

CONFLICT PREVENTION AND  
PEACE MANAGEMENT

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# CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACE MANAGEMENT

EDITED BY

**MANAS CHATTERJI**

*Binghamton University, USA*

**MADHUMITA CHATTERJI**

*ABBS School of Management, India*

AND

**KSHITIZ SHARMA**

*ABBS School of Management, India*



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India – Malaysia – China

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# CONTENTS

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <i>About the Editors</i>   | <i>ix</i>  |
| <i>About the Contributors</i>  | <i>xi</i>  |
| <i>Foreword</i>  | <i>xix</i> |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i>  | <i>xxi</i> |
| <b>Distinguished Guest Introduction: Relevance of Gandhi in Today's Times</b>  |            |
| <i>Jagdish Rattanani and Sudarshan Iyengar</i>   | <i>1</i>   |
| <b>Chapter 1 Introduction to Economic Peace</b>  |            |
| <i>Dominique Steiler</i>   | <i>9</i>   |
| <b>Chapter 2 Weaving a Web of Nonviolence</b>  |            |
| <i>Lester R. Kurtz</i>   | <i>17</i>  |
| <b>Chapter 3 Education for Peace Through Workshops and Comics for Youths in Africa</b>   |            |
| <i>Margit Stein and Koffi Emmanuel Noglo</i>   | <i>33</i>  |
| <b>Chapter 4 Does Political Environment Impact Upon Government Effectiveness? – A Panel Data Investigation for Southeast Asian Countries</b>                           |            |
| <i>Dipangshu Dev Chowdhury</i>   | <i>43</i>  |
| <b>Chapter 5 Leadership Challenges to Re-establish Office Culture Post-COVID-19</b>  |            |
| <i>Manish Wankhede and Kshitiz Sharma</i>  | <i>55</i>  |
| <b>Chapter 6 A Tanzanian School Against Violence and Corporal Punishment: An Evaluation Report on the Basis of Interviews with Teachers, Social Workers and Pupils</b> |            |
| <i>Florian Koopmeiners, Margit Stein and Felista Tangi</i>   | <i>69</i>  |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>Chapter 7 Peace Economics: Behavioural Approach</b><br><i>Debdulal Dutta Roy</i>  | 83  |
| <b>Chapter 8 Remote Work and Virtual Collaboration: Evaluating the Long-term Impact on the IT Sector Post-COVID-19</b><br><i>Sunetra Chatterjee</i>  | 93  |
| <b>Chapter 9 Impact of the COVID-19 Lockdown on Students' Social and Psychological Health</b><br><i>Mihir Dash, Suprabha Bakshi and Arpana Muthyala</i>  | 105 |
| <b>Chapter 10 Education, Citizenship, and Governance: Sharing Experiences on Leadership Practices and Peacebuilding Challenges in Inclusive and Decentralised Governance in Tete</b><br><i>Domingos Juliasso Viola, Fr. Elton João Laissone and Eliseu Cosme Tito Njaico</i> | 115 |
| <b>Chapter 11 Sovereignty and Political Recruitment in Nigeria: Promoting Peace Through Political Participation</b><br><i>Frederick Ifeanyi Obananya</i>   | 129 |
| <b>Chapter 12 Proverbs, A Conflict Management Tool Among the Tonga People of Southern Zambia</b><br><i>Jive Lubbungu and Pethias Siame</i>   | 145 |
| <b>Chapter 13 Pedagogic Dynamics of Peace Strategies in Economic Development: Applying Universal Human Values in Conflict Management</b><br><i>Sadhan Kumar Dey</i>  | 157 |
| <b>Chapter 14 Yogic Science in Organisational Management: Allowing for Sustainability, Mobility, Equality, and Personal Peace in Careers</b><br><i>Sowmya Ayyar</i>  | 169 |
| <i>Index</i>   | 179 |

## ABOUT THE EDITORS



**Manas Chatterji** is a Professor of Management and Adjunct Professor in Economics and the Asian and Asian-American Studies Programme at Binghamton University, State University of New York, USA; Guest Professor, Peking University, China; and Visiting Professor, Central University of Finance and Economics, and Distinguished Professor in Poznan University, Poland. He also served as a Richard P. Nathan Fellow in Public Policy at Rockefeller Institute of Government, SUNY. He is

a Distinguished Fellow in the Programme in Political Psychology and Decision Making (POP-DM) at Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy, Israel. He was also an Honorary Distinguished Professor at Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta, India and George Mason University, USA. He is an elected member of Polish Academy of Science – Committee on Regional Planning. He is currently a fellow of the international organisation Economists for Peace and Security. He previously taught at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and has held visiting appointments at Cornell University, Erasmus University, University of Karlsruhe, University of Munster and many other universities in the USA, Europe, Asia and South Africa. He established the Mahatma Gandhi International Research Centre on Conflict Prevention and Management in Bangalore, India.

He organised several events in the past. He has organised international meetings on peace science, disaster management, health care, technology management, disaster management, etc. in many countries including Japan, China and Russia. During his career, he has edited three journals and serves on editorial boards of many others. Presently, he is the co-editor of *International Studies of Peace Economics and Peace Science* published by Cambridge Scholars, UK. He is also the General Editor of a book series on Contributions to Conflict Management, Peace Economics and Development published by Emerald Publishing Company, UK. Twenty-seven volumes in this series have been published and two more are forthcoming. He has authored/edited more than 30 books and published about 80 scholarly articles in the areas of peace science, military spending, disarmament, economic conversion, conflict management, regional science, technology management, health care management and energy, environmental and urban management. He got his B.A. (with honours in Statistics) at Calcutta University, M.A. (Statistics) at Calcutta University and Ph.D. at Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.



