

EDUCATING THE MIND,  
BODY & HEART

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON  
GANDHI & HIGHER EDUCATION TODAY

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E-BOOK



# ORGANIZERS



## UNESCO CHAIR IN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION



International Development Research Centre  
Centre de recherches pour le développement international



## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE



## UNESCO NEW DELHI CLUSTER OFFICE



## ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN UNIVERSITIES

# INTRODUCTION

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This year is marking the sesquicentennial birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi is known in different circles for his different statures - a leader, a preacher, a practitioner but most importantly, an educator. Throughout his life, he has written, spoken and emphasised extensively on the importance of education and learning. On his 150th birth anniversary, we introspected on what Gandhi means for the world today, with a special emphasis on Higher Education and Knowledge Democracy.

## Gandhi on Education

Gandhi is renowned all over the world for devising a new educational programme called *Nai Taleem*, or new education, under which learning is life-centred, instead of being textbook centred. *Nai Taleem* has been defined as education for life, through life and throughout life. It is divided into pre-basic, basic, post-basic, university and social education where pre-basic is the nursery school part, basic is elementary education for a period of eight years, between 7 and 15 years of age, and post-basic is high school education while social education has become adult education (Dr. Veerabhadra Alladi, 2016).

Gandhi's *Nai Taleem* is an in-depth pattern of education and a complex arena of analysis. Regarding its relationship with Higher Education in particular, the idea proposes a synthesis between vocation and education with equal emphasis on the necessity of both vocational and literary training, as both of them will organically feed into one another. Vocational training is believed to promote labour and provide useful and interesting content to literary training [1].

Gandhi's *Nai Taleem* saw student movements as an important tool of social and political organization. Gandhi believed that this new system of education will act as a tool of social revolution and will lead to a more emancipated class structure. This concept of education was first suggested for children between the ages of 7 and 14 that constitutes basic education. But later, it was extended to all the stages as Gandhi felt that that education should be inclusive and life-long and thus went on to cover university education. The Sarvodaya thinkers accepted the whole idea underlying the new educational concept of Gandhi, including its social and individual aims.

Mahatma Gandhi was also a popular propagator of Adult Education. Some of his thoughts on Adult Education also applied to university education. For him, university education should be a natural continuation to the secondary or the school education. He believed that Higher Education policies adopted at the time of India's independence were a misfit in this logical sequence and added no value to the country. In fact, it further enslaved the students and pushed them into the vicious cycle of racing for jobs. He also commented on the possible frustration and unrest that this type of education resulted in, stressing that the purpose of higher education institutes should rather be to serve the people of the country and lead to their betterment.

In the following sections, we have picked out some specific strands of Gandhi's thoughts which were revisited by different presenters from their respective perspectives on Higher Education in India and abroad.

[1] Hind Swaraj, 1908, ch. 18



# CONCEPT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DIALOGUE

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On the 150th birth anniversary of Gandhi, UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education in partnership with International Development Research Centre (IDRC), UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office and Association of Indian Universities hosted an international dialogue on Gandhi and Higher Education today. Titled “Educating the Mind, Body and Heart,” the dialogue brought together practitioners, academicians and Gandhian philosophers to explore the relevance, applications and impacts of Mahatma Gandhi’s theory and practice on education, learning and knowledge to higher education in India and the world. Drawing from individual and institutional practices, a unique platform of cross country dialogue was facilitated during the event .

Gandhi’s vision on Higher Education has tremendous contemporary relevance today. As mentioned in the introduction, he had not only spoken about vocational education, skill based training but also on the relevance and integration of indigenous knowledge systems.

Most of his views on Higher Education emphasized learning as opposed to mere teaching. For him, a person was made of three constituents-- the body, mind and spirit. In other sense, education must lead to a holistic development of the body, mind and spirit.

An education which is combined with skills training is more self-sustainable and this learning in vernacular is considered the most appropriate. Gandhi opined that the end of all education should be oriented towards service and students should be given opportunities to render service to society while they are studying. The idea of service-oriented education took ethics, morality and spiritualism as its important elements. The University that Gandhi dreamt of would be the building block of a self-reliant and self-sustainable nation - proud of its indigenous languages, cultures, technology and knowledge.

Therefore, this dialogue was not a tribute to the teachings of Gandhi but also explored their policy and practice relevance at national and international levels.



