

CHARACTERISTICS, ROOT CAUSES, AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important phases of India's fight for independence was the Non-Cooperation Movement, which was initiated by Mahatma Gandhi in twentieth century. The purpose of this study is to investigate the characteristics, underlying reasons, and significance of the movement, with a particular emphasis on the role it played in shaping India's war for freedom. A major increase in national consciousness and solidarity was brought about as a result of the movement's nonviolent resistance, mass mobilization, and boycotts of British goods and institutions. Through an examination of the movement's origins, trajectory, and effects, this research offers a deeper understanding of the movement's continuing legacy and the significance it holds in Indian history. Collective actions such as civil disobedience, nonviolent resistance, mass mobilization, and boycotts. repressive policies implemented by the British government, such as the Rowlatt Act and the slaughter at Jallianwala Bagh. An important contribution to the fight for India's independence, the advancement of national consciousness, and a source of motivation for any future movements. On Baisakhi, which was celebrated on April 13, 1919, a large crowd of people from Amritsar and the surrounding areas gathered at Jallianwala Bagh for a public meeting. They did this in defiance of regulations that prohibited public gatherings. A furious General Dyer, as he is now commonly known, gave the order for his forces to open fire on the crowd of innocent people who were not armed, and he did not even bother to give them a warning. The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre incident was the focal point of the piece, which centered on Gandhi's decision to create a grassroots movement. Gandhi's one and only sincere faith in British justice was put under a tremendous amount of strain as a result of this whitewashing of the heinous behavior of the Punjab Provincial Government. At this point, he came to the conclusion that the only way to change the minds of those in authority was to initiate a new movement of protest. In written form, he presented a platform that he called the "Non-Cooperation Movement." By stressing the role that the Non-Cooperation Movement played in creating the road that led to India's independence, this study makes a significant contribution to a more in-depth understanding of the significance of the movement in Indian history.

INTRODUCTION

The Non-Cooperation Movement was a statewide campaign of civil disobedience that was initiated in India in 1920 by Mahatma Gandhi. Its purpose was to advocate for self-governance (Swaraj) and show discontent with the rule of the British. The movement included a number of different tactics of peaceful resistance, such as boycotts of British goods, institutions, and accolades, as well as the promotion of indigenous industry and self-reliance. An important stage in India's fight for independence from British control was the Non-Cooperation Movement, which took place throughout the time period. The objective of this campaign, which was initiated by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, was to bring together Indians in a nonviolent revolt against the injustice

of colonial rule. It encouraged people to boycott British goods and institutions, which helped to build a sense of national identity and solidarity among the various groups that make up Indian society. An examination of the Non-Cooperation Movement's beginnings, strategies, important events, and impacts is presented in this article. The essay also highlights the movement's legacy in influencing India's struggle for independence.

On August 1, 1920, the Non-Cooperation Movement was formally initiated with the objective of attaining self-governance and complete independence for India by the use of actions that did not involve the use of violence. This action was taken as a reaction to the oppressive policies implemented by the British government, such as the Rowlatt Act and the killing that took place at Jallianwala Bagh. Over the course of the movement, Indians were pushed to reject British institutions, goods, and services and to embrace Swadeshi, which refers to products that are created in India.

CAUSES OF NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

A variety of factors contributed to the development of the Non-Cooperation Movement. The immediate background for the movement was provided by the effects of important events such as the First World War, the Rowlatt Act, the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

- a. Dissent that was just beginning to take shape: the economic exploitation of India by the British colonial rulers had already resulted in the masses being poor. The country's economic and political condition during and after the First World War was further exacerbated by rising high inflation, severe taxation, and compulsory cultivation of cash crops. These economic and political factors contributed to the country's predicament.
- b. First World War: The British government broke its pledge to take into account nationalist demands in exchange for Indian help in the war, which shattered the political optimism that prevailed during the years of the First World War.
- c. Montagu-Chelmsford reforms: The reforms that were implemented by the British government through the Montagu-Chelmsford in the form of the Government of India Act 1919 did not meet the expectations of the Indian people in terms of self-governance and responsible government. It was described as "disappointing and unsatisfactory" by the overwhelming majority of officials.
- d. Rowlatt Act: According to the Rowlatt Act, which was enacted in 1919, it was possible to arrest and detain Indians without first putting them on trial. Putting nationalists behind bars without enabling them to defend themselves was the major objective of this organization. This had caused the nationalists and other leaders to become quite angry. In order to combat it, Gandhi made the decision to use Satyagraha.
- e. Jallianwala Bagh Massacre: The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, which took place in Amritsar and saw British forces opening fire on a peaceful assembly of Indians, resulted in the violent deaths of hundreds of people, stunned and infuriated the Indian nation.
- f. Khilafat Movement: The Khilafat Movement was a parallel movement that was formed by Indian Muslims in order to protest against the British occupation of the Ottoman Caliphate

following the conclusion of the First World War. Gandhi was a supporter of the Khilafat movement and fought for independence from the government.

