

**Original Article**

# From Headwear to Hashtag: The Gandhian Cap's Revival in Socio-Political Movements

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**Abstract**

The study examines the remarkable transformation of the Gandhian cap from a physical emblem of India's independence struggle to a potent digital symbol in contemporary activism. Originally embodying Mahatma Gandhi's principles of non-violence, self-reliance, and cultural pride, the simple white khadi cap has transcended its historical context to become a powerful icon in modern socio-political discourse. Through a qualitative research methodology incorporating historical analysis, archival documents, and case studies of recent movements, we trace how this symbol of resistance has been reimagined for the digital age. The research reveals how social media platforms have amplified the cap's cultural resonance, enabling it to foster new narratives of solidarity and collective action through hashtag activism. The cap's digital resurrection is particularly evident in movements ranging from anti-corruption campaigns to environmental advocacy, where its historical gravitas lends legitimacy to contemporary causes. By functioning simultaneously as a cultural artefact and a vehicle for modern expression, the Gandhian cap creates a symbolic bridge between India's freedom struggle and present-day social challenges. Our findings contribute to understanding how traditional symbols adapt to digital environments while maintaining their core virtues. The Gandhian cap's journey illustrates the dynamic interplay between cultural heritage and digital innovation, demonstrating how historical icons can be revitalized to inspire inclusive political engagement and ethical consciousness in an increasingly digitized world.

**Keywords:** Gandhian cap, digital activism, cultural sustainability, social media, non-violence, fashion activism, symbolic power, hashtag activism

**Themes:** Cultural Symbol Evolution; Digital Re-imagination of Traditional Icons; Sustainable Fashion for Social Change; Social Media Activism and Heritage Preservation

**Introduction**

The Gandhian cap has evolved from a simple khadi headwear symbolizing India's independence struggle to a digital icon in modern movements. This transformation links India's anti-colonial legacy with contemporary hashtag activism, raising questions about the effectiveness of virtual symbols in sustaining real-world resistance.

*The Gandhian cap, or Gandhi Topi, is a white khadi sidecap named after Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of India's independence movement. A potent emblem during the freedom struggle, it continues to hold political and cultural significance in India.*

**Headwear as Heritage**

Made from khadi, the cap signified the rejection of colonial industrialization and embodied simplicity, unity, and moral authority. Its accessibility made it popular among both peasants and intellectuals, establishing a strong symbolic foundation that persists in the digital age.

**Cap's Origin**

**Khadi Movement:** The cap's origins lie in Gandhi's Khadi movement, promoting hand-spun cloth as a symbol of self-reliance and defiance against British industrial dominance.

**Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-1922):** During this movement, Gandhi popularized khadi to boycott British goods. The cap, made from khadi, thus became both practical and symbolic. Adoption and Popularity

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**Freedom Fighters:** Worn widely by freedom fighters, it represented simplicity, resistance, and unity.

**Political Symbol:** Over time, the cap evolved beyond its practical use to become an enduring political symbol of India's independence movement.

#### **Hashtag as Hybrid Activism**

In the 2010s, the cap saw a digital resurgence through hashtags like #IAmAnna and #FarmersProtest. Social media transformed it into a virtual emblem via profile filters, memes, and AR tools, enabling global participation beyond geographical and socioeconomic boundaries. While hashtags democratized solidarity, they also risk reducing meaningful activism to superficial "Clicktivism."

**Clicktivism** is a type of digital activism where individuals support social or political causes via online actions, such as signing petitions, sharing social media content, or joining hashtag campaigns. It harnesses digital platforms' speed and reach to boost awareness and rally support. Critics, however, call it "slacktivism," arguing it fosters shallow engagement that rarely translates into tangible change, unlike traditional activism like protests. In socio-political movements, clicktivism could promote symbols like the Gandhian cap through hashtags, though its depth of impact is questioned.

(URL Source - Retrieved from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/05/19/the-brave-new-world-of-slacktivism/>)



*Image 1—Hashtag Avatar of Gandhi Cap*

#### **Paradox of Pixelated Protest**

Digital activism provides visibility but remains subject to corporate algorithms. The farmers' protests highlighted this paradox—while hashtags globalized awareness, real-world demonstrations drove policy change. Though scalable, digital symbols lack the emotional and communal impact of physical protest symbols.

