meanest creatures of the world. Their love extended also to the animal kingdom. Gandhi, like them, believed in the doctrine of absolute and universal compassion for all living beings. A believer in God naturally has the feeling of identity with all creatures because all are the creations of God. Gandhi was never tired of repeating that men could receive divine grace and affection only if they loved their brethren. He said: “We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family”. Hence love of the human kind was only an aspect of his ahimsa, and internationalism is a concrete means to realise at the political level, the universal love for humanity.

But Gandhi wanted that before cosmopolitanism and internationalism could become a reality, those countries which were still suffering under feudal lordship and colonial dependence should have the political freedom to determine their own future. He, therefore, cried for a halt to the nefarious game of imperial “gangsterism” among nations. Nationalism, though only a stage, was a very important one towards the realisation of internationalism. He asked: “How is this vast mass of humanity to be aflame in the cause of world deliverance, unless and until it has touched and felt freedom”? India had first to be free before she could co-operate on terms of equality with other nations. Therefore, it is clear that Gandhi’s romantic conception of the soul of a nation was not meant as the psychological support to virulent national chauvinism but was only a means to extol the soul of a people against the effective organisations and combinations of imperialistic

power that may attempt to suppress rising nationalism. The units that could form any international union should do that from their own will and this implied the previous attainment of national sovereignty by them. Hence Gandhi wrote: "It is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when peoples belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man".

In an obvious criticism of the League of Nations based on the concept of the great powers' predominance, Gandhi had written that an international league could really exist, "only when all the nations, big or small, composing it are fully independent"(Gandhi, 1939).

Nationalism would not mark the climax of human security; it was not an end but a stage. He, therefore, stood only for a nationalism that was "health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian". He felt that Indian nationalism should be a step towards internationalism and human unity. He was also of the opinion that India's freedom could be preserved only if there was "good will towards the whole of the human family."

Gandhi wanted India to be a free nation in order that she could sacrifice herself for the service of mankind. As he wrote: "I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from my free country, so that the resources of my country may be utilized for the benefit of mankind. Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the country; even so a country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the benefit of the world. My love, therefore, or nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free, that if need be the whole of the country may die, so that the human race may live. There is no room for race hatred there. Let that be our nationalism" (Tendulkar, 1944, p.385).

Nationalism was thus not the pinnacle of human endeavours but was only a stage in the political evolution of man. Through national consolidations it was possible to get over the obstacles of caste, group and local prejudices, conflicts and struggles. Thus nationalism could become a means to political and psychological integration. Once local and sectional hatreds had been consumed by the fire of nationalism, the time would naturally come when the nation would sacrifice itself for the good of the world. Gandhi wrote: "My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service of India includes the service of humanity. The whole scheme for the liberation of India is based upon the development of internal strength. It is a plan of self-purification". He wanted that Indian nationalism should mean the development of the national strength of India so that a renovated India could serve mankind. Therefore there could be no place for the pursuit of national interest to the detriment of the legitimate rights of other nations, according to the tenets of Gandhian foreign policy, which believed that the destiny of India lay not in militarisation but in the realisation of the noble mission of friendship and peace in the world. Thus we see that Gandhism teaches the conception of transcendence of narrow, exclusive, aggressive and chauvinistic nationalism and affirms the fundamental proposition that one's good consists in the good of mankind. Gandhi's conception of internationalism, thus, is an effective theoretical counterbalance to the almost blind adherence to the cult of national patriotism and absolute sovereignty which we find in Hegelianism, and fascism. Thus if on the one side he was a trenchant critic of western imperialism and a fighter for "Purna Swaraj", he would refuse to regard the nation-state as the final category in the political evolution of man.

4.3.4 World Federation

Gandhi visualised a plan of human unity to be realised by the federal organisation of friendly interdependent states. He had a great devotion to the noble goal of international co-operation and universal harmony, because, according to him, not to believe in the possibility of “permanent peace” amounts to disbelief in the “Godliness of human nature”. He wanted that permanent peace should be secured. He also pleaded for world order and world federation. He wrote: “Isolated independence is not the goal of the world states. It is voluntary interdependence. The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent states warring one against another, but a federation of friendly interdependent states. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal interdependence rather than independence. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence” (Ibid, p.386).