- g. Desire to Self-Rule (Swaraj): A Growing Desire for Self-Government and Independence from British domination (Swaraj): The movement was mainly fuelled by the growing desire for self-governance and independence from UK domination. The ideas of nonviolence and civil disobedience, which Mahatma Gandhi called for, struck a chord with the Indian population, which was looking for an alternative to colonial control.
- h. Home Rule Movement: Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak were the ones who initiated the Home Rule campaign, which was the movement that laid the groundwork for the non-cooperation campaign. As a result of the Lucknow Pact, the moderates and extremists of the Indian National Congress (INC) came together, and the Muslim League and the Congress Party also showed their allegiance with one another. As a result of the return of the extremists, the INC took on a more militant personality.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NON- COOPERATION MOVEMENT

In its most basic form, the movement was a non-violent and peaceful demonstration against the British rule in India. As a display of protest, it was requested that Indians give up their titles and resign from their positions in the local bodies that they had been nominated for. Individuals were requested to resign from their positions in the government. The Non-Cooperation Movement, which was initiated by Mahatma Gandhi in the year 1920, was an important phase in the war for Indian independence. Here are some of the most important characteristics.

1. Non-Violent Protest: Civil disobedience and other forms of nonviolent protest were central to the movement.
2. Surrender of Titles and Honorary posts: Individuals were strongly encouraged to relinquish their titles and honorary posts that had been bestowed upon them by the British government.
3. Swaraj: As part of the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Indian National Congress, which was led by Gandhi, embraced the goal of achieving Swaraj (self-government) through peaceful and legitimate methods. This objective was a part of the Non-Cooperation Movement. Gandhi designed the campaign in different stages like initially, it would be non-cooperation (boycotts, resignations, and other similar actions), and if Swaraj was not accomplished or if the government responded with repression, the movement would progress to civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes.
4. Resignation from Government Positions and Memberships in Local Bodies: Individuals were strongly encouraged to resign from their affiliations with local bodies and positions in the government.
5. Boycott of Foreign Goods: The Indian people were strongly encouraged to refrain from purchasing British goods and instead make use of only products that were manufactured in India. A collection of garments made in other countries was assembled and then set ablaze.
6. Boycott of Elections: It was requested that Indians refrain from participating in elections that were held in compliance with the requirements of the 1919 Act, as well as legislative

councils (although there were disagreements regarding this boycott). The boycotting of legal institutions was also promoted.

7. Non- Cooperation Movement Institutions: The boycotting of government schools and colleges, as well as courts, government services, and legal processes, was included in this category of non-cooperation with government institutions.
8. Refusal to Serve in the British Army: Individuals were strongly urged to decline the responsibility of serving in the British army.
9. Non-Payment of Taxes: In the event that the aforementioned actions did not produce the desired outcomes, individuals were prepared to refuse to pay taxes.
10. Promotion of Swadeshi Principles: Movement for the Promotion of Swadeshi Principles
The movement worked to encourage the adoption of Swadeshi principles, which included the practice of hand spinning and weaving (Charkha and Khadi). There were thousands of volunteers who went door-to-door in an effort to get people to purchase Swadeshi products.
11. Establishment of National Institutions: The establishment of national institutions included the establishment of private panchayat courts, national schools, and colleges. A number of educational establishments, including Jamia Millia Islamia, Kashi Vidyapeeth, and Bihar Vidyapeeth, were established.
12. Establishment of Panchayats for the purpose of resolving conflicts: The movement advocated for the establishment of local Panchayats specifically for the purpose of resolving disputes, with the intention of establishing alternative institutions to those controlled by the British.
13. Fund for Tilak Swaraj: Gandhi made the announcement of the Tilak Swaraj Fund, which had the objective of collecting one crore of rupees to support constructive activity.

