**Question: Critically analyze Gandhi’s’ concept of ‘Sataygraha’. (2015)**

**Introduction**

Satyagraha is another important aspect of Gandhism. This system is one of the methods of function of Mahatma Gandhi. It is a non-violent principle that Gandhi applied in social and political life. Gandhi believed that through this method it is possible to fight against all kinds of oppression. He used this method as a strong weapon in freedom movement to fight against oppressive rule of British regime.

**Meaning of Satyagraha**

Satyagraha means the clinging to truth. It is a moral weapon which basis or foundation is ‘Love-force’ or ‘Soul-force’. The aim of and objective of Sytagrahi is to fight against oppressor without any force or coercion power. A believer of Satyagraha cannot attack other others physically. He tries winning the mind of his opponents only by truth and love. The persons against whom the Satyagraha is applied are also benefited. Because, by the time the oppressor can realize his fault and thus he can able to reform him. According to Gandhi, to be Satyagrahi a person should be courageous. Only a brave person can take the help of Satyagraha. For his braveness he can fight against the oppression and corruption going in society. Along with braveness a person should also be pure by mind. The Satyagrahi cannot take the help of violence. Love and truth is the main weapon of a Satyagrahi.

**Techniques of Satyagraha**

1. **Non-Co-operation:** By non-co-operation Gandhi meant that those who were doing injustice or oppressing should be non-co-operated. They should not be given any support from any corner and the oppressor should feel himself alone. It is such a situation alone that an oppressor will be obliged to listen patiently to the demands of the opponent. A non-cooperator should have moral strength to face all odds and should have so much moral strength that the opponent feels convinced about it.
2. **Fasting:** Gandhi felt that the sense of the persons in o can most effectively touched by fasting but fasting person should be highly elevated while observing this method. Fasting is a success only when the person going on fast spiritually disciplined and true to his cause. An ordinary person cannot achieve his object but will be failure. Hr therefore, felt that fasting, if taken in its real sprit, is bound to touch the better sense of the opponent.
3. **Strike:** According to Gandhi strike was another weapon for fighting against the oppressor. He pleaded the workers should organized themselves in each industry to fight against the industrialists. He favored the idea of strikes, if these were organized on non-violence. The workers must realize that machinery and wealth are national property and owner is the only custodian of national wealth. The destruction of machinery was unhealthy and should not be justified on any ground.
4. **Civil Disobedience:** For Gandhi another method of fighting against a powerful enemy was that of civil disobedience. The people should be bold enough to declare their intention to disobey cruel and unjust laws. They should openly defy such orders and should be ready to go behind the bars and suffer such cruelties as the oppressor might inflict upon them but should carry on the struggle till the time the unjust law was abrogated and replaced by a just law.
5. **Hizrat:** According to Gandhi, if a person cannot tolerate injustice of the oppressor and also feels he has not the power to become good Satyagrahi, for him, the best method was that of Hijrat or leaving one’s ancestral place. In other words he should not reconcile himself to injustice but leave the state of such an oppressor.

**Conclusion**

For quite some time it was considered that Gandhian philosophy and methods of struggle could not be put into actual practice and provided no practical solution against oppression. But as the time has passed these methods have established their effectiveness and we find that through these methods Gandhiji was in a position to relieve Indians from their miseries in South Africa and also could win freedom for India from the world mightiest empire. These methods, however, require proper disciplining and training of mind which if one has, there is no doubt about the justification of these methods for fighting against any oppression. Therefore, to doubt the effectiveness of these methods is no justified at all.