International Journal of Sociology and Political Science
www.sociologyjournal.in
E-ISSN: 2664-7745
Received: 16-09-2026, Accepted: 16-10-2026, Published: 31-10-2026
Volume 8, Issue 4, 2026, Page No. 40-46

Integral Humanism beyond borders: The international implications of Deendayal Upadhyaya's ideas in contemporary World Politics

Dr. Gajendra
Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, India
DOI: https://doi.org/10.66856/ijsps.2026.8.4.8108

Abstract
The Integral Humanism of Deendayal Upadhyaya, which was stated in four lectures in 1965, is a result of the Indian search for a political and economic philosophy based on their own intellectual framework. Its basic premises are human dignity, social responsibility, decentralization, self-reliance and the welfare of people left behind issues which are pertinent to current international politics as well as national development. This article looks into the potential of the international implications of Integral Humanism, employs qualitative conceptual analysis and also compares the Integral Humanism with the capability approach, Gandhian thought, critiques of market society and postcolonial scholarship. It then looks at the areas of resonance with the current Indian diplomacy such as strategic autonomy, South–South cooperation, human-centric globalization and climate cooperation. The article argues that the Integral Humanism approach can widen the perspectives of development discussions by questioning the economic narrow vision and by focusing on distribution, local agency and ecological responsibility. It is however not a theory of international relations nor is it a template for policy. It is impo rtant to assess the international relevance through critical translation, empirical tests, and compatibility with democratic accountability, equal citizenship, human rights and cultural pluralism. The article suggests a practical model of cooperation based on multiple welfare indicators, Antyodaya test, practicability of cooperatives self-reliance and transparent institutional review of technology sharing in a fair manner. This paper examines the question of whether India can become a developed nation without compromising its national sovereignty and strategic autonomy by drawing on the principles of Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism. The paper looks into the possibility of India becoming a developed nation without sacrificing its national sovereignty and strategic autonomy and demonstrates that it is possible with the principles of Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism.

Keywords: Integral Humanism, Antyodaya, decentralization, capitalism, socialism, justice

Introduction

International politics is beset by a constant dilemma. Cooperation is becoming possible in new ways through trade across borders, through scientific exchange and digital connectivity, but for many societies, the choices are constrained by inequalities, geopolitical competition, climate threats, debt burdens and technological concentration. These dilemmas have cast doubt on the nature of development and how it should be judged and stirred up debates around it. While Gross Development Index (GDP), investment, and trade are significant factors, they are insufficient to demonstrate whether or not people are healthy, educated, secure, listened to in politics, or empowered to take control of their own lives. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2024) [4], for instance, connects the lack of human-development gains with inequality and political polarization and calls for greater international collaboration.

Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism is one Indian intellectual tradition in which all these questions can be re-thought. In his lectures in 1965, Upadhyaya attacked uncritical acceptance of political and economic systems that developed in other historical contexts, and suggested an alternative perspective that considered the individual as a more than economic sphere. His writings were essential to make a connection between individual, society and nature and a greater moral order, and to pay heed to self-reliance, decentralisation and the uplift of the most disadvantaged (Upadhyaya, 1965) [23]. The idea of Antyodaya, welfare or elevation of the person at the tail end of the queue, is a very appropriate moral prism through which to view who succeeds and who is left out of development.

However, the international importance of the Integral Humanism must be said with care. Upadhyaya did not develop a systematic theory of international relations that can be compared to realism, liberal international institutionalism or critical international political economy. His main concern was with the political course and progress of India. To say that his philosophy can be said to be the direct driver of all of contemporary Indian foreign policy would be misleading, since his ideas are not necessarily influencing all of them. A more defensible question is whether its ideas can be used to assess international cooperation, or whether they shed light on the problems that traditional theories of development and politics might address in different ways.

This article makes three arguments. First, there is the possibility of bringing a contribution to the international debates with the insistence of Integral Humanism that the economic performance ought to be evaluated in relation to human welfare, social relationships and ecological circumstances. Second, its ideas for Antyodaya, autonomy of the self and decentralisation can be translated to questions regarding distribution, policy autonomy and local participation. Third, this contribution is only credible if the philosophy is open to criticism and harmonized with equal rights, pluralism and a democratic accountability. The argument therefore is not a question of historical influence,

but of resonance, in the sense that it speaks to the moral sensibilities of that period.