The Gandhian cap's journey exemplifies how historical symbols adapt in the digital age. The most effective movements merge digital reach with physical presence, using technology's scale while preserving the depth and solidarity that material symbols generate—affirming the ongoing relevance of Indian heritage in evolving activism.

#### **Background of the Gandhian Cap**

The Gandhi Topi, a simple white khadi cap, stood for non-violent resistance and national unity during India's freedom struggle (Tarlo, 1996). It grew into a potent symbol of protest, uniting people across various movements (Whitehead, 2014). Gandhi's push for khadi and the Swadeshi movement gave the cap its lasting importance (Guha, 2018). Over decades, it has evolved with changing socio-political tides (Trivedi, 2007). This study explores how the Gandhian cap remains relevant in today's activism. In the digital era, such historical symbols are repurposed for modern struggles, linking visual identity, politics, and online mobilization (Jenkins, 2008). Examining this shift shows how movements adapt old symbols for new purposes, deepening our grasp of political messaging (Mani, 2014).

#### **Research Objectives**

1. Explore the Gandhian cap's historical and cultural evolution
2. Investigate its post-independence decline, revival, and adaptation
3. Analyse its role in socio-political movements, both offline and online
4. Assess digital platforms' role in expanding its reach beyond geographical boundaries
5. Understand how hashtags and digital media amplify its symbolic relevance
6. Document its transformation from physical artefact to "visual hashtag" in online campaigns

#### **Research Methodology**

The study uses a qualitative design, merging historical analysis with digital media studies to explore the Gandhian cap's symbolic shift from a physical object to a digital hashtag. Qualitative methods excel at revealing how cultural items evolve within socio-political settings. The research tracks the cap's transformation from its roots in India's independence struggle to its role in online activism. It highlights the interplay of historical memory and new media in redefining political symbols, a process well-suited to qualitative inquiry (Mani, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

The study employs qualitative case study analysis to examine the Gandhian cap's socio-political evolution (Creswell, 2014). Data sources include archival records, social media metrics, and interviews with activists. Thematic coding identified patterns in symbolic reinterpretation across movements (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### **Methods Used**

**Historical Analysis:** Historical analysis draws on archival records, political speeches, and press coverage from colonial and post-independence times. It investigates how the cap became a powerful emblem of non-violence, self-reliance, and unity during India's freedom movement.

**Case Study Analysis:** Case studies examine movements such as the 2011 anti-corruption protests and recent environmental campaigns (Mani, 2014). They reveal how activists use the cap's imagery online and offline to signal honesty, non-violence, and solidarity in varied contexts.

**Thematic Analysis:** Thematic analysis codes historical and digital content under categories like political identity and cultural symbolism (Tarlo, 1996). This iterative approach uncovers evolving meanings of the cap, enriching insights into its role in digital activism.

### **The Gandhian Cap: A Symbol Across Generations**

#### **Historical Origins**

The Gandhian cap, or "Gandhi Topi," began with India's Swadeshi and Non-Cooperation Movements. Crafted from khadi, it embodied self-reliance, non-violence, and Indian identity, as Gandhi urged its use to boost local industry and defy British imports (Tarlo, 1996; Guha, 2018). More than clothing, it was a bold call for economic and political freedom. Worn widely in protests and rallies, it united diverse groups, turning complex ideas into a clear symbol (Whitehead, 2014). The cap thus became a lasting image of civil disobedience and moral strength.

#### **The Cap as a Post-Independence Political Symbol**

After 1947, the Gandhian cap stayed vital in Indian politics. Leaders like Nehru and Shastri wore it at public events and official gatherings, keeping its symbolic weight alive (Mani, 2014). It reflected non-violence and equality, echoing Gandhi's ideals of integrity and simplicity (Tarlo, 1996). Yet, some critics felt its frequent use—sometimes just for show—weakened its authenticity (Whitehead, 2014). Still, its acceptance across parties showed its deep roots as a marker of freedom and responsibility in public life.

#### **Decline and Re-Emergence in Modern Activism**

By the late 20th century, the Gandhian cap faded as India modernized and Western styles took over, often seen only at ceremonial events (Guha, 2018; Tarlo, 1996). But recently, it's made a comeback in movements like anti-corruption campaigns, signalling trust and a revival of Gandhian values. In protests, it unites people across age and class. Digital platforms, with hashtags and viral posts, have spread its message worldwide (Mani, 2014). This revival proves how old symbols can gain new life in today's digital activism.

