



MADAN MOHAN MALVIYA'S VISION OF SWADESHI AND ITS RELEVANCE IN MODERN ECONOMIC INITIATIVES LIKE AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

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Abstract: Madan Mohan Malviya's vision of the Swadeshi movement, centered around economic self-reliance and the promotion of indigenous industries, remains relevant in the context of India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. This study explores how Malviya's emphasis on economic independence during the colonial era connects with contemporary efforts to reduce reliance on foreign imports and boost domestic production. By revisiting Malviya's philosophy, the paper highlights the enduring importance of economic self-sufficiency, tracing its influence on modern policies such as the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes.

Index Terms - Aatmanirbhar, Independence, Swadeshi Movement, Import, India.

I. INTRODUCTION

Born in Allahabad (now Prayagraj) on December 25, 1861, Madan Mohan Malaviya was a brilliant leader whose contributions to the political, social, and educational realms of India have been largely ignored in popular historical accounts. Malaviya was a multi-talented individual who held positions as a social reformer, educator, writer, speaker, recognized lawyer, and prominent political figure. Malaviya was taught in a traditional Sanskrit school, which had a profound effect on his ideals and gave him a strong sense of morals, ethics, and elevated thought. He continued to be committed to fairness and constitutional governance even in the face of his power among royalty, landowners, and business titans. He fought tenaciously to guarantee that all Indians had access to legal and political liberties and fervently supported the rights of all citizens, especially the right to vote. His four terms as president of Indian national congress demonstrated his leadership and underscores his significance in the country's freedom struggle.

Malviya, who understood the vital significance of economic independence in obtaining true national sovereignty, continuously exhorted the populace to buy Swadeshi products. He underlined the significance of promoting local enterprises because he recognized that political independence would be incomplete without economic self-reliance.

Madan Mohan Malaviya, a prominent Indian scholar and freedom fighter, laid the groundwork for what we now call **Atmanirbhar Bharat** (self-reliant India) through his efforts in education, social reform, and economic self-sufficiency.

1. **Education:** Malaviya co-founded the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in 1916, aiming to provide modern education to Indians. This institution has become one of the largest residential universities in Asia, fostering a generation of educated and self-reliant individuals.
2. **Economic Self-Sufficiency:** He was a strong advocate for the Swadeshi movement, which promoted the use of Indian-made goods and self-reliance in economic activities. This movement was a precursor to the modern concept of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
3. **Social Reforms:** Malaviya worked tirelessly to uplift the marginalized sections of society, believing that a self-reliant nation must include all its citizens. His efforts in social reform were aimed at creating a more equitable and self-sufficient society.
4. **Media and Communication:** He founded the influential English newspaper, *The Leader*, and was the Chairman of *Hindustan Times*. These platforms were used to spread the message of self-reliance and national pride.

Malaviya's vision and efforts have had a lasting impact, aligning closely with the principles of Atmanirbhar Bharat, which aims to make India self-reliant in all aspects, from economy to education and social equity.

Objective of the Research Paper:

This research paper examines Madan Mohan Malviya's conception of the Swadeshi movement, emphasizing his emphasis on promoting indigenous industries as a means of achieving economic self-reliance.

Rationale for This Study:

This study's justification stems from the notion that re-examining earlier economic theories can improve our comprehension of and ability to formulate contemporary policy. The Swadeshi movement, which was envisioned by Madan Mohan Malviya, was essential to India's struggle against colonial control. It's critical to make the connection between India's current endeavors to achieve economic self-sufficiency through the Aatmanirbhar Bharat movement and the fundamental principles that leaders such as Malviya espoused. In the end, this study demonstrates how Malviya's theories—which originated in the context of colonial oppression—remain highly relevant in contemporary India, where achieving economic resilience and self-sufficiency continue to be top concerns.

Research methodology:

The majority of the secondary data used in this study is qualitative in nature and was gathered from a variety of sources, including books, journals, magazines, and websites.

Madan Mohan Malviya Vision on Swadeshi Movement:

Madan Mohan Malviya was a visionary who recognized the close relationship between political freedom and economic independence. He was more than just a political leader. As a leading proponent of economic self-reliance, Malviya thought that India's independence from British domination could not be achieved without it. For him, Swadeshi meant empowering local businesses, artisans, and entrepreneurs in addition to rejecting imported items in order to restore and strengthen India's own economy.