**Madhumita Chatterji** is the Director of ABBS School of Management. She specialises in organisational behaviour and human resource management. She has worked extensively in the areas of corporate social responsibility, corporate governance and business ethics. Her work also covers cross cultural management processes, business history and Indian ethos and culture.

She has earned M.A., M.B.A. with university rank and gold medal and completed her Ph.D. from Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India. She has completed a programme in History, Politics and Society from the University of Oxford, UK. She was awarded a scholarship to attend a course on Participant Based Learning at Harvard Business School, USA. Books authored by her are: *The Ksatriyas in Ancient India*, *Corporate Social Responsibility*, *Ethical Leadership – Indian and European Spiritual Approaches* and *New Frontiers in Conflict Management, Peace Economics and Peace Science*. She is the co-founder of the Mahatma Gandhi International Research Centre for Conflict Prevention and Management, Member, Advisory Board of European SPES Institute, Founding Board member of South Asian Alliance of Disaster Research Institutes. She is associated with various academic and non-academic bodies. She is involved in research and teaching as senior faculty in various management institutes and conducts training for senior executives in corporates on team building, emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, counselling skills, cross cultural understanding and other soft skills.



**Kshitiz Sharma** (Scopus ID: 57212200202) is a Professor and Coordinator – IQAC at ABBS School of Management, Bangalore. His past associations have been with Alliance School of Business (Alliance University), VIHTM (Saurashtra University), UEI Global (Berggruen Education Pvt. Ltd.), IIAS School of Hotel Management and Tourism, Radisson (Carlson Hospitality Worldwide, Le Meridien, etc. He is an author of books and many

book chapters. He has published papers including research papers, articles and case studies in prestigious Springer Nature, Japanese Business Magazine, Case Center and ET Case, ABDC listed, Scopus listed and UGC listed journals. He is Reviewer for many journals, such as *Journal of Creative Communications*, *International Journal of Business and Emerging Markets*, *Amity Journal of Entrepreneurship*, *International Journal of e-government and e-Business Research*, *Cogent Journals*, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *Sage Open* and many more. He received laurels for reviewing articles for these journals regularly. He has conducted several EDPs and MDP and organised International Conferences at ABBS as Convenor. He has been invited for panel discussions at iDRIM 2021, 2022.

His areas of interests are marketing, entrepreneurship and innovation, disaster and risk management, consumer behaviour, marketing research, strategy and analytics.

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS



**Sowmya Ayyar** is a Research Scholar at Malaviya Center for Peace Research at Banaras Hindu University, India. Her current focus is on Spiritual Women's Sanghas impact on diplomacy and peace. She is also the author of *Yoga, Peace, and Conflict in Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict* (e3, 2022). She is the Founder of Prafull Oorja, a Bangalore-based non-governmental organisation which trains yoga therapists to implement sustainable programmes with communities in vulnerable conditions. She teaches graduate level courses on yoga for international peace. She blogs on India, nature, spirituality, women, health and hygiene. She is also a poet, musician and composer, and a budding artist. Her life and work centres on the feminine.



**Suprabha Bakshi** is an Assistant Professor in the area of Human Resource Management and Organisational Behaviour at Amity Global Business School, Bangalore, India. She is an enthusiastic teacher and researcher with 23 years of experience in industry and academia. She has received her Ph.D. in Management from Alliance University, Bangalore, India. Her research interests are mainly in the field of human resource management and management education.



**Sunetra Chatterjee** is an esteemed Assistant Professor at IFIM College in Bengaluru, India, specialising in the realm of information technology (IT). With a dedication to advancing knowledge in her field, her current focus aligns with the theme of her paper, 'Remote Work and Virtual Collaboration: Evaluating the Long-term Impact on the IT Sector Post-COVID-19'. As the IT sector undergoes transformative changes due to the global shift towards remote work, she delves into the long-term implications of virtual collaboration in her research. Her commitment to understanding the evolving dynamics of technology and its influence on the IT industry is evident in both her academic pursuits and research endeavours. Through her exploration of remote work's lasting effects on the IT sector, she aims to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse surrounding post-COVID-19 changes in the field of IT.



**Dipangshu Dev Chowdhury** obtained his Master's degree from the Department of Analytical and Applied Economics, Tripura University. He researched on 'Incidence of Poverty in Tripura: A Study with Money Metric and Multidimensional Approach' for his Ph.D. in Economics at the Department of Economics, Assam University Silchar. His areas of interest are health economics, economics of social sector, and institutional economics and econometrics. He has several publications in different journals and edited books. At present, he is serving as an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Management and Commerce, The ICAI University Tripura.



**Mihir Dash** at present, he is serving as the Interim Associate Dean and an Associate Professor in the Alliance School of Applied Mathematics, Alliance University, Bangalore. He is a specialist in mathematical and statistical modelling. His research interests are diverse, touching several areas of management, and involving applications of quantitative methods in business decision problems.