### **The Gandhian Cap in Contemporary Movements**

#### **Revived Symbolism in Political Activism**

In 2011, Anna Hazare's agitation drive for the Lokpal Bill rallied millions across India, with the Gandhian cap emerging as a potent symbol of integrity and non-violence (Mani, 2014). By wearing it, Hazare tied his protest to Gandhi's vision of ethical governance, a connection scholars say unites activists through shared cultural stories (Whitehead, 2014).

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), born from Hazare's campaign, turned the cap into a populist icon with slogans like "Main Hoon Aam Aadmi" ("I am the common man") (Guha, 2018). Social media amplified this message, as viral images of cap-wearing volunteers fuelled AAP's narrative of transparency and grassroots power (Tarlo, 1996).

**Role in Non-Political Social Movements** The cap transcends politics, uniting farmers and workers in their struggles (Whitehead, 2014). In recent farmers' protests, it embodied *Satyagraha*, linking rural and urban voices for just policies. For labour activists, it signals dignity and fair pay, echoing Gandhi's core values (Tarlo, 1996). Environmentalists have recast the cap's khadi heritage as a banner for sustainability. Its eco-friendly roots challenge fast fashion and pollution, evolving its meaning from anti-colonial resistance to ecological duty (Guha, 2018; Mani, 2014).

#### **The Gandhian Cap and Fashion Activism**

Designers now craft the cap as a bold statement, merging tradition with modern flair to promote activism (Whitehead, 2014). Khadi cap collections spotlight artisanal skill and sustainability, defying fast fashion trends. More than a symbol, the cap sustains culture by preserving weaving traditions (Tarlo, 1996). Its hashtag-driven presence online sparks talks on fair trade and equity, bridging activism, digital culture, and ethical choices (Guha, 2018; Mani, 2014).

#### **The Digital Age: Hashtags, Memes, and Online Protest**

Social media has turned the Gandhian cap from a tangible object into a digital emblem of protest. This section delves into its online transformation, the rise of hashtag activism, and how virtual movements spark real-world change through viral messages and connected communities.

#### **The Cap's Digital Transformation**

Social media breathed new life into the Gandhian cap, fusing its historical meaning with digital rebellion. In 2011, during Anna Hazare's anti-corruption campaign, the "I Am Anna" movement spread the cap's image across online platforms and streets, creating a viral symbol of defiance ([en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org); [business-standard.com](https://business-standard.com)). Activists crafted memes and hashtags like #NonViolence, tying digital creativity to Gandhi's ideals. People added the cap to profile pictures or used AR filters to "wear" it virtually, making participation accessible to all. This shift highlights how old symbols gain fresh power through modern media to fuel socio-political causes.

#### **The Power of Hashtags and Viral Messaging**

Hashtag activism brings global voices together with short, sharp tags. Goswami (2018) describes it as using social media to drive socio-political change through easy involvement. Tags like #SwadeshiRevolution and #NonViolence echo Gandhian values, while #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter prove hashtags can resonate worldwide (Dobrin, 2020; Bestvater et al., 2023).

Catchy slogans turn complex issues into shareable ideas, dodging traditional media filters. For instance, #Ferguson and #HandsUpDontShoot exposed police brutality and uplifted unheard voices (Bonilla & Rosa, 2015; Goswami, 2018). Yet, "slacktivism" threatens to water down real effort (Smith, 2024). Truly effective campaigns pair hashtags with offline action for solid results.

### Bridging Digital and Real-World Activism

Online campaigns often ignite physical protests. The Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street, born on the web, show this power (Goswami, 2018, p. 4; en.wikipedia.org). In India, the 2011 anti-corruption drive used social media to rally nationwide marches (Khan, 2012). Climate efforts like Fridays for Future keep energy alive with memes, growing online networks and political involvement (Johann et al., 2023). Influencers like Rihanna and Greta Thunberg wield digital fame to sway policy in the real world (joyojeet.people.si.umich.edu; Sabherwal et al., 2021). Though 26% of U.S. social media users push political action online (pewresearch.org), lasting impact demands blending viral posts with grassroots work.

The Gandhian cap's comeback reveals how tradition meets technology. Hashtags and memes elevate it into a global symbol, while digital tools lift local struggles onto a world stage. But Gandhi taught that ideals must move beyond words into deeds. Today's activism thrives by merging online buzz with real-world effort, ensuring the cap inspires both clicks and bold action. The Tabulation show the cap's metamorphosis into digital emblem.

