



Connect

Vol.- 4, Issue- 9

September 2018

The surefire method of taking Nai Talim forward



Initiating change at the grassroots level





The seedbed that we at Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education prepared for infusing Nai Talim at school and teacher education levels is now ripe for planting of fresh ideas to give fillip to Mahatma Gandhi's unique pedagogical method that involves the use of head, heart and hands with work on crafts or other instructive and immersive activity taking the centre-stage. Our cover story looks at ways in which disparate groups could be brought together for adopting a unified approach towards introducing Nai Talim, Experiential learning, Work education and Community Engagement with everyone on board -- NCERT, SCERTs, universities, teaching fraternity and the student community. This is crucial for realising the collective goal of improving the draft Nai Talim curriculum which has been duly circulated among targeted circles, academic as well as administrative, in all States and Union Territories. Simultaneously we have laid plans to cover 780 districts nationwide for launching a series of competitions that would run throughout the year marking important days. The idea is to utilize the next academic year for carrying out activities related to Nai Talim as a fitting tribute to Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary celebrations.

An article on the Round Tables on Nai Talim and Work Education that we conducted at the Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith and the Banaras Hindu University in Uttar Pradesh as well as the Workshop on 'Nai Talim' we organized in association with the Gujarat University's Department of Education discusses how the academic community is enthused about giving shape to Nai Talim for meeting today's needs.

The spadework that MGNCRE has done for introducing an elective paper on Sanitation, Hygiene and Waste Management came in for praise when MHRD's Senior Economic Advisor Dr VLVSS Subba Rao visited us on August 13, 2018. An update on the paper in the making, along with suggestions made by Dr Subba Rao, takes a close look at yet another milestone following the launch of Swachh Campus manual last month.

UNICEF has agreed to make available to us international case studies in Disaster Risk Reduction and Rural resilience, apart from providing at least two-year hand-holding support for faculty members in the programmes in which the international organization is involved along with us in various Telangana universities. This will surely boost our efforts as promoting rural resilience is central to MGNCRE's activities, which are guided by the overarching national goal of *Uthkrist gram in Unnat Bharat*.

Dr W G Prasanna Kumar
Chairman

Highlights of MGNCRE programmes in September 2018

- ◆ Launch of '*Experiential learning- Gandhiji's Nai Talim*' in all States/Union Territories on September 5th/ September 8th
- ◆ Orientation Workshops, Faculty Development Programmes and Master Trainer Development Programmes in State/UTs that are ready to introduce paper/course on Nai Talim or modify their existing paper/course having aspects related to Nai Talim
- ◆ Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Society for Training and Development and MGNCRE

Meeting of minds for an integrated approach

Given meeting of minds and an integrated approach, it is very easy to take forward Nai Talim, Mahatma Gandhi's unique pedagogical system that aims at holistic education through the use of head, heart and hands with work being central to the entire process. In fact, people have already started taking interest in Nai Talim and its variants. There are teachers who use their own money to create resources. What is required is a platform where everyone can integrate and work together. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has five centers, apart from a vocational centre in Bhopal. People must contribute ideas to improve education. The problem is only of integration. NCERT is ready to support in this national endeavor, said Major Harsh Kumar, Secretary NCERT.

He was speaking as chief guest at a National Consultative Workshop involving Directors of SCERT on 'Nai Talim, Experiential Learning, Work Education and Community Engagement in School and Teacher Education Curriculum and Practices' held at the Centre for International Programmes, Osmania University, Hyderabad, during 09-10 August 2018. The workshop, being the first round for SCERTs, was organized by the Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education, as part of its series of nationwide workshops and seminars designed to develop school and teacher education curricula in the closely related areas of Nai Talim, Work Education, Experiential Learning and Community Engagement. Apart from authorities of NCERT and directors of SCERT,



the participants, numbering 33, included professors, associate professors, heads of various departments related to education, senior training consultants, research officers, senior lecturers, principal/faculty members of DIETs and coordinators of education departments representing 17 States/ Union Territories.