The article then describes the method, explains four concepts which have international relevance, compares these concepts with the other traditions, and evaluates the potential link of these concepts with the current Indian diplomacy. It ends with an in-depth discussion of the hazards of transferring a philosophy of a particular national context into a plural international system and a practical framework.

Methodology and Conceptual Approach

This study is qualitative conceptual analysis and interpretive comparison. The main text is the Integral Humanism lectures of Upadhyaya. They are analysed in relation to scholarship on human development, market society, and the postcolonial challenges to development and Gandhian political thought. This distinction between economic resources and substantive opportunities can be better understood in the light of Sen's (1999) [19] capability approach to development and Nussbaum's (2011) [15] approach on central human capabilities. Other points of comparison are provided by Polanyi (2001) [16] on market society, Gandhi on modern civilizations and postcolonial scholarship by Said (1978) and Escobar (1995) [9, 18]. The article also delves into official Indian government narratives around the Voice of Global South Summits and India's human-centric globalisation agenda. Official documents are not used as evidence of declared priorities but as proof of the failure of the policies. This distinction is important as it is the goals that are described in a diplomatic declaration, whereas the outcomes will need to be assessed separately to include evidence of implementation, financial impact, and distributional impact. It is a conceptual analysis rather than a causal study and it is not intended to suggest that all current policies have only come from the perspective of Integral Humanism. The comparison emphasizes on integrated human welfare, Antyodaya, self reliance and local agency and questions their contributions to international policy debates, their weaknesses, etc. The approach is not to render intellectual traditions as interchangeable doctrines, but as interlocutors.

Key concepts and their global implications

1. Assessment of the economic value of integrated human welfare beyond economic aggregates

Integral Humanism is a challenge to a conception of the human person that circumscribes welfare in terms of consumption, production or class position. Relationships, ethical responsibility and cultural meaning along with material conditions are all part of human life and are of importance in collective decisions (Upadhyaya, 1965) [23]. Applied globally, the question is, are these trade, investment or industrial policy successes only being judged by the volume of production, or do they also have to be judged by the impact they have on the lives of people?

We can see a definite parallel to the capability approach. Sen (1999) [19] sees development as related to the extension of substantive freedoms, while Nussbaum (2011) [15] identifies central capacities that make a life compatible with human dignity. Both models call into question the notion that resources equate with well-being. Growth does not mean a country is advancing its health services, education, clean water, safety or meaningful political participation. In the same way, external funding can provide more funds to a government but not ensure that public institutions are able to use those funds to provide services.

Their customs are not the same. In the capability approach particular focus is given to the actual freedom that one has, while in Integral Humanism individuals are seen in relation to social and moral relations. This difference should not be lost sight of in the quest for convenience in a synthesis. However, the comparison indicates that the international institutions could add a health, educational, agency, social inclusion and environmental security dimension to macroeconomic indicators. The uneven development and global polarisation highlighted in UNDP's (2024) presentation strengthens the argument for a broader understanding of development beyond the narrow prism of national incomes.

Economic growth wouldn't be made irrelevant by a human centred framework. Rather, it would regard growth as a means, the value of which would be determined by the distribution of benefits and whether it enhances people's capabilities. This is particularly relevant in the evaluation of infrastructure, trade liberalisation, digital public systems or industrial policy by governments. A project can be financially efficient, but can have costs to communities with less influence on the project, such as costs of forced relocation, privacy threats, or environmental impacts. An integrated assessment can make these effects visible such that they aren't a secondary concern.

2. Antyodaya and sharing of global gains

In Antyodaya, the question of success of a policy is uniquely directed at the question of who is left behind. On the international level, the idea can focus on lower-income countries that have limited fiscal space, informal sectors, small farmers, vulnerable populations due to climate change, and displaced persons and populations not connected to digital infrastructure. Policy can make aggregate welfare higher, but aggregate welfare gains might be concentrated among existing power holders. It's actually quite simple when it comes to Antyodaya, the ones who gain, the ones who lose, and the ones who don't get involved.

This is a matter also linked to debates on inequality and social impact of development that have been ongoing since the dawn of development. Sen (1999) [19] states that deprivation needs to be looked at from the perspective of real freedom, and not just income. Escobar (1995) [9] looks at the historical context in which development discourse has shaped problems and populations, which can be blinkered by local priorities and power relations. The views expressed collectively indicate that distribution and participation needs to be part of the design of international programmes, and not a post production process once aggregates targets have been achieved.

