

Airo International Research Journal  
Volume XIV, ISSN: 2320-3714  
January, 2018  
Impact Factor 0.75 to 3.19



UGC Approval Number 63012

A Multidisciplinary Indexed International Research Journal



ISSN : 2320-3714  
Volume : XIV  
Journal : 63012  
Impact Factor : 0.75 to 3.19

**airo**  
ADHYAYAN  
INTERNATIONAL  
RESEARCH  
ORGANISATION

## RELATIVE ECONOMICS- A PARADIGM OF TRANSFORMATION IN SYSTEM

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Life is a complex whole. Various dimensions open to shape human existence. All these aspects disclose new meaning where man can project himself. Social complexity extended due to diversity equally demands social consensus or cohesion. Unlike Amish society that are simple in form, the complex one have to admit the notion of interdependency to establish social integrity, stability and productivity. However, conflict cannot be excluded from social life as Marx Weber observes. American sociologist expanded Mark's idea stating that the key conflict in society was strictly economic. This is to say that, it is a form of class struggle where society is divided into two groups namely; haves and have not's rich and poor. The rich people are powerful because they control resources and poor people are powerless as they are at the receiving ends and have to live as per the whims and fancies of rich people. Thus, there is a competition between

different groups for scarce resources, including prestige and wealth. Admits all these kind of struggle, economic strategies are framed to establish social welfare, harmony, and integrity. However, the key question is how can there be assurance that a government, official, businessman or professional person will properly perform his duty to the public, to his employer or to his client when the duty affects his own private economic interest?

In the nineteenth century, if an official resolved a clash between his personal advantage and public duty in favor of personal advantage it is called corruption.<sup>1</sup> The present economy with over emphasize on rampant consumerism has not only deepened economic disparities but equally has played a significant role in promoting corruption. H. H. Ācārya Mahāprajā in this context introduced a new model of "*Relative Economics*" that is more human and

humanistic in nature. His vision is a transition in the structure of modern economic outlook. It is titled as *Relative* for it is traced in association with ethical and moral values. He says, “Now we have to strive for such an economic order that is based on sound ethical and moral values. The policies of such an economy need to imperatively modulate co-operation rather than competition, to sustainability rather than destruction, to coexistence rather than independent existence, to restraint rather than increase in human desires and wants, to respect for different views rather than pursuit of absolutistic views.” This change in attitude will foster harmony and greater peaceful coexistence. Present economic world, therefore inevitably needs reformation of its aim, principles, and strategies.

### **An Overview of Present Economic Structure**

The modern economy persisting today is a sort of liberalized global economy. All the countries are trying to integrate their economic patterns such that it can enhance high growth rates, rise in standards of living and rapid improvements in their respective foreign exchange positions and other

external economic indicators. This endeavor of modern economists has brought a tremendous hike in the three important sectors of production, distribution, and consumption. Consequently, it is beyond doubt that the task of economic growth has come true.

In spite of the economic advancement in terms of GDP, we have a growing relation that this materialistic advancement brought in by the uncontrolled pursuits of capturing foreign markets under competitive conditions has failed to establish a harmonious and peaceful existence of all nations. Therefore, we have to look for a new model and alternative structures to emerge.

### **H. H Acharya Mahapragy’s Vision of Relative Economics Meaning of Relative Economics**

Relative economics is an economy that is relative to values, ethics, life-styles, culture, nature and integrated prosperity at large. It is not something against the principles of maximum production, distribution, or profits but against to raise these at the cost of others. Monetary benefits are not marginalized rather magnified in terms of

integrated prosperity. It is the concept of sustainable growth that supports man, money and planet well being, care of past, present and future generations and intrinsic value for all life forms. Thus, relative economics is “...(a system) in which there would be scope for huge industries, and huge business houses, and also millionaires and billionaires, but at the same time the system for providing every one the primary needs of life and the required employment organization of fulfill them would not be neglected....”<sup>3</sup>

Relative economics is the need of hour for today we are on the verge of economic recession. It is due to man’s inability to grasp the real meaning of peace and progress. Today peace is searched in money rather than in values. Humanistic outlook is subordinated at the cost of materialistic growth. The principle of consumerism has outraged the notion of satisfying basic needs. Consequently, production of crops has declined. Goods of comforts are rampantly raised. This imbalance in the focus of production has extended threats for human existence. The finance and financial structure has become some man’s show. The problem associated with economy and

specifically finance is attempted here to be study from three perspectives:

(a) Political (b) Social (c) Educational

### **Political Level**

It is a well-known fact that huge amounts are raised at political level in the name of social welfare projects and are utilized in the projects that bring individual benefits. The power concentration attitude of political parties has accelerated the corruption level generating violence. Moreover, conflicts and power concentration attitude at political level has become a major cause of even political terrorism. For instance, the Kashmir issue as a conflict between India and Pakistan is one of the political issues. Both of the nations urge for the land is very crucial which is the cause of conflict and war among these states that bring hike in the political terror. Achaya Mahapragya says, that it will be futile to solve such issues through religious and philosophical principles. The doctrine of *anekānta* is not significant in this area<sup>4</sup>. In the world of politics issues are not solved from the affective point that is from the point of hearts rather they are encountered from the head aspect. The way out of the political

hazardas expounded by H. H. Ācārya Mahāprajālies in the principle of affective system building in the political world. Therefore, the concept of 'Training in Non-Violence' consisting of four aspects includes training in system.