Elaborating on the problem of integration, Major Harsh Kumar remarked: "What is the root cause? We have to find the gap to defeat the problem. What was the greatness of Mahatma Gandhi? He used to do big things and say them in very simple words. What he has conveyed through

words and deed is the culture we have forgotten because of colonial rule. If passion is missing, we cannot do anything. What has crept into the education sector? People with passion are not coming; if they come, they are not allowed to do things, they are getting cornered." Major Harsh Kumar underscored the importance of primary school teaching, saying it is the main teaching. "Nation is built by the teacher. We need to pay attention to our teachers. NCERT is making a lot of changes. We need to pay teachers well. The value of things has to be inculcated."

Earlier, MGNCRE Chairman Dr WG Prasanna Kumar, who presided over the inaugural session, set the tone for the consultative workshop by drawing





attention to the Union government's plans for celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He outlined the three main objectives of the workshop:

- To look inward (*antarkmukhi*) for benefiting the nation through students, teachers and teacher educators.
- To address teacher education in primary section
- To initiate curriculum development from classes 1-12

Dr Prasanna Kumar pointed to certain peculiar problems in the villages. "There are people who are not working. The people who are not working are either not inclined to work or are not capable of working. They may not be capable of working because of physical conditions,



sickness, old age, or because they have young children. Those people who are not inclined to work, even if they go unemployed, it is fine. But, there are those who are employable and aged between 18 and 45 years. Despite the talk of India having demographic dividend, this and that; for the past 20 years, many employable candidates, who are young, are not willing to work. The number of such

people is huge and growing. In course of time, India's population will of course be young, but mainly not inclined to work. That will destroy the economic areas, including agriculture."

According to Dr Prasanna, the primary reasons for this state of affairs are clear: children are told that working in agricultural field/ rural areas is not valuable. We have created certain values for certain types of work. Why is that physical work is not valued? Where does this giving or non-giving of value come from? It is linked with the schools to which students are going. You can see schools putting out ads such as this one: "If you go to school, you never have to go to the village again".

An 'educational' film with a difference!

Ahead of the business sessions, the participants watched an instructive film on *Nai Talim*, Mahatma Gandhi's unique pedagogical method for holistic education that fosters an individual's intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual dimensions simultaneously through a special curriculum that integrates learning with crafts-based, hands-on activities. So, for the first grade under *Nai Talim* the emphasis is on observation, washing vegetables, making *sharbat* and the like. In the second grade, students move on to sowing of seeds. By the time the students enter the seventh standard, they can relate concepts of math, history, geography, science, language, music, etc. with agriculture and allied occupations in the environs around them. The film brought out that under *Nai Talim* girls and boys do the same kind of work, with no scope for gender discrimination. At least four chores are to be learnt by all students: farming, cooking, weaving and

cleaning. Self-reliance is very important in this curriculum. Sensitization on dignity of labour is done through various activities. Drawing attention to how today's education has become a rat race, the film posed a thought-provoking question: Shouldn't parents instead provide guidance? After all, they are individuals in the world who look to achieve their lofty goals. Why is so much competition encouraged? Pointing to the imbalance in social structure, the film delineates how the rich are getting richer, while the poor are getting poorer.

The message of the film is that we need to bring about a paradigm change in the system of education. It must be one that shapes a person to be a self-reliant individual with ennobling qualities of head and heart. Such persons can help nurture a society that values truth and non-violence, which Gandhi, the apostle of peace, espoused all his life through thought, word and deed.