As part of Education 2030 Agenda, UNESCO is promoting reflections and networking to discuss innovative ideas and practices for the Futures of Education. The New Education Policy (NEP) proposals of Government of India have several critical aspects that resonate with Gandhi's views. Association of Indian Universities (AIU) in India is convening several consultations in this regard. International Development Research Centre (IDRC, Canada) has launched a new global initiative in collaboration with Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to support scaling up of innovative solutions for securing SDG 4 around the world.

The dialogue provided inputs on all of these processes.

The objectives of the Dialogue were:

- Explore contemporary relevance of Gandhi's perspectives and approaches to Higher Education today
- Share innovations in practice, social responsibility and community engagement in Higher Education.
- Produce insights for Education 2030 under the Futures for Education
- Mobilise a multi-stakeholder partnership network of policy-makers, practitioners, researchers and civil society to promote Education 2030.

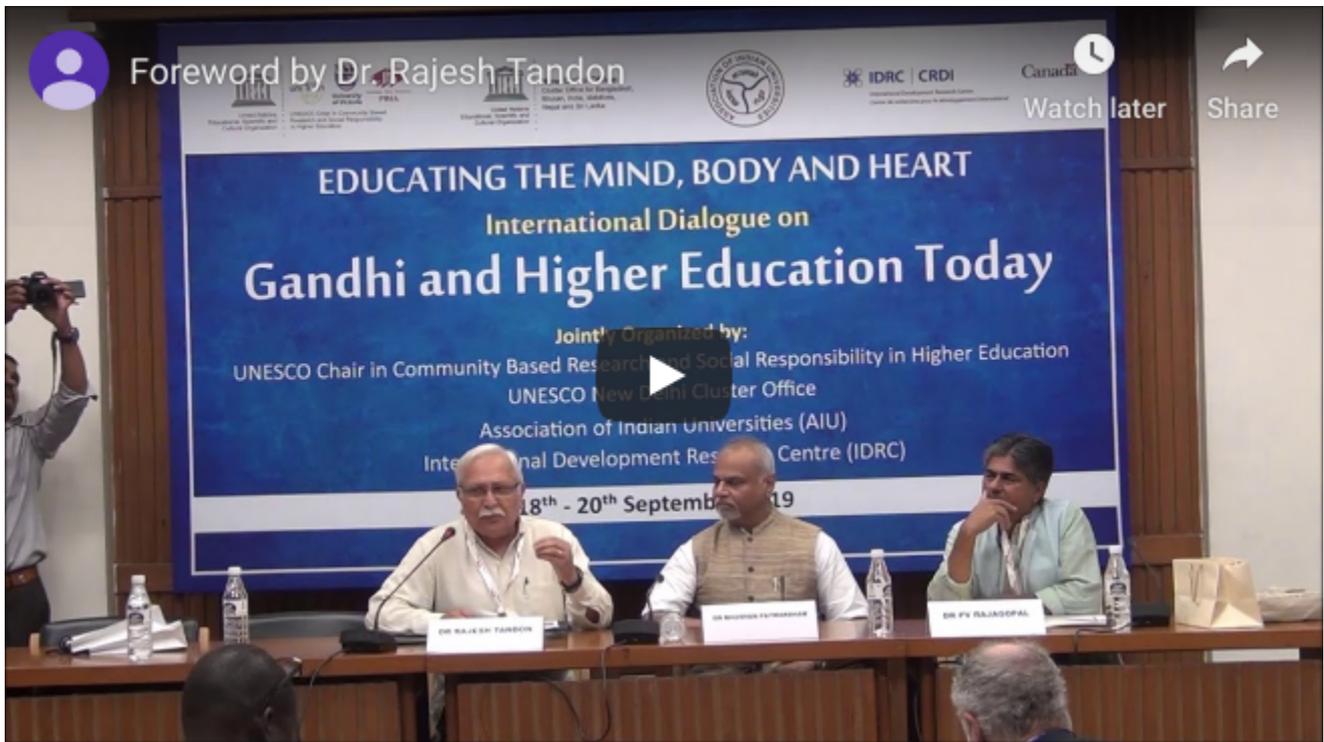
Expected outcomes of the Dialogue were:

- Compile learnings from Gandhi relevant to Higher Education
- Compile innovative practices in Higher Education for Agenda 2030



# FOREWORD

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The aim of this dialogue is to reflect and identify the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's thinking and planning in today's world. As the participants of this session are members of the global consortium "Knowledge for Change" - a network which aims at bringing forth the idea of universities engaging with the community and finding knowledge solutions for local priorities - what one wants to initiate is to start the process of reflecting on Gandhi's thoughts in tandem with the current state of Higher Education in one's own country.