METHODS AND SPREADING OF NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

During the year 1920, Mahatma Gandhi initiated the Non-Cooperation Movement with the objective of achieving Swaraj, which is the Indian term for self-government, via nonviolent resistance against the British authority in India. Among the most important strategies were the promotion of Swadeshi, the boycotting of British goods and institutions, and nonviolent demonstrations. As a result of widespread dissatisfaction and a strong yearning for autonomy, the movement quickly spread throughout urban and rural areas.

Methods of the Non-Cooperation Movement:

- a. Boycott of British Goods and Institutions: This was an essential tactic to employ. Indians were strongly encouraged to abstain from purchasing items made in the United Kingdom, to avoid wearing foreign clothing, and to avoid attending British schools, colleges, law courts, and government posts.
- b. Surrender of Titles and Honors: Indians bestowed with titles by the British government were urged to relinquish them as a symbolic act of resistance.
- c. Promotion of Swadeshi: The movement prioritized the utilization of locally produced products, with a particular emphasis on hand-spun and hand-woven Khadi cloth. This was intended to promote Indian industries and decrease dependence on British imports.

- d. Non-violent Resistance: Ahimsa, which translates to "non-violence," formed the foundation of Gandhi's ideology of nonviolence. Protests were to be conducted in a nonviolent manner, with no instances of violence or aggressiveness allowed.
- e. Public Meetings and Processions: Rallies, marches, and public gatherings were organized to increase awareness of the movement and galvanize support.
- f. Establishment of National Institutions: National schools, colleges, and private panchayat courts were founded in order to compete with the educational institutions that were established by the British.
- g. Non-payment of Taxes: As an additional act of resistance, there were calls for the non-payment of taxes in certain sections of the country.

Spread of the Movement:

- a. Cities: The movement initially gained traction in urban centers. Students left government schools and colleges, lawyers boycotted courts, and people participated in picketing liquor shops and burning foreign cloth.
- b. Rural Areas: The movement also spread to the countryside, with peasants joining the movement against oppressive landlords and demanding land reforms.
- c. Tribal Areas: In some tribal areas, like the Gudam Hills of Andhra Pradesh, the movement took on a more militant form under leaders like Alluri Sitarama Raju, who led armed revolts against British rule.
- d. Diverse Groups: The movement saw participation from various sections of Indian society, including students, lawyers, peasants, tribal people, and workers.
- e. Khilafat Movement: The Non-Cooperation Movement was closely linked to the Khilafat movement, which aimed to restore the Caliphate in Turkey. This alliance between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League strengthened the movement.
- f. Role of Leaders: Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, the Ali brothers, C.R. Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, and others played a crucial role in spreading the movement through their speeches, writings, and organizational efforts. Thousands of students left their educational institutions, with over 800 national schools and colleges participating nationwide. A significant educational boycott was orchestrated in Kolkata under C.R. Das's leadership. Subhash Chandra Bose assumed leadership of the Calcutta National Congress, contributing significantly to the movement. In Punjab, Lala Lajpat Rai played a pivotal role in the movement's success.

The movement extended beyond education to include a widespread boycott of foreign products and clothes. Major products were boycotted, and shops selling foreign cloth faced picketing. Liquor shop also experienced picketing. To promote domestic textiles, people embraced Khadi, making it the un of the national movement. The use of charkhas became synonymous with the movement. At the 1921 All India Khilafat Conference in Karachi, Mohammed Ali declared British Army service as 'religiously unlawful for Muslims.' Gandhiji further emphasized the need for civilians and army memb to sever ties with the repressive British government.

REGION-SPECIFIC MOVEMENTS INCLUDED

- ❖ In the Midnapore district of Bengal, a movement emerged against union board taxes
- ❖ In the Andhra district of Guntur, non-tax movements were organized.
- ❖ Defiance of forest laws became prominent in Andhra during the movement
- ❖ In Assam, tea plantation laborers went on strike
- ❖ In Punjab, the Akali movement commenced as part of the Non- Cooperation Movement, aiming to reclaim control of gurudwaras from corrupt influences.

SIGNIFICANT LEADERS OF THE NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

The non-cooperation campaign witnessed the active involvement of numerous leaders and ordinary individuals, fostering unity between Hindus and Muslims. Notable figures associated with the non-cooperation movement include.