**Sadhan Kumar Dey** (<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7732-0879>) completed Master degrees in English, English Language Teaching, Education and in History from different renowned state and central universities of India. His Doctoral thesis "Paradigms of English Language Teaching in Bengal" has got published by Pearson Education as Teaching of English which is a highly recommended text book or reference book for English teachers training programmes in several universities in India and abroad. He has authored/edited and co-authored/co-edited more than 108 books, 16 research articles and 18 book chapters with nationally and internationally reputed publishers. He has had UG and PG teaching experience for the last 27 years and he has been working as teacher trainer for the last 18 years simultaneously. Presently his research interests hover around the following domains:

- (a) Digitised Pedagogy in English Literature and Language Teaching
- (b) Universal Human Values
- (c) Indian Knowledge System and
- (d) Legal Ontological Interpretation.



**Sudarshan Iyengar**, Ph.D. in Economics, was Former Vice Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad (2005–2014) founded by Mahatma Gandhi; Former Director, Centre for Social Studies, Surat (2004–2005) and Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad (1999–2004); and Chair Professor, Gandhian Philosophy, at IIT, Mumbai (2016–2018). His research areas include decentralised planning, commons, Gandhian thoughts and practices, natural resource development and management, people and civil society institutions. He has served on committees of the Government of India and Gujarat. He has been a trustee and board member in several national and regional institutions. He has contributed more than 70 research articles and written 9 books. He is a working Trustee with Action Research in Community Health and Development and an active Director of the Board of Directors at Gandhi Research Foundation, Jalgaon, Maharashtra. He lives in Dharampur, Valsad, Gujarat and works among tribal people.



**Florian Koopmeiners**, an Educational Scientist, completed his academic career at the University of Vechta, Germany, in 2023. He predominantly concentrated on critical themes such as children's and human rights, alongside the intricacies of inclusion and integration. His thesis encompassed a comprehensive evaluation of the impacts stemming from the non-violent pedagogical approach implemented at St Therese Secondary School, Tanzania.



**Lester R. Kurtz** is Professor at George Mason University and holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Chicago and a Master's in Religion from Yale. He is the Editor-in-Chief of a four-volume *Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict* and Co-editor of a two-volume *Women, War and Violence: Typography, Resistance and Hope; The Warrior and the Pacifist: Competing Themes in Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam; The Paradox of Repression and Nonviolent Movements; Peace Studies for Sustainable Development in Africa; Nonviolent Civil Resistance; Nonviolent Social Movements* and other books and articles, including the award-winning *The Politics of Heresy*. He has chaired the Peace and Justice Studies Association and the Peace, War, and Social Conflict Section of the American Sociological Association. He has taught as a Visiting Professor at the European Peace University, the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, Delhi University and Tunghai University.



**Elton João Laissone** is from Tete city. He is a Diocesan Priest. He has studied Philosophy from the St Augustine Interdiocesan Seminary of Matola, and Theology from St Pius X Interdiocesan Seminar both in Maputo. He holds a Master's degree in Project Development Management from the Faculty of Management of Natural Resources and Mining of the Catholic University of Mozambique in Tete. He is currently the Parish Priest of Tete Cathedral, the Coordinator of the Diocesan Commission for Peace

and Justice, and the Director of Radio Mwadiya which belongs to the Diocese. He is a Lecturer at the Catholic University of Mozambique in Tete and has more than a dozen publications in national and international scientific events and indexed journals. He writes on issues related to development and the sustainability of development.



**Jive Lubungu** is a Researcher, Author and Lecturer in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Kwame Nkrumah University, Zambia. His research interests lie in comparative literature, gender, education and contemporary issues. He has published seven books, five book chapters as well as several articles in internationally refereed journals. He has a strong passion for writing. He has worked with various stakeholders in his civic duties and academics. He was Convenor of Kwame

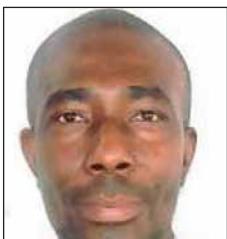
Nkrumah University Golden Jubilee International Conference which was successfully held on 19–20 September 2018 in Kabwe, Zambia. He was the Chair of the International Conference on Education for Sustainable Development co-organized with Zeetaz Publishing Nigeria, which was held in Zambia on 28–29 June at Kwame Nkrumah University. He was also the Convenor of the 2021 Tilembe National Literary Festival which was hosted by Nkrumah University on 11–12 December. He was a member of the Senate of Africa Research University and currently serves as a member and Provincial Coordinator for Professional Authors International, Central Province. He is also a member of the Zambia Textbook, Academic and Non-fiction Authors Association and the Authorship and Career Network, Zambia and the Educational Research Association of Zambia, among others.



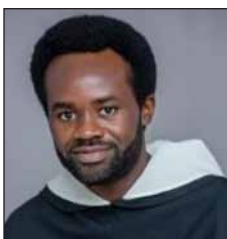
**Arpana Muthyala** is a communications professional with about 20 years of experience in the information technology industry. She has also been a visiting faculty in the area of communication and soft skills at different management institutes. Her research interests are mainly in the fields of communication and soft skills.