Focus Area	Key Insights	Examples / Case Studies	Digital Mechanisms	Impact/Outcome
<b>The Cap's Digital Transformation</b>	- Gandhian cap evolves from a tangible protest symbol to a <b>digital icon</b> .	- Anna Hazare's 2011 anti-corruption movement: The "I Am Anna" campaign displayed on profile pictures and circulated internationally.	- Photo/video sharing on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.	- Increases global engagement with local protests.
	- Social media enables widespread visibility; sharing images of the cap online popularizes it globally.	- Cap silhouette overlays on social posts to invoke Gandhian ideals.	- Digital overlays/memes of the cap.	- Empowers remote supporters to "wear" the cap symbolically.
	- Activists use cap imagery to align with Gandhian values of <b>nonviolence</b> and <b>integrity</b> .			- Encourages moral framing of anti-corruption or ethical campaigns.
<b>The Power of Hashtags and Viral Messaging</b>	- <b>Hashtag activism</b> reduces barriers to participation.	- #NonViolence used in calls for peaceful protest at local and global events.	- Mass tweeting, retweeting, and "liking" amplify hashtags to trending topics.	- Creates <b>collective identity</b> in digital spaces.
	- Short, memorable tags unify conversations; can mobilize large audiences quickly.	- #SwadeshiRevolution can be adapted by eco-conscious groups to stress indigenous production methods.	- Media coverage increases with viral spikes.	- Can lead to offline demonstrations (e.g., BLM, Occupy Wall Street).
	- Slogan-driven hashtags (e.g., #GandhianCap, #NonViolence, #SwadeshiRevolution) can become digital rallying cries.	- Global parallels: #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, #HandsUpDontShoot, showing how short phrases can become movements.		- Risk of "slacktivism" if not followed by on-ground action.
<b>Bridging Digital and Real-World Activism</b>	- Social media platforms offer <b>logistical infrastructure</b> for organizing mass protests.	- Arab Spring (2011) used Facebook/Twitter for protest coordination.	- Event pages, pinned posts, retweet chains signal real-life gatherings.	- Rapid scaling up of protests from small local gatherings to national or global movements.
	- Continuous online engagement fosters momentum, turning passive supporters into active participants	- Occupy Wall Street (#Occupy) spread from NYC to 900+ cities worldwide.	- Influencer activism, e.g., celebrity endorsements, helps mainstream issues quickly.	- Potential "slacktivism" if no real-world follow-through.
	- Influencers (celebrities, content creators) catalyse awareness, converting digital reach into on-ground impact.	- Rihanna's single tweet about the Indian farmers' protests in 2021 triggered international attention		- Sustained digital presence ensures ongoing pressure on policymakers.
		- Greta Thunberg's #FridaysForFuture climate strikes mobilized youth offline		

**Table -1** The Digital Age: The Hashtags of Online Protest

In the digital age, the Gandhian cap transformed into an online protest symbol, as seen in Anna Hazare's 2011 movement. Hashtags like #NonViolence amplified this, unifying global conversations. Social media facilitated real-world activism, exemplified by the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street. Yet, *Slacktivism* risks diluting on-ground efforts.



Image 2 – Cap Hashtags

### Case Studies: The Gandhian Cap in Digital Action

#### Case Study 1: Anna Hazare's Anti-Corruption Movement (2011)

Anna Hazare's 2011 hunger strike reignited the Gandhian cap as a beacon of nonviolent dissent. Mirroring Gandhi's imagery, Hazare's white cap and hunger strike at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan united protesters under slogans like "I am Anna" (Whitehead, 2014). The cap symbolized grassroots defiance, merging street protests with digital campaigns. Hashtags like #JanLokpal and #AnnaHazare trended globally, framing Hazare as a modern Gandhi (Press Trust of India, 2011). Social media amplified petitions and protest videos, transforming the cap into a viral emblem of youth-led anti-corruption demands (Rezwan, 2011).

**Case Study 2: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Political Branding** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) weaponized the Gandhian cap to craft its "common man" identity. Arvind Kejriwal's caps, inscribed with "मेरा देश, मेरा अधिकार" (My Country, My Right), became synonymous with anti-establishment politics (Whitehead, 2014). Supporters donned caps at rallies, while critics mocked them as "topi pehnana" (deception). Memes like #MufflerMan reimagined Kejriwal's cap as a superhero accessory, blending satire with defiance. By 2014, the cap symbolized AAP's challenge to traditional parties, prompting rivals to adopt competing slogans.