Dr Seema Pusadkar and Ms Urmila Hadikar, special invitees from the State Institute of Science Education, Wardha, Maharashtra, in their enlightening presentation, shared how Gunvattapurn Sarthak Shiksha Abhyaan (GSSA), a joint venture of Wardha's District Institute of Education and Training and *Nai Talim* Samiti, Sevagram, proved to be a transformative experience. They drew upon their experiences while working with schools in Wardha to emphasize that,

apart from 3 Hs (head, heart and hand) that Gandhi espoused, they could add two more Hs -- health and honour in the wonderful system of education – for "life, through life and throughout life". The stress is on learning by doing, experimenting, experience, new creation and innovation. The accent is on learning from society and its surrounding atmosphere. The overarching goal was correlation of knowledge and work. There is an integrated approach to personality



development and character building. The driving force is: learn and earn, while engaging in productive work (See box).



The magical transformation

Seema and Urmila have worked with six blocks of Wardha District. They recounted how GSSA was implemented in 53 zilla parishad and upper primary schools by having everyone on board: students, trained teachers and subject experts, parents and the community at large. Today they have about 125 such teachers and more than a thousand activities through which children learn by doing. The significant ones are cycle yatra, kitchen gardening, people participation in terms of kind, value education and mass awareness on 10 life skill and values, vermicompost, sky-watching and telescope making. There is also learning through 'Natyatra' documentation and report writing.

As part of cycle yatras, about 25 people from the Nai Talim Samiti and DIET went round the villages for 5 days,

stopped at various schools en route. They used to ask them about distinct aspects of the school. They found that work done in several small-scale units in the villages could be integrated into the school curriculum. They conducted one more workshop on documentation and analysis and developed tools, including questionnaires. They collected data and found in their analyses that many life skills could be taught through proper integration. As for marketing skills, in Anand Niketan they grow crops and sell them. About 1,000 students under Nai Talim are getting this kind of work education.

The supreme gain and achievement of GSSA is that there are changes in levels of knowledge, behaviour and attitude of students, teachers, and faculty members. This becomes obvious through:



- Self-discipline – keep things in order, neat and clean
- Decision-making
- Problem solving with collective discussion and participation
- Creative thinking/lateral thinking
- Critical thinking/perspicacity
- Effective communication with society and villagers
- Interpersonal relationships
- Self-awareness and mindfulness
- Empathy and sympathy
- Coping with emotions and stress
- Scientific temperament

How they went about it

Seema and Urmila attributed all the foregoing achievements to a systematic approach. Initially, a meeting was called with teachers at which they obtained the consent of the teachers. The State Institute of Science Education resource persons mentioned that this consent made all the difference in how they implemented GSSA and how it contributed to the overall success of the program.

Once the programme reached teachers, they took it forward to students through trained teachers. The organization of Bal Mahotsavs motivated students and

they began to learn things in their own way. The kids enjoyed it and it built their confidence to speak in public without stagefright, this and that. In order to reach the village stakeholders, they, along with a group of people, used to ride a cycle and meet parents and villagers. They were first briefed about the concept. Their objective was to get it accepted by teachers, children, parents and society – in that order.

Today the system is such that the schools continue to work in the same fashion, though they have since been transferred to other places.

At the valedictory, MGNCRE presented the participants keepsakes and mementos for personal and institutional use, along with copies of the Mahatma Gandhi Nai Talim Abhiyan posters in English and Hindi, including two new ones formally released on the occasion

Enriching the working draft on Nai Talim

The second round of the National Consultation on Nai Talim and Work Education involving SCERTs was held in New August during 29-30 2018. In all, 17 SCERT representatives from 11 States/UTs across the country took part in the workshop. MGNCRE Chairman Dr WG Prasanna Kumar flagged the Workshop Objectives, Workshop Methodology and Expected Outcomes.



Dr. Prasanna Kumar explained the core of Nai Talim as envisaged by Mahatma

Gandhi with the accent being on 3Hs: head, heart and hands used together in human capacity building. He stated that MGNCRE works with SCERTs and others in developing the working draft of Nai Talim Curriculum for B Ed, D Ed, and LT teachers. The specific outcomes of the two-day workshop that he outlined included:



1. Determining what will be the Master Training (5-Days, proposed to be supported by MGNCRE) Curriculum? What will be the content? The participants were advised to suggest transaction strategies as well.
2. Improving the content of the draft Nai Talim Curriculum circulated among participants through suggestions, including those pertaining to their respective states.
3. Preparing for district-level orientation as part of the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan in every district. That is, covering 780 districts in all.
4. Preparing for series of competitions –Drama, handicrafts throughout the year using important days like June

5th, July 11th, August 15th, September 5th, October 2nd, November 14th, and February 28th etc.