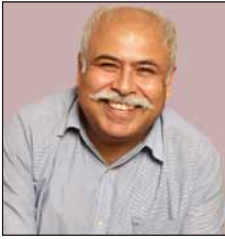
**Eliseu Cosme Tito Njaico**, Ph.D., is from Angonia District, Tete Province. He holds a B.A. honours in Philosophy from the University of Zimbabwe and Arrupe College, a Jesuit School of Philosophy and Humanities in Zimbabwe. He holds a Master's degree in Project Development Management from the Faculty of Management of Natural Resources and Mining and a Doctorate in Innovative Education, both from the Catholic University of Mozambique in Tete. He authored several articles presented at international and national scientific events. He is currently a Lecturer of Ethics, Theories of Education and Pedagogue and Theories of Development and the Programme Manager at the Institute of Distance Learning of the Catholic University of Mozambique in Tete.



**Koffi Emmanuel Noglo** was born in Togo, studied political science and wrote his Doctoral thesis on the legitimacy of the state in a multi-ethnic context with a scholarship from 'Bread for the World' ('Brot für die Welt', Berlin). He worked as a programme manager in the field of international development cooperation, primarily in the Sahel. He is also a journalist. Between 2018 and 2022, he worked with EIRENE, a Christian peacebuilding organisation, and was the head of their 'Peacebuilding Programme in the Sahel' (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger). In addition, together with another former scholarship holder, he built up the Academie Bilimon, which contributes to peace and justice in the sense of a grassroots movement through workshops primarily with young people. So far, over 5,000 young people have been trained.



**Frederick Ifeanyi Obananya**, a member of the Catholic Religious Order, Dominicans, is the Assistant Chaplain of St Thomas More Catholic Chaplaincy University of Lagos; African Regional Promoter for Justice and Peace; Councillor for Justice and Peace at IAOP; the Director of Dominican for Justice and Peace, Nigeria and Ghana; a Contributor at The West African Transitional Justice Centre and a member of Africanist Scholars Forum. He has an interest in the interaction among justice and peace, education and governance. This interest has given birth, over the years, to the publication of several scholarly articles in Nigeria and beyond. This includes: 'Protest and Political Development' (2024); 'Nigeria and Her Education at Crossroads: A Need for a Catholic Philosophy of Education' (2024); 'Post-conflict Peace Building in Nigeria and the Philosophy of Integral Education' (2023), etc. He recently co-edited a book titled *Politics, Religion and Education in the African Context and Culture* (2024).



**Jagdish Rattanani** is a distinguished Faculty at the Mumbai-based management institute SPJIMR (S P Jain Institute of Management & Research, [www.spjmr.org](http://www.spjmr.org)), where he offers courses in the areas of ethics, responsible leadership, business and society, systems thinking and business communications. He is a professional journalist and continues to practise in non-profit space as a Columnist and as Editor of the non-profit Foundation of The Billion Press in Mumbai ([www.thebillionpress.org](http://www.thebillionpress.org)). He is a co-author of the book *Abundant Love*, a longform conversation with the UK-based eco-spiritual leader, Satish Kumar, the Founder of Schumacher College in Devon. This is the first in a series of conversations with leaders who challenge the dominant narratives of our times, published in the UK by Triarchy Press and in India by the Speaking Tiger group. He is Director at the UK-based Association of Sustainability Practitioners ([www.sustainabilitypractitioners.org](http://www.sustainabilitypractitioners.org)), where he works with a team of co-directors to run an initiative called Earth Conversations. He has a Masters in Sustainability & Responsibility from the Ashridge Business School, UK.



**Debdulal Dutta Roy, Ph.D.**, is a retired Head and Associate Professor of the Psychology Research Unit at the Indian Statistical Institute. He holds a Ph.D. in Organisational Psychology from IIT Kharagpur and specialises in abnormal psychology. Currently serving as the Founder and President of the Rabindrik Psychotherapy Research Institute Trust, he focusses on advancing education and research for social welfare through Rabindrik Psychotherapy. He is an international speaker, renowned researcher and prolific writer with over 110 research papers and 2 authored books. He has received numerous awards for his contributions, including the ‘Innovative Scientist Award’ for research on Rabindrik Psychotherapy. As an influential academic, he has supervised Ph.D. and M.B.A. students, conducted workshops and trained over 500 individuals in research methodology and statistics. His diverse research interests span organisational diagnosis, psycho-informatics, agro-psychological counselling and quantum consciousness in mental health and language acquisition.



**Pethias Siame** (<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3203-5307>) received his Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of the Western Cape in South Africa in April 2023. He is a Part-time Lecturer and Researcher at Kwame Nkrumah University in Zambia. He is also an author and a book writer. He is a member of Professional Authors International, a data collection research group, and the Language Teachers Association of Zambia. He teaches English Language, Linguistics and African Languages

courses. His research interests include comparative linguistics, documentary linguistics, sociolinguistics, general linguistics, Bantu linguistics, theoretical linguistics, stylistics, psycholinguistics, applied linguistics, linguistic landscape, translanguaging and contemporary issues in education. He has published extensively in international peer-reviewed journals. He has also attended and presented papers at both local and international conferences. He is a peer reviewer of language papers and contemporary issues in education for journals such as: the *Journal of Law and Social Sciences* at the University of Zambia, *Kwame Nkrumah Multi-Disciplinary Journal* and the *Journal of Educational Research Association of Zambia*. Some of his most recent publications include: *Word Order of Noun Phrase by Modification in Mambwe Language* (2023), *Decolonization: Equity in the Management of Language Education in Zambian Secondary Schools* (2023), *A Morphophonological Analysis of the Applicability of Nasalization principles in Lungu, Mambwe and Namwanga Languages* (2023) and *Phonological Processes Governing Borrowing from English to Lungu, Mambwe and Namwanga Languages* (2023). Some of the academic books in the press include: *A Short Grammar and Common Orthography of Lungu, Mambwe, and Namwanga Languages* and *Comprehensive Grammars of the Lungu, Mambwe, and Namwanga Languages*.