Malviya had a multifaceted role in the Swadeshi movement, not just endorsing local products but also stressing the importance of education and skill development as means of achieving economic empowerment. He aimed to provide the next generation of students with the information and abilities needed to propel the country's economic development as the founder of Banaras Hindu University. Malviya thought that in order for India to thrive, its citizens needed to be self-sufficient, educated, and competent to guide the nation toward economic self-sufficiency. His focus on developing a skilled labour force was a reflection of his larger goal of making India an economically powerful nation.

In the present era, Malviya's concepts of economic independence are still relevant in light of India's modern economic policies, especially the Aatmanirbhar Bharat program. Aatmanirbhar Bharat was initiated to support the Swadeshi ideas as well as lessen India's reliance on imports in the face of global disruptions and the necessity to support the country's economy. In the same way that Malviya stressed the need for traditional industries like handicrafts and textiles to flourish. Malviya's vision has grown and extended to meet the challenges of the 21st century, but the essential idea remains the same: India's prosperity and freedom depend on its economic power.

Madan Mohan Malviya's views on economic self-reliance and his contributions to the concept of Atmanirbhar Bharat were quite significant and evolved through his various initiatives and leadership roles.

Economic Measures Promoted by Malviya

1. **Swadeshi Movement:** Malviya was a strong advocate of the Swadeshi movement, which encouraged the use of Indian-made goods and the boycott of British products. This movement was a precursor to the modern concept of Atmanirbhar Bharat, emphasizing economic self-sufficiency.
2. **Industrial Development:** He promoted the establishment of Indian industries to reduce dependence on British imports. Malviya supported the creation of Indian-owned businesses and industries, which laid the foundation for economic self-reliance.
3. **Educational Reforms:** By founding Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Malviya aimed to provide modern education that combined technical skills with cultural values. This was intended to create a skilled workforce capable of driving India's economic development.
4. **Agricultural Improvements:** Malviya also focused on improving agricultural practices and supporting farmers. He believed that a self-reliant nation must have a strong agricultural base.

Impact Compared to Other Leaders

- **Mahatma Gandhi:** While Gandhi also promoted the Swadeshi movement and self-reliance, his focus was more on rural development and cottage industries. Malaviya, on the other hand, emphasized modern education and industrial development alongside traditional practices.
- **Jawaharlal Nehru:** Nehru's vision for India's economic development was more aligned with large-scale industrialization and state-led economic planning. Malaviya's approach was more balanced, incorporating both modern industries and traditional practices.
- **Lala Lajpat Rai:** Like Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai was a proponent of the Swadeshi movement and economic self-reliance. However, Malaviya's contributions to education and his role in founding BHU provided a lasting impact on India's educational and economic landscape.

Malaviya's efforts in promoting economic self-sufficiency, modern education, and industrial development have had a lasting impact on India's journey towards Atmanirbhar Bharat. His balanced approach, combining traditional values with modern practices, set him apart from other leaders of his time.

Madan Mohan Malaviya's Swadeshi vision and the modern concept of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) are closely related, yet they differ in their specific goals, challenges, and global contexts. Here's a detailed comparison:

Alignment in Goals

1. Economic Self-Reliance:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Malaviya's Swadeshi vision aimed to promote the use of Indian-made goods and reduce dependence on British imports. This was a direct response to colonial economic policies that exploited Indian resources.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** The modern initiative seeks to make India self-reliant by boosting local manufacturing, reducing imports, and enhancing the global competitiveness of Indian products.

2. Empowerment through Education:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Malaviya emphasized modern education through institutions like Banaras Hindu University (BHU) to create a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Focuses on improving education and skill development to prepare the workforce for modern industries and technologies.

3. Industrial Development:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Encouraged the establishment of Indian-owned industries to foster economic independence.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Promotes industrial growth through initiatives like "Make in India" to enhance domestic production capabilities.

Differences in Challenges

1. Colonial vs. Global Economy:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Faced the challenge of overcoming colonial economic policies and the dominance of British goods in the Indian market.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Operates in a globalized economy where India must compete with established global players and navigate international trade dynamics.

2. Technological Advancements:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Focused on traditional industries and cottage industries with limited technological advancements.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Leverages modern technology and innovation to drive economic growth and self-reliance.

3. Market Dynamics:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Aimed at creating a domestic market for Indian goods by appealing to nationalistic sentiments.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Seeks to integrate Indian products into the global market while also strengthening the domestic market.

Global Contexts

1. Colonial Era:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Emerged as a resistance against colonial exploitation and aimed at economic independence from British rule.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Functions in a post-colonial, globalized world where India is an independent nation striving for economic leadership.