Assessment of Antyodaya would be applicable to debt restructuring, trade agreements, climate finance and technology standards. It is necessary to consider, in addition to the projected national gains, the adjustment costs of small producers and workers in considering a trade agreement. The focus of climate finance should be on access of vulnerable countries and communities, rather than the amount announced. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2024) [4], adaptation finance inflows into developing countries rose from USD 22 billion in 2021 to USD 28 billion in 2022 and the finance

gap is still large. These figures depict the distinction between progress and adequacy.

The concept of Antyodaya is not to be equated with rejecting of trade and multilateral institutions. It is more commonly known as a legitimacy distributional test. It questions whether there is meaningful protection for those least able to withstand shocks in the international arena. But the principle must also include institutional details, government requirements for disaggregated data, public involvement, clear allocation guidelines and reviews. If they aren't there, a call to the weak can be rhetorical.

3. Self-reliance without isolation

In the context of the current debates around strategic autonomy, resilient supply chains, and technological sovereignty, Upadhyaya's observations on the importance of economic organisation to suit the conditions of a society can be put in a conversation. It is possible to connect Upadhyaya's concern on the importance of economic organisation to suit the conditions of a society to the contemporary debates around strategic autonomy, resilient supply chains, and technological sovereignty. The COVID-19 pandemic, the energy crisis and competition for key technologies have demonstrated how a country's reliance on a small number of suppliers can limit its choices. But self-reliance doesn't have to imply autarky. It could be about developing local skills, seeking out alternative suppliers, strengthening local skills and the capacity to take sovereign decisions, or to maintain international cooperation but develop local skills capabilities.

Polanyi (2001) [16] in his “Great Transformation” contends that markets are not ‘free’ but part of social and political structures, and that assuming they are ‘self-regulating' can lead to costs that are destabilising to communities. This view is complementary to the Integral Humanism focus on the purposes of economic arrangements. There is a practical implication that openness needs to be matched with protection of the workers, small producers, public health and ecological systems. Strategic autonomy is positive as it enhances the ability of a country to cooperate on a more equal basis, it is destructive if used to justify exclusion, protectionism without public value or neglect of shared problems.

The idea also poses a question for partnerships with international development organizations which are questioned as are they capacity-building or dependency creating? Technology transfer, training, local research institutions and transparent procurement processes can support partner countries to adapt solutions to their needs. But it is not necessarily assumed that domestic production is fairer or more efficient. Structuralist economists argues that dependency can be created within the borders of a nation again by the presence of local monopolies, political patronage, and weak regulation. Self-reliance thus requires public responsibility and tangible evidence of true capacity development, not just the slogan of national ownership.

4. Decentralisation, local agency and plural modernity

A central theme of Integral Humanism is that social institutions other than the central state offer a significant challenge to international development programmes. Policies that are formulated outside the communities they are supposed to serve may backfire if they ignore local knowledge, language, ways of living, ecological conditions etc. A programme can be better designed with participatory design, and be more accountable to local institutions, enabling a better fit between the programme and the needs of intended beneficiaries. This is not to say that there is no element of injustice or exclusion in a local community. The decentralization must be accompanied by enforceable rights, clear procedures and avenues of recourse so that local power structures can't create or reinforce caste, class, gender and ethnic hierarchies.

The notion of plural modernity also disrupts the notion that societies need to copy a single outside model or the idea that societies need to abandon international knowledge. As colonial power helped to define and govern societies, so do colonial categories have demonstrated . (Escobar 1995, Said 1978 [9, 18],). The recovery of agency is possible through an indigenous intellectual framework, but is not intended to be a justification for policies to be immune to investigation. It is essential that knowledge pluralism involves reciprocal exchange. Indian concepts must be open to comparison and criticism, while international theories must be subjected to the different social experiences.

The international lesson is not to accept Integral Humanism as the way of all societies. That frameworks for development must allow for contextual adaptation and public deliberation. The positive contribution of political philosophy is enhanced by its ability to appeal to those who don't share its original cultural context, and by the possibility of making judgements about its practical implications based on a community outside the one in which it originated.