**Dominique Steiler** is a Doctor of Management and Psychology from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. He is a Full Management, Leadership, and Psychology Professor at Grenoble Ecole de Management and Chair Holder of the UNESCO Chair towards a culture of economic peace. He has devoted his research and consultancy focus on personal development and transformation, health, management, well-being and happiness, mindfulness and peace and their relationship to performance and life. He is also a Research Fellow at the Center for Theological Inquiry, Princeton, NJ. A former Naval Fighter Pilot and Olympic Team Coach, he coaches senior executives in France and abroad.



**Margit Stein** is a Professor of Pedagogy at the University of Vechta, Germany. Previously, she served as a Professor of Social Work at the University of Applied Sciences in Nordhausen, Germany. She holds a Doctorate and a habilitation in Psychology and Education. Her academic and professional focus is primarily directed towards fostering value based and democratic coexistence within heterogeneous societies. She emphasises cultivating peaceful and solidary relationships among people of diverse ages, religions, cultural and ethnic origins. In this context, she leads and participates in various projects exploring themes such as the value orientations of children and youth, the dynamics of interethnic and interreligious friendships and the promotion of democratic competencies and tolerance. Additionally, she is involved in advancing sustainability skills and raising awareness for sustainable living practices.



**Felista Tangi**, originating from Tanzania, holds a Ph.D. from Vechta, Germany. She is a member of the congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St Therese of the Child Jesus ('Teresina Sisters'). Her previous academic engagement was at St Mary's Mpanda Secondary School in Rukwa Region, Tanzania, where she held the position of Senior Academic Mistress. Currently, she is a Senior Lecturer at St Augustine University of Tanzania, specialising in educational management and school administration, curriculum development and evaluation, organisational development and professional ethics in education. Her research found that in schools where students experienced violence and corporal punishment, academic performance statistically declined. Together with the Teresina Sisters, she established the inclusive, non-violent St Therese Secondary School in Nyashishi, Mwanza Region, Tanzania. She was awarded the Peace and Justice Shalom Prize from the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany, in 2021.



**Domingos Juliase Viola** is from Macanga District, Tete Province. He is professional teacher, with a wide range of experience in government and non-governmental organisations. He holds a degree in teaching Physics from the Pedagogical University of Mozambique, Beira, and holds a Master's degree in Project Development Management from the Faculty of Management of Natural Resources and Mining of the Catholic University of Mozambique in Tete. He is a peace activist and currently pursuing a political career as the Governor of Tete Province.



**Manish Wankhede** is a graduate student from Liverpool John Moores University, with specialisation in leadership and strategy. He is working for MNC based in India as a Business Development and Strategy Specialist.

# FOREWORD

This volume contains chapters from the International Conference on Peace Economics, Peace Science and Development held at the Mahatma Gandhi Center for Conflict Prevention and Management in Bangalore, India.

International scholars in Conflict Management and Peace selected the papers.

The world is filled with conflicts. In recent years, there have been increased international conflicts (e.g. Russia and Ukraine) and threats of nuclear war, ethnic conflicts, and disruption around the world.

In the last 20 years, many studies related to conflict and peace have been published.

This volume includes some such studies. However, most of them are descriptive and conduct qualitative analysis. During the last 30 years, high levels of quantitative research have been performed using socioeconomic and political variables. This area is known as Peace Science and Disaster Management, and it includes sophisticated work in computer science, such as artificial intelligence.

Some of the topics are as follows:

- Peace Economics
- Peace Science and Disaster Management
- Innovation, Conflict, and Peace Science
- Standard Resource Allocation
- Macroeconomic Stability Analysis
- Modern Growth Theory
- Prisoner's Dilemma
- Samuelson Gun Butter Model
- Schelling
- Klein: Macro and Microeconomic Effect of Militancy Spreading
- Leontief I-O model
- Econometric Models
- Arms Spending and Economic Growth
- Culture and Social Organisation and Leadership
- Individual and Group Behaviour
- Game Theory
- Cognitive Science, Psychological, and Sociological Approaches
- Negotiation and Arbitration
- Coalition and Bargaining Theory
- Principles of Negotiation – Qualitative and Quantitative
- Terrorism
- Probability Theory and Probability Distributions
- Statistical Inference

- Analysis of Variance and Covariance
- Nonparametric Testing of Hypothesis and Chi-square Test
- Multivariate Distributions
- Disaster Management

Please refer to the ‘Books Published in the Series’ for other topics, on Page ii.