2. Global Trade:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Focused on reducing dependence on British imports and fostering local industries.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Balances self-reliance with global trade partnerships, aiming to make India a significant player in the global economy.

Madan Mohan Malaviya's ethical and moral values were deeply intertwined with his vision for Swadeshi and economic self-reliance. Here are some key aspects of his values and how they influenced his approach:

Ethical and Moral Values of Madan Mohan Malaviya

1. Sanatana Dharma:

- Malaviya was a devout follower of Sanatana Dharma, which emphasizes eternal values and moral principles. He believed that true religion involves love, service, tolerance, and mutual respect.
- He saw the service of the motherland as a form of religious duty, asserting that there can be no greater Dharma than the service of all living beings.

2. Selfless Service:

- Malaviya's creed was centred on selfless service and the welfare of others. He aspired not for personal gain but for the alleviation of suffering among all living beings.
- This principle guided his efforts in social reform, education, and economic self-reliance, aiming to uplift the marginalized and create a more equitable society.

3. Moral Education:

- He believed that education should instill moral and ethical values in students. This included teachings on honesty, integrity, respect for others, and social responsibility.
- Malaviya's establishment of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) was driven by the goal of combining traditional Indian values with modern education to build a morally and ethically strong nation.

Swadeshi and Economic Self-Reliance

1. Promotion of Indigenous Goods:

- Malaviya's Swadeshi vision was rooted in the ethical principle of self-reliance. He promoted the use of Indian-made goods to foster economic independence and reduce reliance on foreign products.
- This approach was not just economic but also moral, as it aimed to empower local industries and support the livelihoods of Indian artisans and workers.

2. Industrial and Agricultural Development:

- He advocated for the development of Indian industries and improvements in agricultural practices. Malaviya believed that a self-reliant nation must have a strong industrial and agricultural base.
- His focus on industrial education was aimed at creating a skilled workforce capable of driving economic growth while adhering to ethical principles and social responsibility.

3. Social Equity:

- Malaviya's efforts in economic self-reliance were closely linked to his commitment to social equity. He worked to uplift marginalized communities and ensure that economic progress benefited all sections of society.
- His vision for economic self-reliance included creating opportunities for all, regardless of caste, gender, or socio-economic background.

Aatmanirbhar Bharat- Milestone and Achievement:

The Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative, launched in 2020, represents a key shift in India's economic policy by fostering self-reliance and reducing dependence on foreign imports. It shares the same spirit of economic independence as the Swadeshi Movement, which also promoted local industries and self-sufficiency. However, while Swadeshi focused on rejecting colonial products during India's freedom struggle, Aatmanirbhar Bharat is a modern strategy aimed at strengthening India's domestic manufacturing, empowering businesses, and making the country more competitive in the global market. Through targeted reforms and initiatives, Aatmanirbhar Bharat seeks to build resilience across sectors and plays a crucial role in shaping the nation's economic future.

- **Production Link Incentive Scheme:**

India has implemented Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes in 14 key sectors, including automotive and auto components, pharmaceuticals, large-scale electronics, medical devices, telecom and networking products, food products, white goods like ACs and LEDs, high-efficiency solar PV modules, textile products, specialty steel, and drones and drone components, in an effort to promote self-reliance in essential goods. The intention is to cultivate leaders in the country's manufacturing sector and draw world-class producers to India.

India's industrial industry has experienced a considerable revival because to the PLI initiatives. The Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) plan has received a considerable allocation from the government in the FY25 budget. It was allocated ₹16,092 crore last year, an 89% increase from ₹8,520 crore the year before. About 38% of this budget is earmarked for the purpose of encouraging large-scale electronics manufacturing as part of the government's larger initiative to boost home production and draw in foreign capital.

The Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative's PLI plan has profoundly changed a number of Indian sectors in addition to encouraging self-reliance. This section will look at some of the most prosperous sectors that have benefited from this initiative:

- **Pharmaceuticals Industry:**

Promoting domestic production of bulk medications and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) is one of the scheme's main objectives. The program, which will cost Rs. 6,940 crore, aims to produce 41 important bulk medications between 2020–2021 and 2029–2030. The revival of Penicillin G production—a critical antibiotic that has not been produced in India for more than thirty years—is a noteworthy achievement under this plan. This change demonstrates how India is working to become self-sufficient again in essential medicinal ingredients.