A Diplomatic Approach to Other Political and Development Traditions

1. Gandhi and the Indian Constitution

Integral Humanism is meant to be read along with Gandhi's critique of modern civilisation in Hind Swaraj. Gandhi challenged the optimistic notion that more technology means more moral advancement and he advocated self-restraint, local production and the dignity of work (Gandhi, 1997) [10]. Both thinkers call for a separation between capacity to make more and capacity to live well. Their arguments come from varying political backgrounds and cannot be boiled down to a single doctrine, however, they do offer some related tools to consider when making decisions on development strategies that neglect social cohesion or ecological limits.

The dialogue is applicable to climate diplomacy and sustainable consumption. The inequalities that exist between countries and generations in the benefits of production and the costs of environmental damage are highlighted by climate change. UNEP (2024) recognizes the disconnect between adaptation costs and financing, especially with worsening climate impacts. A human-centred perspective would ask the question, do climate policies ensure livelihoods are protected, facilitate adaptation and ensure equitable cost sharing? It would also acknowledge that there are legitimate development needs in low-income countries and that these countries should not have to be responsible for the same burden as wealthier countries.

The Gandhian philosophy or Integral Humanism does not eliminate conflicts of interest between the states. The role they can play is to broaden the parameters of evaluation for the agreements like food, water, health, not only economic policy but access to energy, and secure livelihoods are

conditions of human security, not just side effects of the economy.

Everyone should have access to the same opportunities for use of their capabilities, rights and dignity.

2. Capability Approach and Integral Humanism

The capacity approach is a helpful analytical link between resources and lived outcomes. These two sets of views suggest that development broadens freedoms (Sen 1999) [19] and that societies must ensure certain capabilities in order to enable people to live with dignity (Nussbaum 2011) [15]. Integral Humanism also takes an anti-materialist stance on welfare, but assigns a special significance to the individual's relationship to the larger social system (Upadhyaya, 1965) [23]. The comparison implies that international policy should review not only the transfer of resources, but the actions people can take with the resources. One of the issues is still unresolved. Relational approaches can bring to the fore responsibilities and social connections, but community claims can also limit individual freedom.

Rights-based approaches offer safeguards against coercion and discrimination but can also sometimes fail to fully recognize the social context in which freedom holds meaning. A defensible dialogue between these approaches must keep both of these insights. No religious practice can justify a denial of dissent and no culture can be denied an equal right to protection, freedom of conscience, or gender equality. This is no little qualification. It's a requirement for the international. To serve a plural world, the ethical language of Integral Humanism must be understood in ways that safeguard people who hold different interpretations of the same things that are dominant in culture and politics. It is not just those who fit into the dominant community's definition of human dignity which benefit from it. Human dignity must be extended the same way to minorities, migrants, females and dissenters, as well as those who fit into the understanding of community of the majority.

3. Postcolonial agency and critical scholarship.

The source of an idea is a factor that cannot be ignored in an international debate, as indicated by postcolonial scholarship. Said (1978) [18] demonstrated the ways in which the non-Western world was represented in relation to relations of power, while Escobar (1995) [9] studied development as a discourse that could help to define a society as a problem that needs to be managed. The project of Integral Humanism's search for an Indian framework can be seen as one of the broader ones of asserting intellectual agency and challenging the notion of universalizing political concepts from one region.

Meanwhile, a man's intellectual independence does not cancel out the necessity of critical examination. Abraham (2019) [7] has written a critical account of the intellectual and political background of Integral Humanism, when it comes to the political economy of Hindu nationalism. This literature warns against giving the philosophy a political face, as well as against assumptions that the philosophy is self-supporting. Any serious evaluation of it should take both its own declared ethical goals and how it can be understood and/or exploited in the current political landscape.

It is neither uncritical celebration nor dismissal that is the strongest argument for international involvement. If integral humanism is treated as a local tradition to which one must relate oneself and which poses questions that can be debated, it can extend the traditions of political thought. The credibility is based on its capacity to respond to criticism, to recognize internal variations, and to show how its ideas could enhance the analysis or practice in other settings where they are not originally from.

Implications for India's contemporary Foreign Policy?