Manas Chatterji  
*Emeritus Professor, Binghamton University, USA; formerly Guest Professor,  
Peking University, China; and formerly Honorary Distinguished Professor,  
Poznan University, Poland*

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Manas Chatterji  
*Emeritus Professor, Binghamton University, USA; formerly Guest Professor,  
Peking University, China; and formerly Honorary Distinguished Professor,  
Poznan University, Poland*

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# DISTINGUISHED GUEST INTRODUCTION: RELEVANCE OF GANDHI IN TODAY'S TIMES

Jagdish Rattanani<sup>a</sup> and Sudarshan Iyengar

*<sup>a</sup>S P Jain Institute of Management & Research, India*

A question being raised these days, particularly and directly in India, and in indirect ways globally through our ways of living, working and desiring, is this: What really is the relevance of Gandhi today? The question is in many ways quite natural, given the rising tide of violence we see in the world, and the headline Gandhian image that lends a narrow and limited 'niceness' quotient to the Mahatma and little more. Gandhi has been largely seen as a leader who made a heroic and giant contribution to public life, and particularly to the Indian independence struggle. He is then raised to the level of reverence in textbooks taught in schools and colleges, and read only to be forgotten. Gandhi's thoughts on economic systems, political governance, and social reforms are hardly debated and are often seen as irrelevant. This is so at many levels, in the Indian as well as the global context. For instance, consider the popular historian Yuval Noah Harari who, while discussing the potential of religions to solve problems of humanity, referred to Mahatma Gandhi thus:

Not that there aren't any economic ideas in the Bible, the Quran, or the Vedas – it is just that these ideas are not up to date. Mahatma Gandhi's reading of the Vedas caused him to envision independent India as a collection of self-sufficient agrarian communities, each spinning its own Khadi cloth, exporting little, and importing even less. The most famous photograph of him shows him spinning cotton with his own hands, and he made the humble spinning wheel the symbol of the Indian nationalist movement. Yet this Arcadian vision was simply incompatible with the realities of modern economics, and hence not much has remained of it save for Gandhi's radiant image on billions of rupee notes. (Harari, 2019)

Harari, the renowned academic and popular author that he is, shows some interaction with Gandhian thinking. However, it is so rudimentary that Gandhi

stands misunderstood completely. It is no surprise that the youth growing up on a diet of instant gratification – fast food, fast cars and faster internet connections – aspire to quick material prosperity, and hardly know anything about Gandhi. The young student of today is neck-deep in a competitive slugfest and the lessons that are picked up along the path of education and growing up are largely about managing these stresses. There is no time for a conversation on the purity of means, which is not only a moral value but also a practical approach to drive creativity, cooperation and an exploration of what might be win-win solutions. Competition has become a dominant value in our industrial and post-industrial societies because control over resources matters the most. Competition tends to lead towards structural violence and often manifest violence.

The term ‘structural violence’ was introduced by Johan Galtung in the seminal paper ‘Violence, Peace, and Peace Research’ published more than 50 years ago. [Galtung \(1969\)](#) notes that ‘an extended concept of violence is indispensable but that concept should be a logical extension, not merely a list of undesirables’. He offers this concept in the following words:

As a point of departure, let us say that violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations .... Violence is here defined as the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is. Violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance. Thus, if a person died from tuberculosis in the 18th century, it would be hard to conceive of this as violence since it might have been quite unavoidable, but if he dies from it today, despite all the medical resources in the world, then violence is present according to our definition. ([Galtung, 1969](#))

This is structural violence. In other words, violence is embedded in the ways and means of the system and is normalised to the extent that it becomes invisible. To counter this, the peace discourse should also examine violence in the context of a system or socio-political and economic order in a society. In the 20th century, there were two dominant politico-economic structures, namely, capitalism and communalism. The world witnessed enormous manifest violence in the two World Wars. After the Second World War, manifest violence has not weakened notwithstanding the efforts in setting up and running the United Nations Organisation (UNO) to build peace. Of course, structural violence has persisted in capitalist and communist systems.

The communist models collapsed more than three decades ago, resulting in a resigned acceptance of the capitalist model of economy and society. But those that have followed the capitalist model have not been able to build a harmonious society either. In the first decade of the 21st century, there has been an agreement that the environmental and ecological problems that are likely to threaten human existence are real. Hence there is a felt need that humanity should try to work in the direction of sustainable development. The concern was first reflected in the UN World Commission on Environment and Development’s report ‘Our Common Future’ in 1987 ([WCED, 1987](#)). Many international conclaves were held and eventually, the Millennium Development Goals were framed by the UN, and adopted by all the member countries between 2000 and 2015. This was followed

by the framing of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs address the issue of development with the ultimate objective of peace among nations and harmony with nature. There is even an honest attempt to attain these goals. However, techno-deterministic solutions do not have the potential to lead to such a desired place of peace and harmony.

The SDGs, it is hoped, will drive peace and prosperity for humanity but there is a nagging doubt about whether Gandhi has anything to do with sustainable development. Yet, it is clear that peace is a necessary pre-requisite for prosperity. The 16th goal of the SDGs reads 'Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions'. The goal notes: 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'. How can a country develop – how can people eat and teach and learn and work and raise families – without peace? And how can a country have peace without justice, without human rights, and without a government based on the rule of law? Some parts of the world enjoy relative peace and justice and may come to take it for granted. Other parts are plagued by invasions, armed conflict, crime, torture and exploitation, all of which hinder development and will threaten to overrun areas considered peaceful today. The goal of peace and justice is one for all countries to strive towards. The SDGs aim to reduce all forms of violence and propose that governments and communities find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. That means strengthening the rule of law, reducing the flow of illicit arms, and bringing developing countries more into the centre of institutions of global governance. Interestingly, SDG 16 recognises the existence of structural violence when it seeks 'justice for all' and stands against 'all forms of violence'.