The PLI scheme aims to promote the medical device industry in addition to medicines. With funding of Rs. 3,420 crore, 26 applications were approved to produce 138 medical products between 2020–2021 and 2027–2028. This shows a deliberate effort to lessen reliance on imports in this sector. The focus on indigenous production is promoting expansion in the national market and establishing India as a prominent medical device exporter.

Results from this initiative have started showing. During 2021–2022, India exported pharmaceuticals worth at Rs. 1,75,040 crore, which included APIs and bulk pharmaceuticals. This development has been made possible in large part by the PLI plan, which promotes foreign investments and supports domestic businesses, reducing the nation's susceptibility to disruptions in global supply chains and boosting its competitiveness in the global market.

- **Defence Industry:**

Historically, between 2016 and 2020, India accounted for 9.5% of all weapons imports worldwide, making it the second-largest importer of weapons. Due to the significant reliance on foreign suppliers, there was a strategic move towards domestic manufacture as a means of highlighting the defence self-reliance. In recent years, there has been a significant transformation in India's defence sector, with a focus on increasing indigenous manufacture and decreasing reliance on foreign sources. The financial year 2023-24's defence budget of Rs 5.13 trillion allotted in previous year.

The notable increase in India's defence exports—which went from Rs 1,521 crore in 2016–17 to Rs 15,980 crore in 2022–2023—has been one of the main achievements of this change. This tenfold growth is indicative of India's increasing ability to manufacture and export defense equipment of the highest caliber. India's defense production for the year ended in August 2022 at Rs 17,885 crore (US\$ 2.24 billion), demonstrating the sector's continued growth.

Through promoting homegrown companies to manufacture essential parts and systems, the nation is gradually decreasing its dependency on imports. Research and development expenditures have reinforced this further, especially in fields like drone technology, precision weaponry, and AI-powered defense systems. These efforts not only strengthen India's military preparedness but also contribute to the growth of the domestic economy by creating jobs and fostering technological advancements.

- **Large-Scale Electronics Manufacturing:**

In order to increase domestic production in India and draw significant investments, the PLI Scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing was introduced in April 2020. The initiative provides a financial reward of 4% to 6% on increased sales for products created in India over a five-year period. Rs 40,951 crore has been set aside to motivate enterprises between FY2021 and FY2026. 32 businesses have benefited from this initiative since it was introduced, including ten producers of mobile phones.

The mobile phone market in India has changed dramatically as a result of this. The nation is currently the second-largest producer of mobile phones worldwide in terms of volume, and it is one of the fastest-growing mobile phone makers worldwide. This has not only increased domestic production but also lessened India's dependency on imports. Mobile imports plummeted by 33% in FY2022, and since FY2021, the nation's reliance on China has substantially reduced. With the help of this program, India is bolstering the expansion of its domestic sector and solidifying its position as a key participant in the global electronics supply chain.

The Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, while ambitious and transformative, faces several challenges and drawbacks. Here are some key points:

Challenges

1. Structural Issues:

- **Infrastructure Deficiencies:** India's infrastructure, including transportation and logistics, needs significant improvement to support large-scale manufacturing and exports.
- **Regulatory Hurdles:** Complex and often inconsistent regulatory frameworks can hinder business operations and deter foreign investment.

2. Skill Gaps:

- **Workforce Skills:** There is a mismatch between the skills possessed by the workforce and those required by modern industries. This gap needs to be addressed through better education and vocational training.

3. Financial Constraints:

- **Access to Capital:** Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) often struggle to access the necessary capital to expand and innovate.
- **Economic Disparities:** Regional economic disparities can limit the uniform implementation of the initiative across the country.

4. Global Trade Dynamics:

- **Trade Barriers:** Protectionist policies can lead to trade barriers from other countries, affecting India's export potential.
- **Global Competition:** Competing with established global players in various industries requires significant improvements in quality and cost-efficiency.

Drawbacks

1. Short-Term Economic Impact:

- **Disruption of Supply Chains:** Shifting focus to local production can initially disrupt existing supply chains, leading to short-term economic challenges.
- **Cost Implications:** Local production might be more expensive than imports, affecting the cost of goods and services.

2. Innovation and Technology:

- **R&D Investment:** Insufficient investment in research and development can hinder technological advancements and innovation.
- **Adoption of New Technologies:** Slow adoption of new technologies in traditional industries can limit productivity gains.

3. Environmental Concerns:

- **Sustainable Practices:** Ensuring that the push for industrial growth does not compromise environmental sustainability is a significant challenge.

While Atmanirbhar Bharat aims to make India self-reliant and globally competitive, it must navigate these challenges and drawbacks to achieve its goals. Addressing infrastructure, regulatory, and skill-related issues, along with fostering innovation and sustainable practices, will be crucial for the initiative's success.