*Nai Taleem*, one of Gandhi's earliest philosophies, is rooted in the ideology of learning from society, learning in the society and throughout one's life. It is interesting to see how that translates to the contemporary times.

**Dr. Rajesh Tandon**  
**Founder-Director, PRIA**

# **EXPLORING THE CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF GANDHI'S PERSPECTIVES AND APPROACHES TO HIGHER EDUCATION TODAY**

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Gandhi's world views and visions are a diminishing sight today. It is a misfortune that Gandhi is known to the world for his philosophies on primary and secondary education and not as much on Higher Education. Revisiting Gandhi's system of education is a reassertion of the fact that he was indeed a visionary of his time.

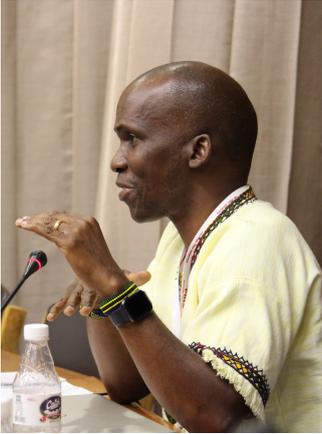
He was confident about the abilities of Higher Education institutions in nurturing a battalion of matured, skilled and accommodating young individuals. These educated youth will not just have professional expertise of knowledge but will also be capable of necessary ground action. An ideal university would be the building block of a self-reliant and self-sustainable nation that is proud of its local languages, cultures, technology and knowledge.

Gandhi has also been consistently talking about the legitimacy of community knowledge and its undeniable importance in educating the youth of India. A developing country like India is inching towards more globalized and homogenous education systems which pay no heed to the social responsibilities and duties of educational institutions. These Universities exist in social spaces but have not realized the need to work towards the betterment of society.

Gandhi, being an ardent believer of physical labour, suggested keeping vocational elements in mainstream Higher Education. It is evident from the state of Higher Education in India that we are adding to the workforce capable only of working for others and not necessarily for themselves. There is an increasing dearth of skilled youth in the country and the idea of vocationalizing Higher Education is the need of the hour.

Reflecting on Gandhi's teachings, UNESCO Co-Chair Dr. Rajesh Tandon invoked the titular wellspring. "As Gandhi said 'Universities do not need a pile of majestic buildings; University needs intelligent backing of public community.' Igniting the discussion further, he added that in the last seventy-eighty years, the walls of Higher Education have only increased in height and width, not necessarily secured the backing of intelligent public opinion that Gandhi talked about."

This later resonated in Prof. Catherine Krull's thought-provoking question, asking what it means to be an educated person in the 21st century, and set the note for the dialogue that ensued.



## EMERGING THEMES

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# UNESCO'S FUTURE OF EDUCATION INITIATIVE



For UNESCO Regional director **Mr. Eric Falt**, the dialogue was extremely pertinent and timely. At a global level, he reminded everyone that there is ongoing debate on “how education needs to be rethought in a world of increasing complexity, uncertainty, and precarity.” He then recounted milestones from UNESCO’s tradition of revisiting and re-envisioning education at key historical junctures of societal transformation, to explore the implications of how we understand and approach educational learning from the perspective of common humanity.

With the current Futures of Education initiative, UNESCO and its partners are now exploring the concept of learning to become.

keeping in line with philosophical and social thinking that emphasises potentials, rejects determinisms and embraces openness to the new, this endeavour acknowledges the challenge of predicting the future of humanity.

And for that, Mr. Falt said, “we need to look back at the past, dig deeper into our time-honoured traditions and storehouse of accumulated knowledge” and apply them to current challenges.

Therein lies the relevance of this cross-country dialogue aimed to create an opportunity to reflect on Gandhi’s holistic vision on Higher Education and test its current relevance, to discuss individual and institutional practices that have successfully imbibed Gandhian principles.