Did Gandhi think on the above lines? Yes and No. Gandhi's quest for *sarvodaya* (growth for all) through *antyyodaya* (uplift of the weakest) was similar, but his philosophical foundations were different. According to him, peace and prosperity do not carry conventional meanings that we are familiar with today in the mainstream. He thought differently. He sought to build the moral steel and inner resolve to prepare people of character who could take on the big challenges in society. He had in his formative years read thinkers like Tolstoy, Ruskin, Thoreau, Carpenter, and others, and was obviously influenced by them.

The current paradigm perfected by modern-day management considers every economic activity as a business with private property rights and consumer sovereignty as the main drivers. State, business, and civil society are more or less in agreement with the modern values that promote competition in the name of merit and excellence, and unbridled consumption in the name of continuous economic growth that feeds aspirations for 'more'. Business schools become the grounds that routinely feed this logic and prepare a new generation to join the ranks, as it were, a small cog in a giant wheel that unthinkingly rolls on.

The way the economic system is run, given its unholy nexus with the state, the fallout is inevitably in deteriorating values in society in general. War, human rights violations by the State and in the warring countries, violence in governance, the plunder of natural resources, difficulties in structuring peace, and a host of

other problems arise, jeopardising efforts to bring peace to any society. But the young generation trained to run businesses with remarkable efficiency is hardly taught to engage with these issues even if these are the burning issues of the day and are up in the air. The working of the political environment and governance the students see as they grow up confirms that the systems are corrupt and highly manipulative. Interestingly, they also realise that social norms are lax regarding business and public life. All this makes them alter their beliefs, morals, and values in professional and private lives. Such a change occurs somewhere through the education process, and even before a student may enter a business school that has become an instrument for feeding new recruits to keep the system at work, and indeed never challenge it.

In large part, the grammar of a business school is driven by ideas of getting more, and getting it faster, breeding a short-termism of the kind that has brought us many of the ills we face today. Why is this so? An easy answer is that management education, limited as it is, has often followed business needs, so business schools are pushed to meet business demands and churn out graduates accordingly. This also possibly reflects the general tendency to embrace the dominant stories of our time and encash on them leading to the silencing of other voices. It mirrors the rise of the ‘me first’ and the decline in the significance given to any values other than the instrumental. However, that may not still explain the story completely. At the very least, Gandhi would stand as a potent counterforce to the extractive models that sit under narrow heads in many Indian business schools and elsewhere in the world. Engaging with this counter will broaden perspectives, and enable new ideas to flourish and allow old ones to evolve into newer versions that may be better suited for our times, making management curricula dynamic and responsive to changing needs.

However, instead of engaging with this counterforce, we have ignored Gandhi. In the Indian education system in general, particularly at junior levels, there is (or was!) deification, which is one form of ignorance – we will pray at the temple and ask no questions. Critical engagement is sorely lacking. In business education, Gandhi may not even have a seat, save a few odd electives (and some new experiments) that appear to be not the core MBA material. Further, the question is more urgent from an Indian perspective because Gandhi is a known figure and his teachings are brought to students from their days at junior school. There would hardly be a student in India who in her school days did not know something about the life and contribution of Mahatma Gandhi. With this start-up knowledge, the Mahatma’s teachings at a higher level remain poised to become a natural and indeed easy way to broaden perspectives and bring new ideas and thinking to a field that has overwhelmingly and unthinkingly embraced models that are quite the reverse of the Gandhian ideal. This is not a hot topic of discussion, although some have lamented the hearty and unthinking embrace of Western models in India.

Dr Manas Chatterjee, co-editor of the *International Journal of Peace Economics and Peace Science*, said, ‘Management education in India has followed whatever we do in the United States. This is very, very sad’. Prof Paul Shrivastava, Chief Sustainability Officer of Penn State University, Director of

the Sustainability Institute, and Professor of Management at the Smeal College of Business, noted:

I'm really surprised that Indian academics have not taken up the intellectual challenge of indigenising a management knowledge that would be connected to the Indian tradition. After having such a cultural asset for thousands of years, to ignore that and to just follow the Western model of MBA and now to come to the realisation that actually that model is wrong ... this is ironic. (Rattanani, 2022)

This is the kind of critique that was at the heart of questions that opened new explorations at a business school in Mumbai, India, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's S P Jain Institute of Management & Research (SPJIMR), explained here in the words of its former Dean, M L Shrikant:

One of the projects that I have for the last 12–15 years been talking about is to bring Eastern ideas of philosophy into management, because while the West generally talks about managing others, I personally feel that management starts with oneself. You don't even know how to manage yourself and you start managing others. I have been focusing on that and trying to do some experiments. In that context, we run an interesting course, the Science of Spirituality, and ... Gandhiji's life would be an ideal story ... (with an) emphasis on values as to what human life is about; the strength comes from values, so this is the whole logic. (quoted in Iyengar, 2019)

The reflections came more than a decade ago when SPJIMR took the initiative to open conversations with Gujarat Vidyapeeth, the University set up by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, to discuss Gandhian thinking and infuse ideas from Gandhi into the modern-day management curriculum. SPJIMR then experimented with a distinctly Indian approach to management and worked with approaches that mixed Western frameworks with learning from Indian traditions and scriptures. Over the years, this led the school to explore some unconventional courses for its MBA participants that sought to emphasise character values and build social sensitivity among its participants.