In a note addressed to Maurice Frydman on 28th July, 1942, Gandhi had asserted his faith in a federally organised world-state: If I can get freedom for India through non-violent means, power of non-violence is firmly established, empire idea dissolves and the World-State takes its place in which all the states of the world are free and equal, no state has its military. There may be a world police to keep order in the absence of universal belief in non-violence.

On July 4, 1947, at a prayer speech, Gandhi visualised that “if by India’s effort such a world federation of free and independent states was brought into being, the hope of the kingdom of God, otherwise called Ram Raj, might legitimately be entertained.”

He agreed that the only condition for the survival of world civilisation was the realisation of world union under one central governing body composed of representatives of the constituent entities. Most probably, Gandhi had in mind the federal pattern for this central governing body.

Gandhi would like the world government to non-cooperate with the lawless, aggressive and recalcitrant forces. But a world police force may be necessary in the beginning. This police force, under the control of the world authority, would exercise its power only as the last sanction when moral and non-violent sanctions had ceased to have effect. This is the ultimate realisation of /for human security. Gandhi’s vision was one of deep international cooperation as opposed to conflict between states.

4.4 RELATIONSHIP WITH DEVELOPMENT

Human security is related to and drawn from the practice of international human development. Traditionally, embracing liberal market economics was considered to be the universal path for economic growth, and thus seen as a measure of development for all humanity. Yet, continuing conflict and human rights abuses following the end of the Cold War and the fact that two-thirds of the global population seemed to have gained little from the economic gains of globalisation led to fundamental questions about the way development was practised. Accordingly, human development emerged in the 1990s to challenge the dominant paradigm of neo-liberal economic capitalist development where the focus was on growth and high gross domestic products. Human development proponents argue that economic growth is insufficient to expand people’s choice or capabilities; areas such as health, education, technology, the environment, and employment should not be neglected.

Human security further enlarges the scope for examining the causes and consequences of underdevelopment, by seeking to bridge the divide between development and security. Too often, militaries did not address the underlying causes of violence and insecurity while development workers often underplayed the vulnerability of development models to violent conflict. Human security springs from a growing consensus that these two fields need to be more fully integrated in order to enhance security for all.

Frances Stewart, an acknowledged authority on the subject argues that security and development are deeply interconnected.

- *Human security forms an important part of people's well-being, and is therefore an objective of development.*

An objective of development is “the enlargement of human choices”. Insecurity cuts life short and thwarts the use of human potential, thereby affecting the reaching of this objective.

- *Lack of human security has adverse consequences on economic growth, and therefore development.*

Some development costs are obvious. For example, in wars, people who join the army or flee can no longer work productively. Wars destroy infrastructure and disrupt normal life and reduces the productive capacity of the economy.

- *Imbalanced development that involves horizontal inequalities is an important source of conflict.*

Therefore, vicious cycles of lack of development which leads to conflict, then to lack of development, can readily emerge. Likewise, virtuous cycles are possible, with high levels of security leading to development, which further promotes security in return. (Stewart, 2004)

In the Gandhian Vision the practice of human development and human security share three fundamental elements:

- First, human security and human development are both people-centered. They challenge the orthodox approach to security and development i.e. state security and liberal economic growth respectively. Both emphasize people as the ultimate ends but not means. Both treat human beings as agents, who should be empowered to participate in the course.
- Second, both perspectives are multidimensional. Both address people's dignity as well as their material and physical concerns.
- Third, both schools of thought consider poverty and inequality as the root causes of individual vulnerability.

Despite these similarities, the relationship with development is one of the most contested areas of human security. The proponents of “Freedom from fear” argue that human security should focus on the achievable goals of decreasing individual vulnerability to violent conflict, rather than broadly defined goals of economic and social development. Others, such as Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy, argue that human development and human security are inextricably linked since progress in one enhances the chances of progress in another while failure in one increases risk of failure of another.

