



## **A Study on Political Philosophy of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a leading figure in India's quest for independence and his political thought exemplifies a rare combination of practical statecraft, administrative prowess, and steadfast devotion to national unity. Based on his views on cooperative federalism, disciplined government, and strong central power, this paper analyses Patel's political philosophy. It delves into how his early exposure to self-governance, the liberation movement, and Mahatma Gandhi's teachings shaped his pragmatic yet forceful political stance. His role in uniting princely kingdoms stands out as an example of his pragmatic approach to politics, which was based on serving the interests of the nation and making the most efficient use of government resources. By examining Patel's ideas on social harmony, economic development, public service, democracy, and unity in the Indian state, this study demonstrates how his vision had a profound impact on these areas. This research endeavours to elucidate Patel's political theory and its lasting impact on modern Indian government by analysing speeches, historical records, and secondary sources.

**Keywords:** *Courageous, Unity, Pragmatic, Democracy, Political.*

### **Introduction**

Among modern Indian political thinkers and intellectuals, Vallabhbhai Patel stands out as a strong and courageous character. In his pursuit of the "best political life," he conceptualized a model state and a network of linkages between the state and individuals based on the idea of human nature. The political theorist describes the perfect state based on his understanding of human nature in an effort to explain contemporary political developments. The model state's design and construction are guided by the state-individual relationship's nature and purpose.

Two branches of political philosophy exist: the more traditional, idealist school and the more modern, empirical school. Ideas regarding the structure and functioning of the state, as well as the connection between the state and the person, can be formulated by contrasting two viewpoints, such as the organic viewpoint and the mechanistic viewpoint. The people are considered as nothing more than a component of the state, which is viewed as an organic whole from an organic viewpoint. Therefore, people are not seen as ends in themselves but as means to an end—a means to help the state achieve its goals. While Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Gandhi, and Nehru have all been the subjects of scholarly publications, Patel has largely gone unnoticed. According to Sikata Panda's "Political

Ideas of Vallabhbhai Patel," the late Indian political philosopher stands apart from his contemporaries. Considerations of equality, fairness, liberty, and rights are all part of the book's analysis of his political beliefs.

Devoted to Gandhi, Patel planned relief for Pakistani refugees fleeing to Punjab and Delhi and fought for a return to peace. As the man tasked with uniting India, he succeeded in making the British colonial provinces that had been "allocated" to India a part of the independent nation. Patel was instrumental in getting almost all of the princely kingdoms to ally with India. He received the moniker "Iron Man of India" because to his dogged pursuit of national unity in the newly independent country. Additionally, he is considered the "Patron saint of India's civil servants" due to his creation of the present-day all-India services system.

A unified framework for political thought, these theories outline a path to the Best Political Life by concentrating on the Ideal State or Ideal Political Society and providing guidelines for getting there. Consequently, it's all about "the search for the principles of the good state and the good society," as Andrew Hacker puts it. According to William T. Bluhm, it pertains to the "search for meaning in society and politics" as well. Thus, political thought is the product of intellectual labor; it reveals the aspirations and principles of the thinkers on the role of the state and politics.

While elucidating contemporary political phenomena, the political theorist uses his own personal view of man to sketch forth the ideal state. Thus, his model state and the pattern of state-individual relationship that he intends to achieve Ideal Political Lives are predicated on the idea of Human Nature. Using either the deductive or inductive approach might, of course, lead to the formation of basic assumptions and postulates about human nature. Both approaches involve reasoning, but inductive reasoning is grounded in facts and reality, whereas deductive reasoning is more intuitive and speculative.

Vallabhbhai is one of many distinguished academics, politicians, and statesmen whose work has enhanced modern Indian political thought. He was the undisputed ruler of India's political landscape between 1917 and 1950, marking the height of modern India's political leadership. He did his time for the nation in a number of different ways. He gave his all to the freedom movement in the years leading up to independence.

Afterwards, he was instrumental in turning the then-most-powerful political party, the Indian National Congress, into a well-structured, mass-based corporation. During its fight for independence, he was a strong leader. After India gained its independence from Britain on August 15, 1947, Vallabhbhai was given responsibility for the Home and States portfolios, which were considered very vital and delicate.