1. Strategic autonomy and multi-alignment

India's foreign policy has always been founded on the principles of national interest, multilateralism and partnership with developing nations, along with the theme of sovereign decision making. While the nature of India's foreign policy is constantly evolving in response to new geopolitical shifts and material interests, there are also enduring aspects of India's foreign policy orientation (Pandey, M. K., Premanandam, P., & Raju, T. N. 2023) [5]. Strategic autonomy could be taken to mean a rejection of making external relationships automatic and dependent on alignment with any single power. This aligns with the contextual judgement and self-directed development that is a core part of Integral Humanism.

The connection is not to be exaggerated. Strategic autonomy is not a new concept in the contemporary debate on the relevance of integral humanism in the international arena but has its own history in the Indian post-independence foreign policy. Nor does autonomy ensure good results. Its significance lies in its ability to increase policy options, safeguard public health and facilitate beneficial interactions, or simply serve as a justification for incoherence. The relationship should be interpreted as an affinity or interpretive connection unless historical evidence shows direct influence.

2. Voice of the Global South and multilateral reform

The first Voice of Global South Summit was organized in India on 12-13 January 2023, and the second in November 2023 [6] on 17th November. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2023 [5] (MEA) these meetings are "occasions for developing countries to share their views on debt, food and energy security, development finance and representation in the world. According to the official account (MEA, 2023), the first summit saw the participation of 125 countries. The first Voice of Global South Summit was hosted by India on 12–13 January 2023 [6], followed by the second summit on 17 November 2023 [6]. Both summits provided platforms for countries of the Global South to discuss shared development priorities and global challenges. Such projects create a modern platform for the exchange of ideas of inclusive development and international voice.

An Antyodaya-informed interpretation question is, who has enough influence over decisions that impact on countries and populations that are at high risk? It enables discussion of the role of representation in international financial institutions, affordable development finance and equitable involvement in technology governance. However, participation at the summit and declaration does not necessarily lead to institutional change. Their value needs to be determined by subsequent promises, support, modifications in decision-making and quantifiable results. The Global South is also diverse, with variations in income, political system, security and trade interests between states.

A credible platform has to take account of those differences, not make assumptions about a single position.

3. Globalisation and public goods

India has adopted the motto ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’ for the G20 presidency for 2023. A government release called for a human-centric globalisation over GDP-centric globalisation (Press Information Bureau, 2023) [17]. This is similar to the philosophy of Integral Humanism, which states that the economic system must be organized around human welfare. While conceptually there are places of overlap, the official rhetoric should not be read as indication that policy outcomes have become more inclusive.

Cooperation is necessary to address climate stability, pandemic preparedness, scientific knowledge, maritime security and resilient food systems, while these are global public goods, with no short-term national returns. A human centred approach would measure the impact of international cooperation on human security and long-term resilience, taking into account differentiated responsibility. The capacity to collect taxes, development needs and past contributions to environmental pressures are different among countries. A fair framework will thus have to be a fair burden sharing of concerns with practicality. The renewed multilateral cooperation focus of the UNDP (2024) in a polarised world further underscores the need for this challenge.

4. Cooperation in enacting climate laws and policies.

Climate cooperation provides a valuable space that can bridge the connection between human wellbeing and local action and ecological consciousness. It is International Solar Alliance (ISA) an institutional forum for international cooperation on solar energy, where countries from various regions are members. Energy access and less vulnerability to the volatile fossil fuel markets is to be expected from renewable-energy partnerships. They are also able to establish new supply chain relationships if financing, equipment, intellectual property, or maintenance are highly concentrated amongst a few suppliers.

An integral humanistic evaluation would not be based on installed capacity. It would consider questions about the cost and availability of energy, generate local skills and jobs, look at impacts on land and biodiversity, and consider who pays for the maintenance and end-of-life recycling. Technology sharing should involve training, open procurement process, adequate data protection measures, and local institutions that can adapt systems. Accessibility of climate finance to countries with fiscal space constraints and a lack of adaptation in the context of adaptation and mitigation are also priorities (UNEP, 2024) [4]. These criteria transform vague ethical statements into questions that can be assessed and discussed.

The limitation and risk of international application

Any serious examination must recognize that there are ideas in Integral Humanism that have complex meaning. They Can foster solidarity but can also be interpreted in terms of a dominant cultural identity. Abraham's (2019) [7] critical analysis of Integral Humanism and Hindu nationalist political economy provides a view of the political backdrop of the philosophy which cannot be eliminated. Cultural rootedness can be combined with international relevance only in the context of equal citizenship, freedom of conscience and protection of minorities.