Delivering the first Dr M. L. Shrikant Memorial Lecture at SPJIMR, Dr Iyengar recalled the early effort at teaching spirituality in management and then bringing Gandhi into management and noted that the effort was not dissimilar to the efforts of European SPES articulated by Luk Boukaert in the following words:

The overall aim of the European SPES Forum is to make spirituality accessible as a public good to as many people as possible. This aim is expressed in the key word of SPES being on the one hand an acronym for 'Spirituality in Economics and Society' and, on the other hand, the Latin word for Hope, the virtue that sustains our belief in a better future. The European SPES Forum has a focus on experienced-based spirituality that succeeds in making a connection between day-to-day activities and the inner pluriform quest for meaning. (quoted in Iyengar, 2019)

Business schools across the world are in a state of flux. There is a rethink on what the schools are delivering and new questions on business education and how it might evolve at a time of rapid change. This is a time marked by the swiftly evolving business landscape with the growth of artificial intelligence, machine learning tools, and associated technologies and applications that herald the arrival of what is being called the fifth industrial revolution, side-by-side with what is known as the triple planetary crisis – the crisis of climate change, of

nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste. This has been accompanied by a series of other crises, like the pandemic that highlighted humankind's dysfunctional relationship with nature, or the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 that showed how the greed of bankers and financial institution leaders who gave themselves bonuses while the system around them was collapsing, almost brought the world economy on its knees. The current flux may provide a good opportunity to turn to Gandhian thinking.

Gandhi's unique contribution to humanity is three-fold. The first is about building a sterling character in an ever-evolving process by following self-discipline. Satyagraha is his second contribution, and the 'constructive programme' is the third. Relentless peacebuilding is a powerful constructive programme and the need of the hour. In 2007, the UNO unanimously resolved to celebrate 2 October, the birth date of Gandhi, as the International Day of Nonviolence. The UN resolution that instituted the commemoration noted 'the universal relevance of the principle of nonviolence' and the desire 'to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and nonviolence'.

Yet, this was also a time when Gandhi was not the universally revered figure he was in India. So, when discussing the relevance of Gandhi in today's times, which is the theme of this chapter, let's be clear about some signs and signals: Voices against Gandhi, and his messages of nonviolence, have grown in recent times. Ramchandra Guha wrote in *The Financial Times*, UK, just ahead of Gandhi's martyrdom day, in January 2023:

The leadership of Gandhi and his Congress party in the freedom struggle was denied, and those who advocated armed revolution against the British were extolled as true patriots. The formative role of the progressive and secular constitution of 1950 in shaping the democratic republic is ignored. Instead, Indians are told that they have been a Hindu nation from time immemorial. Professional historians derisively refer to these claims as 'WhatsApp history', but the tragic truth is that they are gaining ever wider currency. In this new narrative, Gandhi is the major hate figure. (Guha, 2023)

In some senses, this makes the task of bringing Gandhi back into education much more challenging and does not help the cause of engaging with Gandhian thinking with the nuance and gusto that our times demand. Yet, times of challenge can become times of opportunity because as we lunge from one crisis to another, there is the obvious question that the tools and approaches of modernity cannot answer: Where do we go from here? How do we live in harmony and reach a state of happiness? What, really, is our idea of growth? There are also signs that the youth are disenchanted with the capitalist order, the plunder of the planet and growing inequality. Trust in big business and the government is declining. With rising consumerism also comes the experience of an inner emptiness that will not go with material acquisitions, and so arises the quest for something deeper and more meaningful.

Across the world, young audiences are challenging the violent ways of our world. The Black Mountains College, UK, is an exciting initiative that talks about 'learning to live in a warming world'. The vegan movement is setting new standards for ethical conduct. The 'Occupy Wall Street' movement has challenged big business. It is often students who speak up against the exploitation of child labour

by brands running remote factories in faraway locations. US Universities have seen protests against the atrocities committed by Israel in Palestine. There is pent-up anger at increasing greed, corruption, and exploitation. But business has yet to wake up to this new world. There are some stirrings, seen mostly in weak efforts at talking sustainability in business but change is only on the margins so far, barring a few exceptions. The model is deep-wired to resist change. Bad business theories still rule, to quote the late Sumantra Ghoshal (2005), who wrote: ‘bad business theories are destroying good business practices’.

The lessons of *satyagraha* are very different. A true *satyagrahi* is noted for character, truth, nonviolence, a person who is non-stealing, not acquisitive, and exercises self-control. In contrast, the capitalist mode of production, based on the exploitation of human labour, is a source of violence, according to Gandhi. Gandhi said that any payment to the factory owner above the remuneration for managerial skills was an indication of the exploitation of workers. It leads to unequal distribution of income and violence is inherent in this economic inequality. As he said,

A nonviolent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists – a violent bloody revolution is a certainty one day, unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches gave and sharing them for common good. (Gandhi, 1968)

At this point, the case is more complex and stands against everything that has brought us modernity. Should our students engage with this debate critically? Yes, they should. We need to create new material to freely discuss these spaces, to empower students, and to enable them to participate in these conversations and take a stand.

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