Dr Prasanna Kumar urged the SCERTs to motivate respective DIETs to organize 7-10 day Action Plan preparation exercise at their district headquarters to decide on the activities to be carried out throughout the next academic year.

Prepare children for life

Hrushikesh Senapaty, director of NCERT, appreciated MGNCRE for taking up responsibility to improve the quality of education. He said that improvement in the quality of education should not be confined to classroom teaching. It needs to be integrated with



school and teacher education as well. “We are preparing children for examination, not for life,” he observed and pointed out that it is reflected in their personality. He underlined the need to minimize the gap between theory and practice and called for efforts to involve children. In view of the importance of teaching and learning processes, school-based assessment of work education is the need of the hour, he suggested.

Spell-binding elucidation of Nai Talim

Dr. Atul, an authority in Gandhian pedagogy, explained the concept of Nai Talim in a lucid manner. Gandhiji had full appreciation of the western education system; yet, he did not agree that it was suitable for India on three counts:

- I. Foreign education system does not mention Indian values; it is not rooted in Indian culture.
- II. There is no mention of Indianness in the foreign system of education.
- III. The medium of education is foreign, not favorable for Indian masses.

Thus, the foreign system of education is not holistic for Indian students.

Dr Atul then outlined the PANCH-KOSH paradigm proposed by Adi Shankara charyaji: अन्नमय कोश - अन्न तथा भोजन नननमिता शरीर और मस्तिष्क; प्राणमय कोश - प्राणों से बना; मनोमय कोश - मन से बना; विज्ञानमय कोश - अंतर्ज्ञानि या सहज ज्ञान से बना; आनंदमय कोश - आनंदानुभूत से बना

The closest English meanings for aspects of PANCH-KOSH are: physical well-being (human body development – with cereals and food); soul well-being; mental well-being; scientific well-being; ultimate well-being (spiritual satisfaction)

In his words, “Adhyatmikvikas and Aatmik vikas” constitute the ultimate purpose of education. This is much beyond knowledge of mathematics,

logic, history, science, astronomy and related vocations and livelihood options. He emphasized the need for practicals in every aspect of learning, including teaching of Mathematics and Logic. Theory should follow the practical; only then students will learn the concept. Memorizing without understanding creates conflict in students’ minds. Gandhiji himself experimented with this method at Tolstoy Farm in South Africa. There he gave first two hours of the day as physical activity for all students. This was followed by classroom discussions. Each student is allotted work according to his/her (choice, interest).

Dr. Vikram Sarbhai also started his foundation school in Ahmedabad on these principles. Here, the classrooms have no books; they have only toys, games and parts of equipment. The children themselves choose their options and then the teacher polishes their interests by supporting them and explaining the concepts. Theory is always explained after the children experience the phenomenon. Each child is unique; and, hence, each person should not be moulded in the same frame. Each child should be called by his/her name. His individuality must be recognized and respected.

Prof. Atulji shared a Russian school experience post World War-II. One

teacher while beginning to teach the war-torn children had to study not only the children, but their background and family history to understand their mental status to teach them, mentor them effectively. This is the true way of teaching. He then explained the experiences of a Nagpur school where the school opens at 6.55 am. For students, the timings are 6.50 am to 6.30 pm, for teachers only 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. During 6.55 am to 10.00 am students manage their own affairs, including prayer, yoga, physical training and garden work. He explained that Gandhi proposed that PT must be done with music. Exercise may be done with music. Mathematics can be explained by organizing a market in the class with two students in each shop. They will learn addition, subtraction, division, multiplication, profit and loss as well as fractions and ratios by these experiments.

