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[Applied Philosophy of Economics of Mahavira](#)

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[Introduction](#)

Today we are moving from mono utility to multi-utility. This has led us towards the burning problem of global warming, ever increasing number of psychosomatic diseases, over comfort zone one attitude leading towards social inequality so on and so forth. This Economic inequality and vast differences in the mode of consumption are the two curses of our age. Accumulation of wealth on the one side and the lust for worldly enjoyment on the other, are jointly responsible for the emergence of the present day materialistic consumer culture. The wide difference in material possession as well as in the modes of consumption has divided the human race into two categories of 'Haves' and 'Have notes.' At the dawn of human history also, undoubtedly, these classes were existent but never before the vices of jealousy and hatred were as alarming as these are today. Not only inappropriate distribution of wealth but luxurious life led by affluent people these days, is the main cause of jealousy and hatred in the hearts of

the poor. That's why Ācārya Mahapragya rightly said, 'Hungry man is the biggest terrorist.' So the need of the hour is to incorporate the new model of Non-violent economics of Mahavira to establish a crimeless and problem free society of eco-friendly co-existence.

Human Centered Economics

Mahavira do believed in the utility of the wealth but at the same time he claimed wealth is always a means and it shouldn't be considered as an end. So Mahavira's Non-violent Economics aims at human centered economics rather than comfort centered economics. He added that while earning wealth, human values shouldn't be sacrificed. Koutilya said, money rules everything.' In my opinion however economics rules everything. The main aim of Non-violent economics is to provide ways and means to fulfill the basic needs of every individual and not the desires. This is the basic differences between Mahavira's concept and the concepts of modern economics. Mahavira's Non-violent Economics emphasizes on the development of compassion and sensitivity along with the pace of economic development in an ethical manner.

Balanced Personality and Anekantic Perspective

Non-violent Economics of Mahavira is potential enough to promote holistic and balanced personality through the development of anekāntic perspective. It is really a misbelief that mere money and the fulfillment of desires can bring about happiness. It should be very clear that happiness and contentment are not based on our possessions but upon the kind of attitude or mentality we possess towards materialistic objects. So Mahavira believed in the notion, 'Change your perspective and the world would be changed.' On the basis of this maxim, Non-violent Economics can explore the change of vision at the individual level, can develop the culture of tolerance at familial level and can establish peaceful co-existence at social level and universal brotherhood at national and the international level. It is anekāntic perspective which considers each and every thought, speech, action and the concept to be relative. This view of relativity of Mahavira can awaken the spiritual consciousness along with the materialistic consciousness for the balanced and integrated development of the nation.

Planet, People and profit concern Economics

Let us analyze the applied philosophy of Non-violent Economics in the three fold principle of Mahavira i.e. limited desires, limited consumption and limited accumulation. To this, many persons claim that religious restraints, self-discipline are not productive and are impediment to development. In reality, however it is only when we think in terms of worldly pleasures that they appear to be obstacles. If we consider them from the point of view of human welfare; we would find that they are not obstructive but conducive to development. As Non-violent Economics of Mahavira asks for self profit to be moderated by the concern for others through the self imposed restrain over ones desires, accumulation and consumption which is the basis of eco-friendly social life.

During the process of analytical study of Non-violent Economics, I arrived at the remedy that the cause of entire social inequality lies in discontentment. It is greed which is the mother of all actions. On the one side, this greed is an effective motivator at the same time it can be a worst enemy of the self growth as

well as of social development. When this basic instinct of greed overrules the concern for others seems neglected then it becomes the main cause of social degradation in all walks of life. In Uttarādhyayana Sūtra, 1.18 Mahavira rightly said that desires are endless as the sky. It is greed boosting economy that has brought about one-sided materialistic growth completely obliterating the role of spiritual growth. I believe that 'I' and 'Mine' these are two basic enemies of the self. Unless and until they are not universalized, the dream of peaceful coexistence can't be made real. In Dasvaikālika Sūtra, 6.21, Parigraha is identified with (murchā) attachment.[1] In Tattvārtha Sūtra, 7.21, also Umāsvāti has emphatically pointed out that parigraha is attachment.[2] For this, we have to apply multi-dimensional perspective rather than mono perspective in all the transactions of life. The notion of multi-dimensional perspective will show us the path towards the holistic solution for the prevailing burning problems of today. Economists especially are needed to brain-wash their entire thought process and decentralize this 'I' and 'Mine' instinct.

The narrow centered view of wishing to satisfy one's ego, one's possessiveness and trying to enjoy the maximum material luxuries of the world at the personal level is the root cause of reactive violence, domestic violence prevailing in present era. Unless and until this notion is submitted or directed from one to many, self to society, the dream of Mahavira's Sarvodaya, Non-violent Economics, can't be translated into reality.

Thus, Jaina philosophy as a humanitarian and compassionate philosophy, Mahavira's Non-violent Economics can prove to be relevant for shaping global human values in the right perspective and in right direction for sustainable progress of inner and outer peace. The concept of Non-violent economics based on Mahavira's philosophy can act as a tool in establishing social and economic equality. So ahimsa in conduct, aparigraha or limitation of desires in business, anekant in thought and Syadvad in expression highlights the essence of Mahavira's sociological applied philosophy of Sarvodaya Economics in the world of experience.

Footnotes:

[1]

Dasvaikālika Sutra, 6.20

[2]

Tattvārtha Sūtra, 7.16

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