The second tension is in the "community-individual rights" relationship. Whereas care, belonging and mutual responsibility can be found in communities, so too can coercive community norms. This is an issue for gender equality, freedom of expression, religious pluralism and migrants' rights. The solution is not to throw out the baby with the bathwater, the solution is to make sure that there is a balance between solidarity and constitutional protections, and human-rights norms and institutions through which affected persons can challenge decisions. If not for these protections, human centred language can mask inequitable power.

Third, the international system is not all values made of shared values. States have security problems, internal political issues and conflicts. What is not possible to replace by strategic analysis, deterrence, negotiation or institutional design is Integral Humanism. It is its task to widen the dimensions of the ends at which statesmanship is directed, and to inquire whether national interest is material or also in the broader sense of "human security" in the long run.

Last but not least, conceptual statements must be tested empirically. Having a policy based on the concepts of Antyodaya, self-reliance or human-centred development is not sufficient to make it a successful policy. Should be assessed using baseline data, distributional analysis, public consultation, transparent financing and post-implementation review. If the idea is to make a contribution rather than simply to be a political talking point, the difference between an ethical goal and an actual outcome is critical.

A Human-Centred Approach to International Cooperation: A Practical Framework

There are five principles that can be extracted from the implications of Integral Humanism at international level. First, adopt a multi-faceted definition of welfare, including both economic and health, education, agency, social inclusion and environmental security indicators. This is aligned with the UNDP (2024) focus on human development in the context of global polarisation, and the thinking behind capability-based development (Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 1999) [15, 19].

Second, conduct an Antyodaya analysis on groups and countries who are likely to miss out from benefits or be burdened with disproportionate costs. Distributional assessments should be published for international projects, and a strategy should be developed to address the limited political influence of these groups. Third, define self-reliance as not being isolated, but capacity-building within cooperative networks. Partnerships need to dedicate resources to skills, local research, diversified supply chains and to the capacity to maintain and adapt technologies.

Fourth, hold the sharing of technology to account. Ownership and maintenance responsibilities should be specified in agreements, data usage, privacy, training and dispute resolution. Fifth, defend pluralism by guaranteeing equality of rights, democratic engagement and free discussion. These principles can be applied to development finance, digital public infrastructure, climate programmes and trade-related adjustment policies.

There is a need not only for declarations but also for practical instruments for implementation. Proposals may

include a baseline assessment, public consultation plan, public financing and ownership information, distributional indicators, ecological review and post-implementation audit information. Decision making should be challenging for partner countries and affected communities. These safeguards would enable verification of ethical commitments.

Open to other traditions, such as African communitarian thought, Latin American critiques of extractive development, Indigenous ecological knowledge, Buddhist and Islamic ethical traditions, liberal human-rights theory and social-democratic welfare approaches. Integral Humanism must be a contribution to the world's debate and not a civilisational claim. Internationalisation should not be about the export of ideas but about a reciprocal learning and critical translation process. (Kapoor, 2026) [8].

Conclusion

Designed as an alternative model of political and economic development for India, Integral Humanism has its questions that are applicable beyond the national boundaries. It is an integrated understanding of the human person, which calls for a broader definition of progress. Antyodaya focuses on the 'left behind', self-reliance on dependence and policy autonomy and decentralisation on local knowledge and participation. These concepts can be leveraged to address discussions on global inequality, development finance, technology governance, climate cooperation, and multilateral reform. Some of the resonances that could be identified are strategic autonomy, South–South cooperation, Voice of Global South Summits and the language of human-centric globalization. These happenings, however, also show the diplomatic history of India, geopolitical circumstances as well as other intellectual traditions. Without additional historical data, it would be mistaken to say that they are only due to Integral Humanism.

Critically translating is the key to the international value of philosophy. Its narrative of community needs to be compatible with pluralism and equal rights, with self-reliance and cooperation, and with evidence that is transparent and clear. When read this way, Integral Humanism is not a formula for world politics that is universal. It is a place-based lens that can be used to reflect on and question whether international institutions respect human dignity, expand real capabilities, incorporate the least-advantaged, and maintain the ecological conditions that future generations need. Its impact will not be judged on how far its label goes, but rather by the dialogue it facilitates and the tangible benefits it can help to achieve.

