Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was an eminent leader of Indian independence movement in British-ruled India. Employing non-violent civil disobedience, Gandhi not only led India to independence but also further inspired movements for Civil Rights and Freedom across the world. He spearheaded various campaigns so as to eradicate poverty, create awareness regarding cleanliness, promote social justice, end untouchability, build religious harmony, expand women's rights and most importantly, achieve Swaraj or self-rule. He implemented Satyagraha and non-violence as strategic, ethical and pedagogic tools. He had a simple and modest living. He ate simple vegetarian food and used fasting as a self-disciplinary exercise as well as a political device. Gandhi is affectionately remembered as Bapu and the ideas or principles promoted by him are known today as ‘Gandhism’. Gandhian ideology or Gandhism encompasses his ideas, words and actions which provide guidance to the people. Gandhi invented the practice of Satyagraha and was a strict follower of non-violence (ahimsa). He followed these practices in all the situations and campaigns. So Satyagraha and non-violence are regarded as the most important tenets of Gandhism.

The other legendary figure of Indian freedom movement, who is popularly ranked as a rival of Mahatma Gandhi is reveredly remembered as
Shaheed-E-Azam Bhagat Singh. He willingly treded the thorny path with courage and faced the gallows with fortitude. Bhagat Singh is considered as one of the most influential revolutionaries of the Indian independence movement. He spent the years from 1924 to 1928 in studying the history of revolutionary movement in India. He passed through the phases of being a Gandhian Nationalist to a Romantic Revolutionary, and then after coming under the influence of Terro-(or Anarcho) Communism for a short period, finally became a convinced Marxist, a follower of Scientific Socialism. Bhagat Singh’s patriotism was neither based on mere ‘anti-British-ism’ or anti-colonialism, nor on crude anti-imperialism. His anti-imperialism was not only more radical than that of Lokmanya Tilak, Dadabhai Nauroji and Gandhiji, but also was soundly grounded in the Leninist understanding of imperialism. He was attracted to anarchism and communism. He popularised the concept of revolution. Singh’s legacy prompted youth in India to begin fighting for Indian independence and he continues to be a youth idol in modern India.

Both Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh are two titans of India’s freedom movement. Both were committed towards the goal of India's freedom from British rule. However, the means they adopted were distinctly different. Mahatma Gandhi spearheaded a civil disobedience movement
founded on the principles of non-violence and Satyagraha. While Bhagat Singh waged a revolutionary armed struggle based upon violence towards the British regime. He gave a new direction to revolution in India and inspired many youths to join the freedom movement. Bhagat Singh was executed while he was only 24 years old. In contrast, Gandhi lived a long life and India succeeded in gaining freedom under his leadership. So, for the present study, ideologies and principles of both the leaders were compared and analyzed. Efforts were done to explore the causes of convergence and diversion between Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh. Freedom movements and strategic methods employed by Gandhi and Bhagat Singh to achieve freedom were studied and analysis was carried out to find out the difference. Efforts were done to investigate whether it is actually correct to say that Bhagat Singh was a total contrast to Mahatma Gandhi?

Both were very popular with masses. Though Bhagat Singh was also quite popular and hailed as a national hero yet history has witnessed the prominence of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian freedom movement who became popular and famous as ‘Father of the Nation’. In present scenario, it appears that as compared to Mahatma Gandhi and his simplicity, the youth of the nation particularly, admires Bhagat Singh and his glamorous image. But it is also becoming evident that the ideologies and vision of both the leaders have
been shunted aside in the modern India. They are now being remembered only on their birthdays. Their ideologies proved fruitful during freedom struggle but the same ideologies are looked down upon in modern India. All these observations point towards the urgent need to investigate the facts like whether actually modern Indians have rejected Gandhi’s ideology or why such an ideology which is the source of inspiration for the leader of world’s most powerful country is losing charm even with the common man of India? So through this doctoral work, a survey was conducted amongst different strata of modern Indian society so as to investigate the existence of elements of Gandhian and Bhagat Singh’s ideologies. Investigations were done to assess the public perceptions of Gandhism and Bhagat Singh’s ideology. Analysis was done to find out whether modern Indians prefer Bhagat Singh’s ideology over Gandhism or both the leaders’ ideologies are losing charm with the public. Efforts were done to explore the reasons for people’s disenchantment and based on these causes remedial suggestions were provided for the further fructification of both leaders’ rich legacy and vision. Furthermore, analysis was done to explore the relevance of the ideologies of both the leaders in contemporary society by observing and analyzing current social or national events. The review of the following studies made things far more clear and gave a definitive way to the research.
Review of the Literature