#### Case Study 3: Farmers' Protests and Unity

The 2020–2021 farmers' protests revived the Gandhian cap as a bridge between generations. Elderly farmers wore it to evoke India's independence struggle, while younger activists used #FarmersProtest to globalize their cause (Haq, 2021). Celebrities like Rihanna amplified the movement, linking agrarian rights to Gandhian nonviolence. Live streams and folk songs on TikTok turned local protests into global dialogues, blending physical endurance with digital storytelling.

#### Case Study 4: Meme Activism and Digital Reinterpretation

Memes have redefined the Gandhian cap as a tool of digital satire and critique. From Gandhi-themed AR filters to AAP's #MufflerMan, the cap symbolizes integrity and rebellion (Pandian, 2014). However, its adoption as "radical chic" fashion risks diluting its ethical weight. Yet, even satirical uses—like mocking "topi pehnana"—acknowledge its enduring role in India's protest lexicon.

### Gandhian Cap in Modern Socio-Political Movements: Comparative Analysis

Parameter	Anna Hazare Movement (2011)	AAP Political Branding (2013-14)	Farmers' Protests (2020-21)	Meme Activism (Ongoing)
Primary Function	Symbol of anti-corruption resistance	Political brand identity	Intergenerational solidarity symbol	Tool for satire and critique
Physical Manifestation	White cap worn during hunger strikes	Caps with political slogans distributed at rallies	Worn primarily by elderly protesters	Digital reimagining through visual media
Digital Presence	Hashtags: #JanLokpal, #AnnaHazare, #ISupportAnnaHazare	#MufflerMan meme phenomenon	#FarmersProtest with global reach	Memes, filters, profile pictures
Key Actors	Anna Hazare, youth supporters	Arvind Kejriwal, AAP supporters	Farmers, international celebrities	Social media users, digital activists
Connection to Gandhian Legacy	Direct invocation through hunger strike imagery	Appropriation as "common man" symbol	Link to independence movement values	Repurposing core values of integrity
Online-Offline Integration	Physical protests amplified through social media	Political rallies complemented by digital narratives	Rural protest digitized for global audience	Primarily digital with occasional physical manifestation

<b>Cultural Impact</b>	Revitalized cap as protest symbol	Transformed cap into political identifier	Demonstrated cap's cross-generational appeal	Ensured symbol's relevance to younger demographics
<b>Challenges</b>	Maintaining momentum beyond digital spaces	Opponents using "topi pehnana" (deception) narrative	Balancing local concerns with global spotlight	Risk of trivializing through meme culture
<b>Innovation</b>	Merged traditional symbolism with digital activism	Added slogans to personalize the symbolic cap	Tech-savvy rural protesters using digital tools	Creative reinterpretation through digital media
<b>Long-term Impact</b>	Established digital template for subsequent movements	Cemented cap as a political branding tool	Proved symbol's enduring international relevance	Ensures continued cultural significance

**Table - 2 Gandhian Cap in Modern Socio-Political Movements**

### Findings and Discussion

#### The Gandhian Cap as a Socio-Political Identity

The Gandhian cap endures as a strong symbol of resistance, unity, and ethical leadership, rooted in Gandhian ideals of non-violence and grassroots empowerment (Tarlo, 1996; Guha, 2018). Today, it unites diverse movements in protests, its broad appeal conveying moral authority and shared identity (Whitehead, 2014; Mani, 2014). Linking modern activism to historical struggles, it acts as a "floating signifier" for ethical, people-led change (Whitehead, 2014). Scholars use qualitative methods like semiotic analysis and historical contextualization to unpack its deep symbolic role (Turner, 1967; Geertz, 1973).

#### Digital vs. Physical Protest: The Cap's Role in Both Realms

The Gandhian cap thrives in both physical and digital protests. On streets, it signals solidarity and moral strength (Guha, 2018), while online, hashtags and images boost its reach (Tufekci, 2017). Digital efforts draw global attention, yet turning clicks into action is tough—often dismissed as "*Slacktivism*" (Whitehead, 2014; Smith, 2024). Success comes from blending online stories with real-world efforts, merging the cap's past with new media to rally activists. Research uses network and content analysis to track such symbols online (Earl & Kimport, 2011).