Dr Atul emphasized the need to inculcate adhyatmic teaching to children at an early age. He gave example of Nagpur school again, where students were allotted work to feed the birds for two months. Later this became their habit and they taught this to their parents, and thus they learnt to respect all creatures of God and derive spiritual satisfaction by serving Nature, society and country.



He also explained how the game of cricket is used for teaching, with the class being divided into two teams. Each team will ask the other team questions on a subject and the teacher will evaluate the responses. If there is immediate correct answer, it is a SIX; if correct answer but after some time-FOUR; if a few students discuss and

answer –it is TWO; and; if very late answer ONE, no answer BOLD. Like this, both the teams will score for their team and students will learn the whole subject and will in addition learn how to frame good questions.

Students will learn to communicate, be articulate and will improve their listening skills. Students can also

improve their General Knowledge by answering one new question daily. This way they will learn about 200-220 GK questions (depending on the number of working days for the school) in one year. If the student studies from Class I to Class XII in this school, he/she will have learnt $200 \times 12 = 2,400$ GK questions and answers.

Expectations at large:

The suggestions made by the participants included:

- Including state-specific aspects with an eye on local culture, festivals and agricultural practices
- Making various activities part of work education, particularly in areas like sanitation, plantation and maintaining vegetable/kitchen garden
- Training and skilling local youth in agricultural operations and related enterprises so that they can explore locally available opportunities for jobs and entrepreneurship
- Making available resource persons as well as right tools and materials to facilitate skill-oriented training

Nurturing Nai Talim in varsities

Befitting the tempo of Mahatma Gandhi 150th birth anniversary celebrations, MGNCRE has rekindled interest in Nai Talim, Gandhiji's unique pedagogical method for holistic education that involves the use of the head, heart and hands, with work being at the centre of the process. MGNCRE has been conducting National Consultation Workshops and Seminars involving leaders and heads of national and state education boards, planning and regulatory bodies as well as Central and state Universities. As part of this long-drawn process, MGNCRE's academic consultants have been working vigorously to bring renewed focus on NaiTalim, considering its overarching

importance in any system of education in vogue today.

In this context, Sarvani Pandey, senior academic consultant with MGNCRE, has nurtured ideas on Nai Talim that are relevant today in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat universities, where the Gandhian method of education has made headway.

Initially, Sarvani conducted a Round Table on NaiTalim – Work Education at the Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Uttar Pradesh. MGKVP, established in 1921 during the non-cooperation movement and inaugurated by the Mahatma himself, has been closely associated with MGNCRE since 2006. The Post Graduate course in Sustainable Rural Development offered by its Department of Social Work is part of a project that is funded by MGNCRE.

The Round Table was organized in coordination with the Department of Social Work on August 01, 2018. It was chaired by Vice-Chancellor Prof TN Singh. Prof. Sanjay – Head, Department of Social Work, Prof. RC Pathak – Dean, Faculty of Social Work, Prof. Arvind Pandey – Head, Department of Education, Dr Sushil Gautam – Coordinator, National Service Scheme and other faculty members were among those who took part. Following discussions, Prof TN Singh, Vice Chancellor, assured support and offered to work with MGNCRE in reviewing MGKVP's existing curriculum and strengthening it by incorporating aspects from the one developed by MGNCRE for universities.

Practical, possible: BHU

A Round Table on 'NaiTalim' was organized on August 2, 2018 by MGNCRE in association with the Department of Education, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Uttar Pradesh. It was chaired by Prof RP Shukla, Head & Dean Faculty of Education. MGNCRE was represented by Sarvani Pandey, academic consultant. Dr Seema Singh, Prof Educational Psychology, Special

Education, Prof Anjali Bajpai, Science Education, Education Research and Evaluation, Technology, Prof. Sanjay Sonkar, Physical Education, Dr. Alok Gardia, Associate Prof. Sociology of Education, Citizenship Education, Dr. Asha Pandey, Prof. Vansta College, Rajghat (affiliated to BHU) were among those who contributed to the Round Table.