Few studies have investigated the relevance of the ideologies of both the leaders i.e. Gandhi and Bhagat Singh. Some of the major reviewed works are described as under:

1) In 2004, a case-study was carried out pertaining to Gandhian elements of the Lok Samiti movement in Mehdiganj (Uttar Pradesh) to explore how Gandhian ideology is perceived and implemented among a group of social activists at the grassroots level (Breukelen, 2006). This study reported that the movement does not identify itself with Gandhian ideology but utilized Gandhi’s strategies for action. This case study concluded that activists of the movement had not much knowledge about Gandhi’s vision and ideals but adopted certain elements of Gandhi’s ideology like satyagraha, non-violence, swaraj, swadeshi etc. Through the methods of Gandhian resistance the activists aimed to end practices like corruption, caste discrimination, undemocratic governance and the policies of companies or the government that disadvantage the poor. But

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on the other hand, they had not very good perceptions of Gandhians.

2) Another study published in 2013 in the Journal of Global Citizenship & Equity Education reviewed the non-violent philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. in the 21st Century in a global context. The study has concluded that dedication to the non-violent philosophy of Gandhi and King can be a starting point in the pursuit of global social justice (Adjei, 2013, pp. 80-101).  

3) A study published in 2012 in the Journal of Humanities and Social Science reviewed the relevance of Gandhian philosophy in contemporary period. It concluded that Gandhi is now more relevant on global level than before and he is remembered now more with reverence (Das, 2012, pp. 307). The study reported that Gandhi is being recognized as a great leader of action, a liberator and a Prophet Martyr all over the universe. And relevance of his ideology to contemporary society is

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unquestionable and unchallengeable. But there is a need to implement his vision, strategies and thoughts into practice.

4) M. Maharajan (2011) in his book- Mahatma Gandhi and the New Millennium has examined the relevance of Gandhian thought. He concluded that the relevance of Gandhian ideas and their universal applicability is precisely because of the fact that his ideas and thoughts are not based on colonial dominations, exploitative attitudes, cut throat competition or material and worldly values.

5) Similarly, many historians have reviewed and analyzed the ideology of Bhagat Singh. He has been described as the 'Che Guevara' of South Asia (Lal, 2012), The Eternal Rebel (Waraich, 2007), The Prince of Martyrs (Mathur, 2002) and a unique martyr in freedom movement (Saigal, 2002).

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7) Hansraj Rahbar (1990) in his book Bhagat Singh and his thought, has explored the influence of Marxism Leninism on Bhagat Singh’s thoughts. In Bhagat Singh Revisited: Historiography, Biography, and Ideology of the Great Martyr, Chander Pal Singh (2011) has investigated the life and mission of Bhagat Singh. He has highlighted the fact that Bhagat Singh was not taken to be Marxist/Communist.

8) Chander Pal Singh, Kuldip Nayar (2000) and Vishwa Nath Datta (2008) have also put their efforts to explore Gandhiji’s role in Bhagat Singh’s trial.

Inferences from Review of the Literature

1) M. Maharajan (2011)\textsuperscript{15} in his book-Mahatma Gandhi and the New Millennium has concluded that Gandhian ideology is still relevant. He attributed the universal applicability of his ideology to the fact that Gandhi’s ideas and thoughts are not based on colonial dominations and exploitative attitudes, cut throat competition or some other material and worldly values.

2) The case study conducted in 2004 concluded that Lok Samiti drew on Gandhian repertoires and adopted terms like Satyagraha, Swaraj and Swadeshi, which are essentially expressions of resistance against the exploitation by an existing power structure. But in reality the movement did not identify itself with Gandhian ideology. Furthermore, the study reported that although workers utilized Gandhi’s strategies for action, they did not have any understanding of Gandhi’s vision. The study reported that there was a controversial image of Gandhi among the activists. His ideas were considered very inspiring. The group admired his revolutionary ideology for change in

India’s society, the resistance against the exploitation of the poor and his methods of resistance. But on the other hand, they had not very good opinion regarding Gandhians, who were deemed only as an institutionalized group who has no function in society but keeping its own ashrams and offices alive. The study published in 2012 has concluded that Gandhi is now more relevant on global level than before and he is remembered now more with reverence (Breukelen, 2006).  