The following table is adopted from Tadjbakhsh to help us to understand the Gandhian Vision clearly and clarify the relationship between these two concepts.

Variables	Human Development	Human Security
<i>Values</i>	Well-being.	Security, stability, sustainability of development gains
<i>Orientation</i>	Moves forward, is progressive and aggregate: "Together we rise"	Looks at who was left behind at the individual level: "Divided we fall"
<i>Time Frame</i>	Long term	Combines short-term measures to deal with risks with long term prevention efforts.
<i>General objectives</i>	Growth with equity. Expanding the choices and opportunities of people to lead lives they value.	"Insuring" downturns with security. Identification of risks, prevention to avoid them through dealing with root causes, preparation to mitigate them, and cushioning when disaster strikes.
<i>Policy goals</i>	Empowerment, sustainability, equity and productivity.	Protection and promotion of human survival (freedom from fear), daily life (freedom from want), and the avoidance of indignities (life of dignity).

4.5 RELATIONSHIP WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

Human security has a deep relationship with the human rights tradition (the ideas of natural law and natural rights). The development of the human security model can be seen to have drawn upon ideas and concepts fundamental to the human rights tradition. Both approaches use the individual as the main referent and both argue that a wide range of issues (i.e. civil rights, cultural identity, access to education and healthcare) are fundamental to human dignity. Human security proponents argue that the goal of human security should be built upon and strengthen the existing global human rights. Gandhi was a great advocate of human rights. The whole of Indian freedom struggle waged under his leadership was the struggle for human rights and human security.

4.6 GENDER AND HUMAN SECURITY

Human security focuses on the serious neglect of gender concerns under the traditional security model. Traditional security's focus on external military threats to the state has meant that the majority of threats women face has been overlooked. By focusing on the individual, the human security model aims at addressing the security concerns of both women and men equally. Women are often the worst victims of violence and conflict: they form the majority of civilian deaths; the majority of refugees; and, are often the victims of cruel and degrading practices, such as rape. Women's security is also threatened by unequal access to resources, services and opportunities. Human security seeks to empower women, through education, participation and access, as gender equality is seen as a necessary precondition for peace, security and a prosperous society. This is precisely what Gandhi wanted and has done.

4.7 HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

The application of human security is highly relevant within the area of humanitarian intervention, as it focuses on addressing the deep rooted and multi-factorial problems inherent in humanitarian crises, and offers more long-term resolutions. In general, the term humanitarian intervention generally applies when a state uses force against another state in order to alleviate suffering in the latter state. Human security argues that this intervention should be done only as a last resort when there is ethnic cleansing and genocide. In such cases the international community has the 'Responsibility to Protect' the endangered community when the state has failed.

Under the traditional security paradigm, humanitarian intervention is contentious. The traditional security paradigm places emphasis on the notion of states. Hence, the principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention that are paramount in the traditional security paradigm make it difficult to justify the intervention of other states in internal disputes. Through the development of clear principles based on the human security concept, there has been a step forward in the development of clear rules of humanitarian intervention and the obligations of states that intervene in the internal disputes of a state.

4.8 SUMMARY

The Gandhian Vision of human security can be summed up as under. The protection of individual welfare is more important than the state. If the security of individuals is threatened internally by the state or externally by other states, state authority can be overridden. Addressing the root causes of humanitarian crises (e.g. economic, political or social instability) is a more effective way to solve problems and protect the long-term security of individuals. Prevention is the best solution. A collective understanding of the deeper social issues along with a desire to work together is necessary to prevent humanitarian crises, thereby preventing a widespread absence of human security within a population (which may mean investing more in development projects).

4.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Critically examine Gandhian Vision of Human Security.
2. What is the difference between Traditional and Gandhian Vision of Human Security?
3. Write short notes on :
 - a) Human Security and Human Rights
 - b) Gender, development and Human Security.

SUGGESTED READINGS

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