Acknowledgment

The Scholar, Dr. Gajendra, is the awardee of the ICSSR Post-Doctoral Fellowship. This paper is largely an outcome of the post-doctoral fellowship sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). However, the responsibility for the facts stated, opinions expressed, and the conclusions drawn is entirely of the author.

References

1. Farny E. Dependency theory: A useful tool for analyzing global inequalities today. E-International Relations, 2016, 23.
2. Omar S. Rethinking development from a postcolonial perspective. Journal of Conflictology, 2012.
3. Allen D. Is Gandhi’s approach to technology irrelevant in the modern age of technology? In Gandhi after 9/11: Creative nonviolence and sustainability. Oxford University Press, 2019, 99–137. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199491490.003.0006
4. United Nations Environment Programme. Adaptation Gap Report 2024: Come hell and high water — As fires and floods hit the poor hardest, it is time for the world to step up adaptation actions. Nairobi, 2024. https://doi.org/10.59117/20.500.11822/46497.
5. Pandey MK, Premanandam P, Raju TN. India’s foreign policy transformation in the 21st century: Continuity and change. Educational Administration: Theory and Practice,2023:29(4):5911–5916. https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v29i4.10957
6. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Summary of deliberations: Voice of Global South Summit 2023, January 12–13, 2023, 2023. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/36119/Summary_of_Deliberations_Voice_of_Global_South_Summit_2023_January_1213_2023
7. Abraham J. In Search of Dharma: Integral Humanism and the Political Economy of Hindu Nationalism. South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies,2019:42(1):16–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/00856401.2019.1557362
8. Kapoor R. Deendayal Upadhyaya birth anniversary: Integral Humanism is guiding philosophy for humanity: Dattatreya Hosabale. Organiser, 2026. https://organiser.org/2026/09/25/382759/bharat/deendayal-upadhyaya-birth-anniversary-integral-humanism-is-guiding-philosophy-for-humanity-dattatreya-hosabale
9. Escobar A. Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the Third World. Princeton University Press, 1995.
10. Gandhi MK. Hind Swaraj and other writings (A. J. Parel, Ed.). Cambridge University Press, 1997. (Original work published 1909)
11. International Solar Alliance. Member countries. Retrieved October 15, 2026, from https://isolaralliance.org/membership/countries
12. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. India’s foreign policy. https://www.mea.gov.in/indian-foreign-policy.htm
13. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Voice of Global South Summit 2023, 2023a. https://www.mea.gov.in/voice-of-global-summit.htm
14. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. 2nd Voice of Global South Summit 2023, 2023b. https://www.mea.gov.in/second-vgss.htm
15. Nussbaum MC. Creating capabilities: The human development approach. Harvard University Press, 2011.
16. Polanyi K. The great transformation: The political and economic origins of our time. Beacon Press, 2001. (Original work published 1944)
17. Press Information Bureau, Government of India. Human-centric globalisation: Taking G20 to the last mile, leaving none behind, 2023. https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1955336
18. Said EW. Orientalism. Pantheon Books, 1978.
19. Sen A. Development as freedom. Alfred A. Knopf, 1999.
20. United Nations Development Programme. Human development report 2023–24: Breaking the gridlock:

Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world, 2024. https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2023-24
21. Gajendra. Understanding Social Justice through Deendayal Upadhyaya: A Humanitarian Approach. Our Heritage, 2020, 68(30).
22. United Nations Environment Programme. Adaptation gap report 2024: Come hell and high water, 2024. https://www.unep.org/resources/adaptation-gap-report-2024
23. Upadhyaya D. Integral humanism: Four lectures delivered in Bombay, April 22–25, 1965, 1965.
24. Kumar P, Gajendra. B. R. Ambedkar and Deendayal Upadhyaya on social justice: A comparative study. International Journal of Sociology and Political Science,2021:3(2):38–42.
25. Bharatiya Jana Sangh. https://deendayalupadhyaya.org/speeches/
26. Gajendra D. Deendayal Upadhyay ke drishtikon se vitranatmak nyay ka punaravalokan: Ekatma manavvad aur iski samakaleen prasangikta. International Journal of Sociology and Political Science,2024:6(2):59–64.
27. Kumar P, Gajendra. Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Antyodaya: A way to protect from economic and social injustice in Covid period. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Education and Research,2021:6(4):44–48.