## **Review of Literature**

**Vijay Srivastava and Sapan Asthana (2023)**, one needs to grasp political economy concepts in order to contextualize Sardar Patel's socioeconomic theories. Although Sardar Patel had legal training, he had a vision for the political and economic advancement of the nation. He developed his economic ideas while adopting a Gandhian outlook. His vision of society and politics revolves around Gandhian political and economic ideals. In his writings, he covered topics such as conflict resolution, Satyagraha, constructive programs, democratic principles, and the idea of a country,



pluralism, freedom, and the significance of Swadeshi, the necessity of industrialization, economic relationships, and the dignity of labor, among others. His socioeconomic theories were affected by the sentiments and practical elements of the Indian national movements against British rule, but the principles of political economy might help us grasp his vision for a new India. It's important to comprehend political economy issues in order to fully appreciate Sardar Patel's economic theories, who served as India's first home minister after independence. Unlike Gandhiji, Sardar Patel had a profound understanding of society and politics despite not having a background in economics. Based on this comprehension, he has brought up numerous crucial political economy issues in his lectures, papers, and stimulating legislative debates. He thought about the economic problems connected to India's political and economic integration. His perspectives on the crucial elements of Gandhian political economy were far-reaching. A study of his writings demonstrates how highly esteemed a Gandhian economist he is. He made numerous policy recommendations while maintaining his position on the functioning system of values, foreign policy, Panchayati Raj, and democratic institutions. In the discussions of the Constituent Assembly, he brought up these crucial political and economic issues. Today's moment calls for a deeper examination of these discussions in order to better understand and ponder his economic ideas. It is necessary to revisit and rediscover his economic ideas at this time, when all of the world's economies are based on liberalization principles, capitalist forces are once again threatening the value of labor, the pluralistic idea is in crisis, and economic and social inequality are rising. Patel's economic philosophy places a strong emphasis on the founding of Gandhi's Sarvodayi Samaj in the context of socialism. He had the same views on small-scale methods for promoting production as Vinoba Bhave, Kumarappa, and Schumacher. He was a fervent advocate of Gandhi's economic philosophy, which holds that industrialization centered in villages will lead to the emergence of a non-violent economic civilization. The communist economy would run more smoothly, he said, with "necessary industrialization" and against nationalizing industries. He thought that "essential industrialization" produced capital. He also believed that Marx's concept of socialism originated in the West. This western socialism, in his opinion, was not beneficial to eastern civilizations. He viewed political integration as a crucial component of economic integration in the context of national integration and nationalization. According to him, political integration is a prerequisite for national integration. His notion of plurality is intertwined with his notion of national unity.

**Sonia (2022)** made it clear that by incorporating Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's idea of nation-building with Indian politics, this essay aimed to analyze that idea. One of the important figures in the development of the newly independent India was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He was a visionary and courageous individual who was prepared to face the difficulties and offer leadership. He was a key player in the union of the princely states into the Indian Union thanks to his profound awareness of the subject. Despite his lofty position as India's Iron Man, Patel emphasized the significance of bringing about social change. The administrative framework of independent India received leadership and direction from Sardar Patel, who also gave it the new mission of fostering national progress. The purpose of this essay is to inform the public about Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's significant socio-political contributions to nation-building. Sardar Patel's statesmanship and strict

leadership are primarily responsible for the India we think and talk about today. The research study used descriptive methods in two steps, which included a survey of the literature and an analysis of secondary data. The essay relies heavily on secondary data that is compiled from published books, magazines, articles, and the internet in order to accomplish its goals.

**Chitranjan Kumar (2022)** looked into why Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was dubbed "Iron Man" for his dedication to the nation, social work, and patriotism, as well as his resolve, self-assurance, determined power, unshakable power, steadfast faith, and devotion to work. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who was born on October 31, 1875, in Kheda, Gujarat, came from a modest farming family. He has always excelled in hard work and bravery, and in 1910 he passed the law test with a first-class grade, for which he was also awarded Rs 750. Beginning in 1917, Sardar Patel actively participated in national politics. He traveled to Bardoli in 1920 to protest the Jallianwala-Bagh slaughter, spurred by Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha movement, and began working there for the rest of his life to secure India's freedom.

**Iqbal, A. et al. (2022)** this article examines Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's political contributions to the Indian independence cause. Few political leaders in South Asian history have ever done what was required of them based on their ideology alone. They included Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Without any institutional or financial motivation, he selflessly offered his services to aid India in its fight for independence. Since he seems to have had a role in facilitating political integration, that process is one of the aims of this paper. This article takes a look at the political processes in pre-independence India and tries to figure out if his ideological leanings and other criteria for the time are compatible and harmonious. Such a question calls for an understanding of his role in the subsequent leadership styles of the Indian independence struggle. To examine his political involvement during the movement in enriching the growth and level of politics in India, the leadership approach has been used for this specific research aim. The investigation's methodology is historical-interpretive. It is important to consider that he never let his affiliation with the All-India National Congress Party deter him from working to free an undivided India from colonialism. Even though India was ultimately divided, his activism against colonialism has left a lasting legacy.

