

# A Study of an Innovative and Creative Approach of Gandhiji's Nai Talim on the Skill Development of Students.

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## INTRODUCTION

Traditional and colonial forms of education that emphasized literacy and abstract, text-based knowledge were the domain of the upper castes. Gandhi's proposal to make handicrafts the center of his pedagogy was aimed at a "radical restructuring of the sociology of school knowledge in India", in which the 'literate' of the lower castes – such as spinning, weaving, leatherworking, pottery, metalworking, etc. work, making baskets and binding books" – would be centralized. The second aim of this use of handicrafts was to make schools economically and socially independent of the state—an even more revolutionary concept. Thus in 1937 In his influential article on Education in Harijans he argued: "By education I mean an all-round depiction of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit. Literacy is neither the end nor the beginning of education. It is only a means by which man and woman can be educated. Literacy is not an education in itself. So I will start the child's education by teaching a useful handicraft and enabling it to be produced from the moment the training starts. In this way every school can be made self-supporting."

The three pillars of Gandhi's pedagogy focused on the lifelong character of education, its social character and its nature as a holistic process. For Gandhi, education is 'the moral development of the individual', a process which is by definition 'lifelong'. Gandhi's model of education was directed towards his alternative vision of the social order: "Gandhi's basic education was, therefore, an embodiment of his notion of an ideal society, in which his ideal citizen would be a hardworking, self-reliant young man. . As a person directly related to the student as a person. Dialogue: "A teacher who establishes a relationship with the taught, becomes one with them, learns more from them than he teaches. One who does not learn anything from his disciples is useless in my opinion. Whenever I talk to someone, I learn from him. I take more from him than I give him. Thus a true teacher considers himself a student of his students. If you teach your students from this perspective, you will benefit greatly from them. Gandhi's disciple, Vinobha Bhave, developed this idea as an instrument of social change: "The root of Nai Talim lies in bridging the gap between learning and teaching, and knowledge and work. discuss the need to redefine the relationship between "they should treat each other as a fellow worker..." Instead, the 'teacher' had to be proficient in an art/skill (and thus make a living) was to be received and not the tuition salary.) The student had to live, work and grow with the teacher and

his/her family. In the process he/she would learn the art/skill - skills as a way of life, code of conduct, network of relationships, e.t.c." Finally, basic education was conceived as a response to one of the main dialectics of modernity, as Gandhi saw it – the dialectic between human and 'machine' or 'technology': "this dialectic In the U.S., man represented the whole of mankind, not just India, and the machine represented the industrialized West." [For this reason, among others, Gandhi placed such central emphasis on the role of handicrafts such as weaving, metalworking, pottery, spinning in his pedagogy; They symbolized the values of self-reliance or Swaraj and independence or Swadesh

The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has brought some changes in the educational system, seeing the changes in the dynamics of the society. It suggests having no-hard separation of curricular and extra-curricular subjects. Nai Talim focussed on imparting training in mother tongue and so the NEP also emphasises the importance of three language formula for every children and encouraging them to be multilingual. The ideas of education laid down in NEP 2020 are very much influenced and related to Gandhiji's ideas of Nai Talim. The NEP provides flexibility to students in choosing courses based on the interest of the child and also on the assessment methods used by the schools. Thus, Nai Talim ideas significantly promotes the creativity, scientific accessibility, multilingualism, social responsibility among students making them more productive and able them to contribute more as a citizen in the society's development.

Gandhi's educational ideals were meant to transform backward, illiterate, exploited, desperately poor people into self-confident and self-respecting citizens of a new independent community and nation. His educational ideas, principles and thoughts are given shape as NAI TALIM or Basic Education. He believed that for true character-building education, the focus needs to be on values, ethics and ideal citizenship, on culture, arts, music, dance sports and games which are the basis for the development of creativity, imagination and peaceful living with harmony leading to become self-reliant individuals. The primary aim of this study is to realize the impact of Gandhiji's ideas on Nai Talim.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF NAI TALIM

Current Indian education system is a tool for industrialisation which depends on mass production and global marketing processes which actually makes them non-profitable, non-competitive, non-productive or useless for society.