Prof RP Shukla emphasized that the concept of Nai Talim as enunciated by

Mahatma Gandhi in 1937 needs to be discussed threadbare and then adopted suitably in line with the current systems of education and perspectives in society.





He mentioned that Gandhiji had sought to provide education through remunerative and creative physical work under conditions existing then. Still, Nai Talim could be introduced today. It is possible and practical.

So, BHU and MGNCRE agreed to move ahead with plans to conduct workshops and Faculty Development Programmes on NaiTalim.

Green light for FDP

A workshop on 'NaiTalim' was organized by the Department of Education, Gujarat University, on August 20, 2018. It was chaired by Vice-Chancellor Prof Himanshu Pandya. MGNCRE was represented by Sarvani Pandey, senior academic consultant.

Prof. RC Patel, HOD, Education The Maharaja Sayajirao University of

Baroda, was the Guest of Honour. Dr. RS Patel, Dr. MC Shastri, Dr. AJ Bharwad, Dr. L.G Malav, Dr.Preeti and Asha Pandit participated in the discussions, along with other faculty members. In all, 26 faculty members took active part in workshop.

Gujarat University and MGNCRE agreed to join hands to conduct Faculty Development Programmes on NaiTalim, starting September.

Elective Paper on Sanitation, Hygiene and Waste Management in the works

Senior Economic Advisor Dr Subba Rao visits MGNCRE

In line with the overall plan of the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development to introduce novel courses that provide a holistic education experience, the Mahatma Gandhi National Council for Rural Education (MGNCRE) has done the spadework for introducing an elective paper on Sanitation, Hygiene and Waste Management.

Senior Economic Advisor Dr VLVSS Subba Rao, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, who visited MGNCRE on August 13, 2018, made suggestions in this regard, following a detailed presentation made by MGNCRE Chairman, Dr WG Prasanna Kumar on various aspects of the curriculum being developed on Sanitation, Hygiene and Waste Management by his teams in association with those of universities and higher education institutions.

After appreciating the work done till date, Dr Subba Rao suggested that the draft course book needs to be completed by September 7, 2018 so that he could present the same to Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for assessment. The changes suggest by them could then be incorporated in the draft and the finalized course book released on October 2, 2018 i.e. Gandhi's birthday.

Dr Subba Rao shared that MHRD's plan is to have the PG Diploma course material preparation completed by January 2019 so that in the next academic year students could have this PGD course as one of the options. He expressed his view that IISERs would have Faculty Development Programmes before the course is implemented. It was agreed that MGNCRE chairman could be the consultant for IISERs in this regard.



Since sanitation and hygiene are crucial to health, an elective paper covering these vital areas could be introduced into BSMS courses, Dr Subba Rao opined. In the context, he referred to studies which suggest that 70% of diseases in India are caused by poor hygiene and insanitary practices. About 70% of hospital beds are occupied by patients suffering from gastro-intestinal diseases, leaving little scope for treating heart patients and those suffering from other serious illnesses. On the whole, poor hygiene and insanitary conditions are distorting the country's healthcare system. So, introduction of elective paper like the proposed on Sanitation and Health would help raise awareness about health hazards posed by improper habits and practices, he underlined.



Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education Department of Higher Education

Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

5-10-174, Shakar Bhavan, Ground Floor, Fateh Maidan Road, Hyderabad - 500 004

Telangana State. Tel : 040-23422112, 23212120, Fax : 040-23212114 E-mail : editor@ncri.in, Website: www.ncri.in

Editorial Team: Dr WG Prasanna Kumar Chairman MGNCRE, Dr D N Dash Assistant Director, R Murali and K Ravindra Reddy

Published by Shri P Murali Manohar Member-Secretary MGNCRE