Mahatma Gandhi:

In the month of March in the year 1920, he published a manifesto and made public his theory of the non-violent non-cooperation movement. The people were encouraged to adopt Swadeshi ideals and practices, such as hand spinning, weaving, and labor for the elimination of untouchability, by him, who was a key leader of the movement. During his tour of the country in 1921, he spoke to thousands upon thousands of individuals. He was forced to put the movement on hold as a result of the outbreak of violence that occurred in Chauri-Chaura, Uttar Pradesh, in the month of February 1922.

C.R.Das (Desh Bandhu):

During the annual session of the Congress that took place in Nagpur in 1920, he submitted the primary resolution that was proposed about the Non-Cooperation Movement. Despite the fact that he was a lawyer by trade, he chose to stay away from the legal system and give up a profitable practice. In the process of bringing together Hindus and Muslims in Midnapore, Chittagong, and Calcutta, respectively, his three subordinates and allies, Birendranath Samsal, J.M. Sengupta, and Subhash Bose, played a significant role.

Jawaharlal Nehru:

It was he who continued the promotion of the Non-Cooperation Movement and who promoted the foundation of the Kisan Sabha in order to advocate for the cause of the peasants who were being exploited by the policies of the government. The decision that Gandhi made to withdraw the movement was not acceptable to him.

Ali Brothers:

Shaukat Ali and Muhammed Ali, who were known as the Ali brothers, were the most influential leaders of the Khilafat movement. They enthusiastically supported Gandhi throughout his tour around the country to expand the movement. During the All India Khilafat Conference, Muhammad Ali made the declaration that "it was religiously unlawful for the Muslims to continue serving in the British Army." Later thereafter, the Ali brothers were taken into custody.

Lala Lajpat Rai:

He was first opposed to the Non-Cooperation Movement's policy (he was against the boycott of schools), but he eventually came around and became a supporter of the movement. Indeed, he held a demonstration against its removal in the year 1922.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel:

In Gujarat, he was responsible for spreading the movement, and he believed that the Non-Cooperation Movement was a viable alternative to revolutionary terrorism as a means of fighting against a colonial administration.

Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya:

The Non-Cooperation Movement was organized by him in the little town of Chirala-Parala, which is located in the Guntur district. The movement was made in opposition to the government's desire to turn the town into a municipality and the increase in local taxes.

M.N.Roy:

Along with being a communist leader, he was also the editor of the communist publication known as "Vanguard." 172 of the 225 individuals who were suspected of involvement in the Chauri Chaura tragedy were sentenced to death by the session's court, which he criticized.

Subhash Chandra Bose:

The Non-Cooperation Movement (NCM) was a historic movement in which Subhash Chandra Bose played a role that was both intricate and substantial. Although he first joined the movement, he gradually became disillusioned with its techniques and finally advocated for a more aggressive strategy to gaining India's independence. He was a member of the movement since its inception.

SUSPENSION OF NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

In February of 1922, the Non-Cooperation Movement, which had been initiated by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, was put on hold as a result of the Chauri Chaura event. The episode in question was a violent mob that set fire to a police station in Chauri Chaura, Uttar Pradesh, resulting in the deaths of twenty-two officers. Gandhi, a staunch supporter of nonviolence, made the decision to put an end to the campaign because he was of the opinion that the demonstrators had not fully understood the concept of nonviolence. The Non-Cooperation campaign was a mass campaign that was organized by the Indian National Congress. Its goal was to achieve self-governance by protesting British authority in a nonviolent manner through boycotts and non-cooperation. A protest march that was taking place in Chauri Chaura in February of 1922 got violent. A group of people attacked and set fire to the police station, which ultimately led to the deaths of twenty-two patrol officers. Gandhi, who advocated for nonviolence (Ahimsa), was extremely troubled by the event that took place. He was of the opinion that the event of violence that took place at Chauri Chaura was a sign that the movement was not yet prepared for widespread nonviolent action. According to Testbook, Gandhi therefore chose to suspend the Non-Cooperation Movement in

spite of resistance from some leaders who thought the movement was gaining traction and shouldn't be stopped because of individual instances.