**T.Balasubramanian and A. Balu (2021)** found evidence that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was involved in other protests following the Satyagraha. His relationship with Gandhi was further cemented by this. In the struggle for independence, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was instrumental in many ways. Because of his confrontational behavior, he spent a lot of time behind bars. He remained very motivated despite serving lengthy prison terms. Getting the British out of India was Patel's top priority. He had an intense and profound devotion to his nation. The great Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was an ambitious and self-reliant man. When it came to his work, he nearly never required anybody else's help. A man who contributed to the nation's unity was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The tools to rebel against the British authority were given to them by him. A hero who battled for India's independence, known as "The Iron Man" He took part in multiple protests against the authorities of India. During the Satyagraha in Gujarat, Patel became a member of the Quit India Movement and accompanied Mahatma Gandhi. He became a prominent figure in the Indian National Congress after

joining the group. In many respects, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was an inspiration to the people of the country. He was considered a self-made man as he did not depend on anyone. Patel was one of the most beloved leaders of the country because of his people-friendly personality. He was instrumental in uniting the countrymen. Following India's independence, his clout in politics increased. After being selected to be India's Home Minister, he was then appointed to the position of Deputy Prime Minister. He was selected before anyone else for both positions. He had a key role in bringing the country together. The unification of India's states was mostly the brainchild of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He wholeheartedly believed in the One Nation Theory, the philosophical foundation of India's legal system.

**T. Balasubramanian and V. Venkatraman (2020)**, An influential figure in Indian politics, Patel helped establish the Republic of India and was a well-known lawyer in India. He spearheaded the independence movement and saw it through to its eventual unification into a single sovereign nation. As a result, Nehru was invited by the British administration to head the Interim administration. Perhaps Sardar Patel could have served as the nation's first Prime Minister if he had been elected as the Congress' President. Sardar Patel served as the Deputy Prime Minister, Home Minister, Information Minister, and Minister of State for the country's first three years after independence. Despite not being India's first prime minister, Sardar Patel will always be remembered as the man who brought the country of India together. He was India's first deputy prime minister following the country's independence. Patel was chosen to serve as India's Home Minister on the country's first anniversary of independence. Additionally, he was in charge of the State Department and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Patel organized relief efforts for refugees fleeing from Punjab and Delhi while serving as India's first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. He also sought to restore calm.

**Nishu Sharma and Rajeev Kumar (2019)** Sardar Patel was examined by him to see if he was a person of strong character and diligence in a variety of national interest sectors. He had both a realistic and optimistic outlook on India's long-term security and the changing geopolitical landscape. As a nation-builder, he was profoundly affected by the historical circumstances surrounding his consideration and resolution of India's diplomatic challenges. He was aware of the 'cold war' phenomenon and how it affected the rivalry between major nations in terms of geopolitics. Patel was an advocate for democracy and opposed Communism. At a time when regional and global geopolitical factors significantly impacted India's foreign policy as a whole, this article seeks to analyze Sardar Patel's perspective on the globe. In actuality, his contribution to the development of India's foreign policy was crucial to the stabilization and very survival of India as a country. If one were to follow Patel's writings and opinions on international relations, they would undoubtedly come to the conclusion that anytime Nehru, who had a global perspective and cared about his reputation abroad, disregarded Patel's counsel on international matters, the entire nation suffered. India today is, in his own words, "surrounded by all kinds of dangers," and it is up to the populace to bravely confront them all.



**Shobha N. (2018)** maintained that India's freedom was marred by a myriad of social and political issues. The nation's leaders were confronted with a climate charged with numerous and varied criticisms. If not addressed immediately, these issues would have become more complicated. Faced with a plethora of issues of varying magnitudes, the leaders had to figure out how to face reality and find a solution that would be good for the nation. Even though they initially appeared to be of trivial character, minorities' issues turned out to be quite important. And Sardar Patel, with his amazing intelligence and capacity, could come up with a workable solution to win back their trust, guiding them toward their shared objective of national unity. In addition, a more serious issue occurred as a result of British policies towards the more than 500 Princely States, whose precise standing following the British withdrawal remained unclear. India and Pakistan were founded as two separate countries as a direct result of their independence. The local rulers were free to choose which of the two suggested nations they wanted to join. A nation with as many Free states as it does could never have imagined political consolidation in such a setting. Those princes might have joined forces to establish a third force, which would have led to its dissolution rather than greater consolidation. Sardar Patel was given the task of finding a solution in light of the critical and complicated situation because the Congress party had worked to foster political awakening and democratic thinking in the minds of people from all spheres of society in the nation. Sardar Patel had the important task of awakening the people of those states to the importance of politics and convincing their rulers to become part of India's union so that the country might emerge stronger and more united when the British left. Subtly, via the use of privy purses, polite advice, and, on occasion, strong administrative actions, he managed to unite all the kings in merging their states into the Indian Union, all without resorting to violence. Thus, Sardar Patel's capable and powerful hands helped the final mission of nation-building succeed.