#### The Role of Slogans and Messages on the Cap

Slogans and hashtags on the Gandhian cap give it a louder voice. Phrases like "#I Am Anna" turn wearers into walking advocates, instantly sharing demands (Mani, 2014; Tarlo, 1996). Catchy, heartfelt messages can spread fast online, especially when tied to identity or ethics (Tufekci, 2017; Smith, 2024). But lasting change needs more than shares—it demands organized activism.

#### The Risks of Commercialization and Political Co-option

The Gandhian cap's meaning is at risk from commercial and political misuse. Brands and politicians may exploit it for profit or fake sincerity, turning it into a fashion item or prop (Whitehead, 2014; Tarlo, 1996). This can breed cynicism, eroding its credibility (Mani, 2014). Its authenticity hinges on true non-violent reform and Gandhian values like democracy and self-reliance (Guha, 2018).

### Conclusion

The Gandhian cap, once a defining emblem of India's freedom struggle, continues to evolve as a powerful symbol in contemporary socio-political movements. Its transformation from a tangible marker of ethical resistance to a digital icon underscores its resilience and lasting relevance. While social media has amplified its reach, turning it into a global tool for activism, this heightened visibility also brings challenges—risking dilution, misappropriation, and commercialization. The ease of digital engagement raises concerns about superficial advocacy, where symbolic gestures replace meaningful action.

Yet, despite these challenges, the cap's deep-rooted association with Gandhian values—self-reliance, civic responsibility, and non-violent dissent—remains its strongest foundation. Its resurgence in modern activism demonstrates how historical symbols can adapt to contemporary struggles without losing their essence. By bridging offline activism with digital advocacy, movements today not only uphold the cap's ethical significance but also extend its influence across generations and borders. To ensure its integrity, activists and scholars must consciously balance online amplification with real-world action, fostering a culture where symbols inspire substantive change rather than passive endorsement. Through mindful stewardship and committed engagement, the Gandhian cap will continue to serve as a catalyst for meaningful socio-political transformation.

### Future Research Directions

#### Future of Symbol-Driven Digital Activism

Emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and NFTs are transforming protest symbolism (Smith, 2024). AI-generated content could automate Gandhian cap imagery, while NFTs might tokenize its designs for fundraising (Tufekci, 2017). Social media's global networks elevate local symbols like the cap into universal icons of peaceful dissent, similar to the "V for Vendetta" mask (Whitehead, 2014).

#### Recommendations for Activists and Digital Strategists

#### Optimize Hashtag Movements for Real-World Mobilization

1. Synchronize offline actions with online campaigns.
2. Partner with grassroots influencers to convert digital engagement into participation (Smith, 2024).

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- 3. Encourage tangible actions (petitions, local chapters) over passive sharing.

#### **Strategies to Prevent Symbol Dilution**

- 1. Pair cap imagery with educational narratives on Gandhian values.
- 2. Avoid commercial co-branding that erodes its ethical legacy.
- 3. Highlight artisanal craftsmanship to reinforce authenticity.

#### **Preserve and Innovate in Digital Media**

- 1. Develop AR filters/NFTs aligned with Gandhian principles.
- 2. Prioritize ethical data practices to maintain public trust (Tufekci, 2017).
- 3. The Gandhian cap exemplifies how historical symbols adapt to digital activism. By balancing innovation with integrity, activists can sustain its moral resonance while driving contemporary socio-political change.

#### **Conceptual definition –**

##### **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a branch of computer science focused on creating machines that can simulate human intelligence. This includes capabilities such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, and understanding language. AI systems range from simple rule-based algorithms to advanced technologies like neural networks and machine learning models. Source - Russell, S., & Norvig, P. (2020). Artificial intelligence: A modern approach (4th ed.). Pearson.

**Augmented Reality (AR)** Filters Augmented Reality (AR) filters are digital overlays that enhance or alter images and videos in real-time using augmented reality technology. AR integrates virtual elements—like animations, text, or 3D objects—into the real world, often through smartphone cameras or wearable devices. Source Billinghurst, M., Clark, A., & Lee, G. (2015). A survey of augmented reality.

**Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)** Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) are unique digital assets that represent ownership of a specific item or piece of content, typically stored and verified on a blockchain. Unlike cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, which are fungible (interchangeable), NFTs are distinct and cannot be exchanged on a one-to-one basis. source -Mapping the NFT revolution: Market trends, trade networks, and visual features.

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