In a democratic setup, freedom is the birth right of every citizen. However, absolute freedom to corner wealth and consume products is instrumental in generating economic disparities and environmental pollution, poverty, conflicts, arm race and war. The propensity for the war cannot be put to an end without diffusing humanistic view point and disciplining gotism and greed. The growing problems related to the policy loopholes are not that easy to be revised but of course can be addressed by integrating emotional balance with a proper system of governance. Thus, the violation of equality, the fundamental human right at the cost of freedom right is unpardonable. Freedom, equality, and justice the basic constitutional aspects should not contradict rather must be integrated. Such a integration will strengthen the concert of all inclusive and well being of all.

### **Economic Level**

In the rampant consumerist culture of the present society one, actualize a wide gap between the upper class and lower class. It is not exaggeration to say that this inequality gap is million times among these groups.

In this regard, H.H. Ācārya Mahāprajā—a very recently has traced the concept of *vṛtticcheda* hermeneutically available in Jain canons as *bhattapanavoccheda*<sup>6</sup> (depriving one's share) pointing to the problem of corruption. It means inequality in exchange. Higher sections are exploiting work force by depriving them of their share. This brings a serious disproportion in these two extreme sections of the society.

Though in this civilized society we do talk high of human rights but practically the presence of this *vṛtticcheda* mentality is playing a key role in widening economic disparities. Thus, there are problems like poverty versus affluence and equality verses disparity.<sup>7</sup>

It is therefore, essential to consider corruption as a root cause in both political and economic levels. They are to be taken at

stalk to edify the non- violence oriented economic model.

‘Limiting desires’ (*Ichhāparimāōa.*)<sup>8</sup>is the classical economic principle of Lord Mahavira introduced in terms of relative economics. Under this notion of ‘limiting desires’one is free to fulfill one’s needs without grabbing others share.

The present scenario in the economic front emphasize capital enhancement. Thus, taking loans has become a source of inspiration as it has become the source of economic development in terms of more business and more production. This exclusive view of economic advancement has ignored physical health, mental pace, emotional balance and environmental protection. Human mind engrossed in the race of money making has turned purely mechanical. Everyone has structured the in ordinate desire to build an economic empire. No doubt, increase in the consumables through artificial means was deemed necessary because of increase in population. Economic progress was focused to remove poverty. The case however, is it has relegated fundamental aspects of holistic growth. The economic race had enhanced craving for increased consumption that is far

from reducing poverty or managing needs of growing population problem. On the contrary, says Acharya ahapragya, they can be instrumental in increasing them (violence and crime).”<sup>9</sup>

Thus, an economic policy that over look the general human needs and becomes money or profit centered will turn out self-destructive.

For a new economic model containing defenses of peace he has laid down the following five principles to remedy the economic ailment, which grips the world today:

1. Reconciliation between human labour and machine,
2. Greater investment in community-oriented priorities,
3. Preserving environment for the coming generations,
4. Nurturing decentralized economy,
5. An alternative economic system to address the problems of disparity, hunger and unemployment.

Acharyaji’s economic thinking is further reflected in his classic entitled “*Anuvrat Darśan*” wherein he makes the following observation:

Acquisition or parigraha is a man's belief. It is also his belief that a materialistic object is valuable and that it is a source of joy. The fulfillment of a need is neither joy nor sorrow. The concept of happiness that lies beyond that is his psychic belief. A materialistic object (padartha) is neither parigraha (a tendency to possess and acquire materialistic wealth) nor is it the cause of bondage or sorrow. It becomes the cause of bondage or sorrow only when we associate our desire with it. In reality, parigraha is synonymous with desire.

It is the last vow yathasamivibhaga vrata of the twelve anuvrata expounded by Lord Mahavira that plays an important role in giving rise to a new economic model which Mahapragyaji has envisioned. This vow alone, if observed by most of the people of this world, can create a sustainable and nonviolent society in the world. Mahavira goes to the extent of saying that, "he who does not share his resources, eatables and other objects of daily use with others will not be able to attain liberation (asamvibhāgi nahu tassa mokkho)"<sup>10</sup>.

## Education

*Anuvrat* strongly admits, "no system, howsoever good, will ensure good result unless the quality of the individual is good."<sup>11</sup> It is thus, important that present education system needs to impart teaching of economics of social-welfare. At present, the government board of studies decides and plans the educational curriculum. It puts much focus on the cognitive part ruling aside the affective and psychomotor levels of individuals. Unless the emotional part of kids is not trained and focused the situation are going to worsen further. Thus non-violence oriented economics model should be introduced at the primary level education systems.

We are on the threshold of eradicating corruption governed by economy. Corruption the root cause of economic disparity can be countered only in the wake of virtues named non-violence, compassion, sensitivity and morality. The consciousness where these virtues remain focused such on event can no more take place, where funds raised in the name of poor's enters the pockets of higher authorities.

The study from the three perspectives, political, economical, and educational brings to light the emergency of training in all these aspects. The concept of relative economics that encompasses all the three dimensions emphasizes to rethink and renew the persisting economic concepts in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our present age has to focus on the mismatch in what economics intends and it does. Relative economics as envisaged by H.H. Ācārya Mahāprajā is a active concern in the world of transformation of systems.

Thus, relative economics as discussed earlier, can gain its pristine position when the virus of corruption is ruled out from the fundamental constituents of the systems. H.H. Ācārya Mahāprajā says that corruption can be countered by five c's.

1. Compassion (*Karuna*)
2. Cosmic bond (*parasparopagrahitā*)
3. Care (Faith in others prosperity)
4. Courage (restraint attitude development)
5. Connectedness (equanimity)

To achieve these goals of nonviolent economic strategies one needs to proceed towards building new structure based on emotional training along with convergence

between economics, ethics, environment, and modern knowledge to eradicate global poverty and hunger.

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