3) The study published in 2012 has concluded that after many years of martyrdom, Gandhi is considered more relevant on global level than before. The study summarized that in contemporary period Gandhi is being recognized globally as a great leader of action, a Liberator and a Prophet Martyr. But there is an urgent need is to implement his deeds, actions and thoughts into practice. Thus the study had concluded that his relevance in different fields is unquestionable and unchallengeable (Das, 2012, pp. 307).


4) Another study published in 2013 has concluded that a dedication to the non-violent philosophy of Gandhi and King can be a starting point to position members of the profession as forerunners in the pursuit of global social justice (Adjei, 2013, pp. 80-101).\textsuperscript{18}

5) In the article-The revolutionary legacy of Bhagat Singh: the 'Che Guevara' of South Asia, Chaman Lal (2012)\textsuperscript{19} has provided indepth details regarding Bhagat Singh’s life, revolutionary activities, ideals, opinions and legacy. He has highlighted the fact that Bhagat Singh’s life, work and thought were marked by an uncompromising struggle against colonialism and imperialism, together with radical opposition to capitalism, communalism and the caste system. He has regarded Bhagat Singh as the 'Che Guevara' of South Asia.

6) In the book titled Eternal Rebel, Waraich (2007)\textsuperscript{20} has emphasized on the fact that the massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh was a turning point in the life of young Bhagat Singh. According to him, a revolution started simmering inside him.


and he became a committed soldier ready to sacrifice his life for the freedom of his beloved country.

7) Gurdev Singh Deol (1978) has mentioned that Bhagat Singh represented the popular upsurge of his time. K. L. Johar (2007) has described Bhagat Singh as a legend. He has acknowledged that Bhagat Singh’s revolutionary philosophy has come alive through recent movies and has pointed out towards the greater need of realization of his dreams.

8) Hansraj Rahbar (1990) has explored the influence of Marxism or Leninism on Bhagat Singh’s thoughts. He has concluded that a national form of Marxism Leninism is known as Bhagat Singh’ thought. However, Chander Pal Singh (2011) has clearly mentioned that during Bhagat Singh’s life time, the Marxists did not show much interest in him because his style did not suit their ideology. They did not approve of projecting individual self as the point of attention. But right from 1953, members of the Communist Party have started claiming him as

their own. Singh has pointed out that it is totally inappropriate and just an act of “ideological hijacking.” The communists are embracing him only because communism is going through a grave ideological crisis globally. He has highlighted the fact that Bhagat Singh was not taken to be Marxist/Communist.

9) In his biography of Bhagat Singh, Kuldip Nayar (2000) holds the view that Gandhi was very concerned about Bhagat Singh, but he did not approve of his violent methods because he thought that such means would do much harm to the country. That is why Gandhi even refused to associate himself with the move to raise a statue in honour of Bhagat Singh’s martyrdom. A recent study has argued that despite his firm commitment to non-violence, which remained a cardinal principle of his life, Gandhi put the maximum pressure on the Viceroy Lord Irwin for the commutation of the death sentence of Bhagat Singh and his comrades. Gandhi disapproved of their action. In this study, Gandhi’s attitude to Bhagat Singh and his associates' death sentence has been examined against the background of his

negotiations with the Viceroy for the settlement of outstanding political issues facing the country (Datta, 2008).26

After reviewing the literature and studies carried out by various scholars, it has been observed that majority of these studies have historical and analytical approach. There is a lack of experimental and observational studies which could analyze the relevance of ideologies of the two great leaders’ or analyze the perceptions of common people regarding them.

**Research Gaps**

Although a lot of scholars have studied and analyzed the ideologies of Gandhi and Bhagat Singh separately yet there is a lack of studies which have compared their ideologies with each other. No study has so far tried to compare their perceptions about freedom. They are being posed as rivals and their ideologies are considered as contrasting. Bhagat Singh is generally associated with violence and Gandhi with non-violence. But Bhagat Singh was not blind adherent of violence. Through his writings, he had made it clear that by revolution he does not mean bloody strife. Similarly, Mahatma Gandhi also wrote, "where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence." He had participated in the Boer war and Zulu rebellion from the British side and also supported the British forces

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during World War I by encouraging recruitment of Indians in the British army. Furthermore, it is evident that as a young lad, Bhagat Singh was under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and actively took part in the non-cooperation movement. He earnestly believed that India would indeed gain freedom under Gandhi's leadership. But when Gandhi called off the movement following the Chauri-Chaura riot in 1922, Bhagat Singh became disenchanted with Gandhism and gradually veered towards the tenets of armed revolutionary struggle. His plan of throwing bombs in parliament without trying to kill anyone and then surrendering for arrest also points towards the Gandhian influence in contrast to the revolutionary spirit. Similarly, his hunger strike in jail is a reminiscent of Satyagraha. So is it correct to say that Bhagat Singh was a total contrast to Mahatma Gandhi?