India's push for economic self-reliance under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative interacts with global trade policies and WTO regulations in several significant ways. Here are some key points to consider:

Interaction with Global Trade Policy

1. Protectionist Measures:

- **Tariffs and Import Restrictions:** To boost domestic manufacturing, India has imposed tariffs and import restrictions on various goods. While these measures protect local industries, they can lead to trade disputes and retaliatory tariffs from other countries¹.
- **Export Restrictions:** India has implemented export restrictions on certain goods, such as rice and onions, to stabilize domestic prices. These actions can affect global supply chains and lead to tensions with trading partners¹.

2. Trade Agreements:

- **Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements:** India's focus on self-reliance influences its participation in trade agreements. For instance, India opted out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) to protect its domestic industries². However, India continues to engage in other trade negotiations to balance self-reliance with global trade integration.

Compliance with WTO Regulations

1. Trade Policy Reviews:

- **WTO Oversight:** India's trade policies are regularly reviewed by the WTO to ensure compliance with global trade rules. These reviews assess India's adherence to WTO regulations and provide a platform for addressing any concerns raised by other member countries.

2. Subsidy Programs:

- **Export Subsidies:** India has had to modify its export subsidy programs to comply with WTO rules. For example, the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) was replaced with the Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP) scheme to align with WTO norms.

3. Intellectual Property Rights:

- **TRIPS Agreement:** India must ensure that its intellectual property laws comply with the WTO's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement. This includes balancing the protection of IP rights with the need to promote access to affordable medicines and technology.

Challenges and Opportunities

1. Balancing Protectionism and Global Integration:

- **Challenges:** Protectionist measures can lead to trade disputes and affect India's relationships with trading partners. Balancing self-reliance with global trade integration is a delicate task.
- **Opportunities:** By focusing on self-reliance, India can strengthen its domestic industries and reduce vulnerability to global supply chain disruptions.

2. Innovation and Competitiveness:

- **Challenges:** Ensuring that domestic industries remain competitive on a global scale requires significant investment in innovation and technology.
- **Opportunities:** Policies that promote research and development can enhance India's global competitiveness and drive economic growth.

India's push for economic self-reliance under Atmanirbhar Bharat interacts with global trade policies and WTO regulations in complex ways. While protectionist measures can protect domestic industries, they must be balanced with compliance to WTO rules and global trade dynamics to ensure sustainable economic growth.

Conclusion:

Madan Mohan Malviya's vision of Swadeshi remains profoundly relevant in contemporary India, particularly through initiatives like Aatmanirbhar Bharat. His call for economic self-reliance, once a strategy for resisting colonial exploitation, now echoes in the policies aimed at reducing import dependency and revitalizing indigenous industries. The success of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme across key sectors such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, and defense illustrate how modern India continues to draw inspiration from Malviya's ideals.

This study demonstrates that the essence of Malviya's Swadeshi movement—promoting local industries and reducing reliance on foreign goods—aligns seamlessly with Aatmanirbhar Bharat's objectives. While Malviya championed indigenous products to foster national pride and economic strength during colonial rule, today's government initiatives similarly seek to bolster India's position in the global market by empowering domestic industries. By prioritizing self-sufficiency, the country is better equipped to navigate the challenges of global supply chain disruptions, geopolitical tensions, and economic volatility.

To build upon this legacy, it is critical that policymakers continue to focus on sustainable development models that promote innovation, education, and skill development—key aspects of Malviya's vision. Further investment in technology-driven industries, alongside efforts to enhance the quality and competitiveness of India's products, will ensure that the country not only meets domestic demands but also becomes a leading exporter in the global marketplace. Additionally, collaboration between public and private sectors, and fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem, will be essential for the long-term success of these efforts.

While Malviya's Swadeshi vision and Atmanirbhar Bharat share the common goal of economic self-reliance, they differ in their approaches, challenges, and the global contexts in which they operate. Malviya's efforts laid the foundation for a self-reliant India, and the modern Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative builds on this legacy by integrating advanced technology and global trade dynamics.

Madan Mohan Malviya's ethical and moral values were foundational to his vision for Swadeshi and economic self-reliance. His commitment to Sanatana Dharma, selfless service, and moral education shaped his efforts to promote indigenous goods, develop industries, and ensure social equity. These values continue to resonate in the principles of Atmanirbhar Bharat, reflecting a legacy of ethical and moral leadership.

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