**S. Shirsat (2018)**, The contemporary Indian nation may trace its ancestry back to the heroic Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a legendary freedom fighter. He established order for a fledgling nation's populace. His impact on the country's progress is unparalleled. As an organizer, Patel excelled because he was a realistic man by temperament, background, and personality. Sardar Patel had the extraordinary talent of combining roles that are often performed by multiple people with diverse backgrounds and differing views. He was an exceptional leader and founder of the Congress Party, and he was also an effective administrator who united India at a time of great instability.

**Shailja Mishra's (2017)** According to research Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is a name that we are all quite familiar with. He made a substantial impact on the progress of the country. In addition to being India's first minister of home affairs, he served as the country's first deputy prime minister. When India gained its independence, the country was in the midst of a civil war caused by internal divisions. Millions of innocent Indians perished as a result of the partition, and India bore the cost. Sardar Patel was tasked with uniting the nation in such a situation. Only during times of peace can a nation be built, and in order for there to be peace, everything needs to be well organized. The most important qualities of a nation are its integrity and cohesiveness. India was divided into a number of Princely States during the British Empire. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was tasked with uniting these princely republics. These states were effectively incorporated into India thanks to him. He was also a member of the Constituent Assembly, making him

one of the main designers of India's current Constitution. This essay makes an effort to highlight Sardar Patel's contributions to national unification, constitution-making, the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Affairs portfolios, his role as the Army's Supreme Commander-in-Chief, and his ideas for resolving the current Jammu and Kashmir crisis.

**S. Ananthakrishnan (2014)**, The concept of "Integral Humanism" seems to form the bedrock of Indian political philosophy, while contemporary Indian political thinkers have explored this relationship from other angles. Intellectual discussions on Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Gandhi, and Nehru often fail to mention Patel. According to Sikata Panda's work, "Political Ideas of Vallabhbhai Patel," Vallabhbhai Patel stands out in the development of Indian political thinking. On the one hand, the book delves into his political views in light of rights and liberty, justice and equality on the other. Between 1917 and 1950, Sardar Patel controlled Indian politics, devoted his life to the cause of freedom, and restructured the Indian National Congress. He oversaw delicate ministries, including Home and the States after Independence.

**Goel, S.L. (2013)** looked at how effective a politician, administrator, and diplomat Sardar Patel was. Sardar Patel is considered one of the finest orators of his time. He was a man of impeccable character, intelligence, and patriotism. He prevailed in his argument against the secretary of State that Indian personnel had a duty to continue serving their nation after independence and could not choose to "retire" with a generous pension. In his own case, he has no reluctance to provide the All-India Services with the essential assurance because he is aware that protecting service conditions is the customary policy of all contemporary governments. Today, with the elimination of the ICS's purported "privileges". It is crucial to recall the Sardar's viewpoint expressed in the Constituent Assembly with regard to these safeguards for officers, who are expressly protected by the Constitution.

## Conclusion

A strong monument to reality, discipline, and unfaltering patriotism is Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's political ideology. Balancing idealism with actual action, his pragmatic approach to government was influenced by his background in administration and the moral teachings of Gandhi. The historic integration of the princely kingdoms was Patel's way of realizing his dream of a powerful, unified India. This action reflected his conviction that strong national unity is the bedrock of democratic advancement and political stability.

Elements that continue to shape India's system of government, such as cooperative federalism, a meritocracy in the civil service, and efficient administration, are emphasized in this study of Patel. Accountability, national security, and social cohesiveness are three of his key points that are still very much discussed in today's political climate. The importance of disciplined institutions and responsible citizenship in a democratic society was something Patel understood.

A focus on administrative efficiency, a dedication to realism, an emphasis on individual responsibility, and a keen awareness of the importance of the nation's future were the main tenets of Sardar Patel's political philosophy. His lasting legacy is rich with lessons for politicians seeking to strengthen democratic institutions and preserve national unity, as well as insights into the formation of the Indian state.



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