There are some unanswered questions like:

1. Whether the ideologies of both the leaders are actually contrasting?
2. What are the similarities and dissimilarities between the ideologies and principles of Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh?
3. What were the major causes behind conversion and diversion between Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh?
4. What were the movements, rules and methods of Gandhi and Bhagat Singh to achieve freedom and in what respects they were different?
5. What were the perceptions of both the leaders for freedom?

6. Was Bhagat Singh a terrorist or not?

7. Was he an atheist or not?

8. Are the ideologies of both the leaders relevant or not?

As stated earlier, no study has compared the points of convergence and divergence in both the leaders’ ideologies. Secondly, after reviewing the literature and studies carried out by various scholars to examine the relevance of ideologies, it has been observed that majority of these studies have historical and analytical approach. There is a lack of experimental and observational studies which could analyze the relevance of ideologies of the two great leaders’ or analyze the perceptions of common people regarding them. So the present study tried to fill these lacunae by exploring the answers to these questions.

**Research Questions**

1) What are the similarities and dissimilarities between the ideologies and principles of Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh?

2) What were the perceptions of both the leaders for freedom?

3) What are the public perceptions of Gandhian and Bhagat Singh’s ideology?
4) Which elements of both the leaders’ ideologies are relevant for modern Indian society?

5) Whether actually modern Indians prefer Bhagat Singh’s ideology over Gandhism or both the leaders’ ideologies are losing charm with the public with the passage of time?

6) If so, what are the reasons for people’s disenchantment?

7) What are the remedial steps which can be taken for fructification of both leaders’ rich legacy and vision?

**Objectives**

The main objectives of the present study were:

1) To gain new insights into the ideologies of both Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh.

2) To compare and analyze the ideologies and principles of both the leaders.

3) To assess public’s perceptions and knowledge regarding philosophies of Gandhi and Bhagat Singh.

4) To investigate the existence of elements of both the leaders’ (Gandhi and Bhagat Singh) ideologies in contemporary Indian society.
5) To analyze the impact of ideologies of both the leaders (Gandhi and Bhagat Singh) in contemporary Indian society.

6) To investigate the relevance of their ideologies in contemporary society.

7) To explore the reasons for people’s disenchantment, if any, with Gandhi and Bhagat Singh.

8) To provide suggestions for the fructification of both leaders’ rich legacy and vision.

Research Methodology

The study is predominantly empirical and analytical in nature. It relied upon both qualitative as well as quantitative research methods. Random sampling technique was used for the collection of data.

(i) The Type of Data, i.e. Primary and Secondary data

The study made use of both the primary and the secondary sources for collection of data. Data from the original writings of Gandhi (The Story of My Experiments with Truth, Harijan, Hind Swaraj, Young India, The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi) and Bhagat Singh (The Statement of the Undefended Accused, Why I am an Atheist, Jail Diary, Jail Notes, Court Statements) were analysed thoroughly and systematically. The secondary
sources of data were the books, newspaper-articles, journals, research papers etc. related to both the personalities.

(ii) **Universe and Sampling Designs/Framework**

With an aim to cover all the important players, people from different strata of modern Indian society were selected. Students, youth political leaders/activists of educational institutes, government employees, women, social workers etc. were asked to fill the designated questionnaire. Approximately 150 people were contacted either personally or through mail.

(iii) **Methods of Data Collection**

All the main methods of data collection i.e. observations, interview/conversation, documents/literature, questionnaires and case studies were used to collect data. Keeping in mind all the research questions and objectives, a questionnaire was designed. It had 2 sections: A and B. Questions of section A were designed to assess the knowledge of target population regarding Gandhian and Bhagat Singh’s ideologies. Questions in section B were designed by focusing on the key principles of Gandhian and Bhagat Singh’s ideologies. This section was designed to investigate the existence of elements pertaining to their
ideologies. Case studies were selected from current social and national events.

The collected data was thoroughly investigated, critically analyzed and presented accordingly. The studies pertaining to different aspects of ideologies of both the leaders have been described in respective chapters with an aim to enrich the existing knowledge and fill the research lacuna. The Research Questions and Objectives have been answered in the Conclusion part of the study in Chapter No. 5. The whole study has been divided into five chapters.

**Chapterisation**

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