

**GANDHIAN PRINCIPLES IN R. K. NARAYAN'S**  
***THE VENDOR OF SWEETS***

**NETAJI BHARAT KOKATE**  
VITTHALRAO SHINDE ARTS COLLEGE,  
TEMBHURNI, SOLAPUR, INDIA.

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**Abstract**

*The present Paper is an attempt to focus light on the exhibition of Gandhian Principles in R K Narayan's The Vendor of Sweets. Gandhiji, a socio-political figure, struggled for the sake of India's development and independence .He is an immense source of writing and has influenced different disciplines and many writing from different fields like history, politics, philosophy, literature, sociology, and so on. Gandhiji taught the people of India to love one another and advised them to show bitterness towards non-violence .In this principle of non-violence, Gandhiji introduces technique of resistance to evil and truth. His Satyagraha is inspired by boundless love and compassion .The major purpose of this Paper is to explore the principles of Gandhiji. It also shows how Jagan, the central character is a follower & disciple of Mahatma Gandhi.*

**Keywords:** *Gandhian, truth, non-violence, Jagan, vendor, charkha, philosophy, Satyagraha, khadi, Bhagvad Gita.*

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## GANDHIAN PRINCIPLES IN R. K. NARAYAN'S *THE VENDOR OF SWEETS*

-NETAJI BHARAT KOKATE

R K Narayan is the most famous Indian novelist in English. The Vendor of Sweets is a great Hindu novel. It exhibits Gandhian ethics and values. All throughout his life, Gandhiji believed and lived as a man of ideals. This was instructed and educated to all the individuals of India, through the writings of various writers. R. K. Narayan explored Gandhiji's view in his writings. The main thing which attracts R.K. Narayan to write about Gandhiji is that, truth, satyagraha, simplicity, and last but not the least his non - violence. His character named Jagan in The Vendor of Sweets [1967] one or another way exhibits Gandhiji himself or his vision. The central character of this novel is rooted and flourished in the Indian ethics and Indian philosophy. Jagan, the protagonist of The Vendor of Sweets is in search of truth who exhibits Gandhiji, a man of truth in his own particular manner. Like Gandhism, Malgudi, an imaginary town plays an important role in Narayan's novel. The Vendor of Sweets is set in Malgudi. It is not a place but an experience of soil and soul of India. It is a town which combines traditionalism and modernism.

Jagan or Jagannath, the sweets vendor, is a staunch follower of Gandhiji in his thinking and conduct. His entire thinking is conditioned by Gandhian thought. He believes in the Gandhian principle of 'simple living and high thinking'. He wears a loose jibba over his dhoti. His clothes are made of handspun material. He also wears a sandal of leather tanned by his own hands. His needs are minimum. He believes in natural resources. He is a Hindu who reads the Bhagvad Gita and Hindu scriptures regularly. When Gandhi had visited Malgudi twenty years ago, Jagan was inspired. He took part in India's Freedom Movement. Under the influence of Gandhi, he spins on the Charkha everyday. He continued this practice even in his sixties. It is because of his commitment to Gandhi. He does not leave his Charkha. He takes the Charkha with him when he goes to an ashram across the river.

In the beginning of the novel, Jagan says to a cousin 'Conquer taste, and you will have Conquered the self.' This shows the impact of the Gandhian philosophy on Jagan .He has learnt the teachings of Gandhi and follows them in his practical life. He obeys the rules and regulations of Gandhism. He has stopped to take salt, rice and sugar. He takes a natural diet of stone - ground wheat ,some drops of honey mixed with water and vegetables .He believes that the ghee from buffaloes is not good for us .Gandhiji too has advised us so. He eats food only cooked by himself .Twigs of trees make an ideal tooth brush for him. He believes that the bristles of the brush are made from hair of pig's tails .He regards daily shaving as an European habit. He also believes in Gandhiji's principle of non - violence. He is calls his footwear the 'non-violent foot -wear'. He is presented as a Gandhian in the post - independent India and he follows the Gandhian way of life to the minute details.

R.K. Narayan supports Gandhism and he said in an interview with Susan E. Croft, R K Narayan avers: "I liked Mahatma (Gandhi) personally and I wanted to somehow recount this. He was a very impressive person. I did not know him personally but I want too many gatherings he addressed."

### **Conclusion**

Jagan, the protagonist in *The Vendor of Sweets* is true embodiment of Gandhian virtues and principles. R.K.Narayan has presented an encompassing view of Gandhian ideology and philosophy. The novel serves as a panorama for the future generations who want to understand Gandhiji as whole.

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