IMPORTANCE OF NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

One of the most significant turning points in India's fight for independence was the Non-Cooperation Movement, which was initiated by Mahatma Gandhi in the year 1920. The movement placed an emphasis on nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience, and it encouraged Indians to boycott British institutions and goods. This was done in order to challenge the power of the British government and to create national unity. Peasants, laborers, students, and women were among the numerous groups that were drawn together by this movement, which was a united front against British rule. The idea of Satyagraha, which translates to "truth force," and peaceful resistance as methods for obtaining independence rose to prominence as a result of this. Indians were encouraged to boycott British schools, colleges, law courts, and other institutions, which ultimately resulted in the British authority being further weakened. Because of this, there was a major reduction in the importation of foreign commodities, particularly textiles, which had an effect on the economy of the United Kingdom. The Indian people developed a sense of national awareness, solidarity, and self-reliance as a result of this opportunity. By garnering support from the general populace and expanding outside the realm of elite circles, it expanded the reach of the nationalist cause. It brought to light the exploitative nature of British rule and gained support and attention from around the world.

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

In 1920, Mahatma Gandhi initiated the Non-Cooperation Movement, which proceeded to have profound repercussions on the economy, politics, and society of India. The result was a rise in political consciousness, an increase in the number of people who felt a sense of national pride, and economic upheavals for the British. Despite the fact that it was ultimately unsuccessful as a result of the Chauri Chaura tragedy, it was essential in laying the framework for subsequent movements and cementing Gandhi's leadership. A sense of solidarity and national awareness was established among Indians as a result of the movement, which also encouraged involvement from a wide range of social strata and helped to consolidate the concept of a united India. It brought political issues to the attention of the general public, which inspired people to take an active role in the struggle for freedom and posed a challenge to the authority of the British government. In addition to exposing the fragility of the British government, the boycott of British institutions, which included schools, universities, and law courts, also damaged the administration. His ideas of nonviolence and Satyagraha gained widespread appeal as a result of the campaign, which positioned Mahatma Gandhi as a major leader in the movement for Indian independence. The campaign resulted in a substantial boycott of British goods, notably fabric, which led to a sharp fall in imports and a boost for Indian businesses, particularly textile mills. The boycott was a direct effect of the movement. It was a powerful feeling. As part of the movement, national schools, colleges, and private panchayat courts were established with the intention of providing education and justice outside of the system that was controlled by the British governing body. As a result of the movement, there was a shift in the role that women play in society, as seen by the greater engagement of women in

political activities and demonstrations. It was a significant component in the strengthening of the national movement that the movement sought to promote harmony between Hindus and Muslims and to bridge the divides that existed between the two communities. Traditional social structures, such as the practice of untouchability, were challenged by the movement, which also elevated the status of Dalits who were previously marginalized. During the course of the movement, the harsh nature of British rule was brought to light, which resulted in international attention and support being directed towards India's fight for independence. Following the Chauri Chaura incident, which resulted in the deaths of 22 police officers, Gandhi ultimately decided to abandon the movement. This event served to demonstrate the efficacy of non-violent resistance and civil disobedience, therefore undermining the authority of the British Raj and inspiring subsequent movements. The Swadeshi movement, which promoted the consumption of products created in India and contributed to the expansion of domestic industries, was given a lot of attention.

CONCLUSION

One of the most significant moments in India's struggle for independence was the Non-Cooperation Movement. Although it did not succeed in accomplishing all of its objectives, it had a significant influence on the nation. The significance of taking a position against British rule was brought to the attention of a great number of people in India by this movement. It was able to bring together individuals from a variety of circumstances, such as farmers, laborers, and students, who were all interested in bringing about change. A great number of people were motivated to join the cause by Gandhi's teachings of nonviolence and unity. Awareness was also raised on societal issues such as discrimination based on caste as a result of the movement. In general, the Non-Cooperation Movement was an important factor in determining the course that India would take to achieve its independence and it laid the groundwork for subsequent demonstrations. The Non-Cooperation movement sparked a new patriotism and promoted Swadeshi. Later in India's freedom war, the Non-Cooperation movement's spirit persisted. After the revolution was halted, some Congress leaders focused on organizing in rural areas. While integrating urban Muslims into the national movement, it also communalized national politics (Sitaramaiya B., 1946) [8]. Muslim emotions reflected a broader anti-imperialist stance, but national leaders failed to elevate their religious political consciousness to a secular level. The Non-Cooperation Movement spread nationalist sentiments across the country, politicizing all demographics, including craftsmen, peasants, students, urban poor, women, and traders. By politicizing and activating millions of men and women, the national movement became revolutionary.

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