Education system based on Nai Talim believes that in “craft based education”, practical skills serve as the centre and foundation of an individual’s overall development. Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education (MGNCRE), Hyderabad held a conference in September 2018 promoting Nai Talim with an aim to relaunch the same in our current education system.

This grand idea of Mahatma Gandhi’s education concept seems to be relevant and could be a successful alternative for education towards sustainable development. It emphasizes on the individual’s indigenous education scheme, taking care of creative and constructive capacity of the children and also the needs of the society.

Nai Talim system integrates the intellectual work with physical labour for development of the society. He believed that knowledge and skills should be constructed in practical affairs of life. The concept of Nai Talim is such where the teacher teaches the student to prepare him / herself for a superior life. There should be a perfect understanding and mutual empathy between the teacher and the learner which gets stronger during the teaching-learning process since both pick up knowledge through practice. Besides obtaining faith, building sympathy and mutual respect between the learner and the teacher is important in all the Nai Talim Institutions.

Gandhiji was very clear that he would work for an education that would not make a person a servant but a master of his living. One of the core ideas of Nai Talim was that the education should be child-centric, inter-related to the swabhav of the child, particularly the Basic and Primary Education.

Gandhiji’s model of Nai Talim is timeless and not past, present or future bound. In his pattern, there was a correlation with the environment. But, yes, definitely in the present scenario of volatile changes, the concept of Nai Talim has to be modified to keep it viable.

The principle of Nai Talim is imparting education through learning by doing. So it is necessary to emphasize on the purpose of implementing Nai Talim and its significance after undergoing various aspects of this education scheme.

Also known as Basic Education For All, Nai Talim is based on the principle that the knowledge and work are inseparable. It promotes a concept of learning which cannot be fully achieved with the help of text books only. Nai Talim implies restructuring of the education system of the Indian society from teacher-centric to child-centric. Knowledge

of the productive work involves art like music, dance and crafts like spinning, weaving, pottery, basket-making, etc. These skills improve the talents of the students and make them happier so thereby making them more productive, sensible and responsible person.

With changing times, the education system in India has seen a considerable change. It is no longer a government sector service. Many private and non-governmental institutions have become a part of this system, who have brought considerable changes through non-traditional views which are unconventional in terms of curriculum, assessment, etc. Nowadays we can notice that curriculum have become more of child-centric rather than teacher-centric and also give trainings for life skills, enhancing creativity, developing a sense of leadership with responsibility. Examples of institutions working on the ideas of Nai Talim in India are Purvidham Learning Centre (Tamil Nadu), Secmol (Leh), Kalkari Sangeet Vidyalaya (Karnataka), Imlee Mahua School (Chhattisgarh), etc.

In spite of being mandated by government across the country by many schools who tried to promote Nai Talim, failed probably because of the way this approach was perceived by consumers of education.

Nai Talim always remained less important in the mainstream of educational curriculum. But, a new ray of hope can be seen now.

Humayun Kabir Biswas (January-February, 2021) conducted a study on A Study on Gandhiji’s Basic Education and its Relevance in the Modern Education with the conclusion that there is a serious problem of educated unemployment situation among young men and women in India. The present educational system should be reformed on the spirit of Gandhiji’s concept of Nai Talim. Gandhiji’s idea of basic education is valid and fruitful which may also be used as guiding principles in the present scenario. Marjorie Sykes (March 1988) in her book *The Story of Nai Talim*, gave the conclusion that education means wherever one happens to be, he must have the knowledge to tackle and resolve the tensions and conflicts of outlook and interest which are a necessary and valuable part of human experience. To this learning of the way of peace, the principles and practice of Nai Talim have a great deal to contribute, as the basic principle of Nai Talim is to make a person able to deal with the problems of life.

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