“Gandhi is one of the figures that best represent our common humanity.”

Mr. Falt also invoked a few of the Mahatma's ideas that resonated with him on a personal level, namely, his ideas of multilingualism, skill-oriented education, practical and lifelong learning beyond the confines of a classroom and go on well into adulthood, which he believed stands to make one self-reliant and solve problems like poverty and unemployment.

In this regard, he mentioned that UNESCO's upcoming 'State of the Education' report for India, 2020, is themed on technical and vocational training to highlight the role of skills development and linkage with employment and entrepreneurship. He also referred to the UN body's focus on the concept of learning to be in the 1970s, followed by learning the treasure within in mid-90s (Delors Report) that emphasized a humanistic and integrated approach to the multiple functions of education - a fundamental right and a public good.

*"There has never been a greater need to look at education from a new perspective, one that will question and clarify the fundamental motivations that drive systems and practice of education so that education remains relevant to the needs of learners and the changing learning environment."*

- Mr. Eric Falt,

on the ramifications of the new National Education Policy tabled and currently under deliberations by the Indian government

# WITNESSING NAI TALEEM IN HIGHER EDUCATION: CASE OF MGNCRE



**Dr. WG Prasanna Kumar**, an eminent Gandhi practitioner and Chairman of Mahatma Gandhi national Council for Rural Education (MGNCRE) re-explored Gandhi's educational reforms of Nai Taleem and the merit it offers to contemporary education by bridging the gap between theory and practice in Indian pedagogy.

He demonstrated this praxis with real life teaching pedagogies and examples from his own university: Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education (MGNCRE). Dr Kumar introduced the concept of 'Nai Taleem', a new/alternative learning method propounded and practiced by Gandhi in South Africa over a century ago, but whose need he felt the most in India with its missing dignity of labour.

***MGNCRE began promoting 'Nai Taleem' with schools but soon extended it to Higher Educations because at the heart of this new pedagogy is teachers' training.***

Under this programme, teachers' education is offered to universities all across the country. Dr Kumar and his team speak to chancellors and deans to interest them in incorporating Gandhian teachings, curate curriculums for departments handling teachers' education, organize teachers' workshops to identify what's missing in the existing methodologies.

# REVIVING THE VIRTUES OF NON-VIOLENCE AND PEACE IN HIGHER EDUCATION



# SPECIAL ADDRESS: GANDHI'S VISION AND VALUES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



Discussion on both days veered towards bringing back the virtues of peace and non-violence in Higher Education as well amongst the youth. "Concepts such as non-violent economy and non-violent governance must replace the present development paradigm modelled on war, crime and violence," said eminent Gandhian practitioner **Dr. P.V. Rajagopal**.

***"As a child, of course I understood that liberating a nation from slavery is important, but liberating the minds of people from slavery is also important. From the Gandhian education I learnt that one needs to learn to move from near to far, learn about your village and community before learning about the world history."***

Dr. Rajagopal stated that it is important for the young generation to think about the question 'How is our education relevant to today's world?' Sharing the two key learnings he took away, Dr. Rajagopal then highlighted the following ideas:

- Education being relevant for the poorest and the weakest individual in the society
- Building non violent social movements

He further stated:

***"Social movements are very important to address issues that people are facing, but social movements need to be very well rooted in non violence otherwise things can go chaotic".***



He incorporated the idea of social movement addressing societal problems and non violence by designing training programmes for the youth. The process of developing the same lay in answering the question: *“How does one deal with anger? How do you divert your anger to positive action?”*

He emphasized on the need to distinguish between the concept of direct and indirect violence, further stressing on the fact that “indirect violence is the breeding ground for direct violence, thus indirect violence is important.” He further articulated Gandhi’s idea of “transformative non-violence”, which worked with a two-pronged aim of obtaining freedom for oneself as well as making the other get out pf the habit of oppressing and accumulating. Stressing on the need for education institutions to include non-violence so that one can make new history, he concluded saying,

***“There is a lot of research, innovation & investment in the war industry, thus a need to bring the same into non violence.”***

# INNOVATIONS AND TEACHING PEACE AT BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY



The same sentiment was later echoed by UNESCO Co-Chair for Peace and Intercultural Understanding **Professor Priyankar Upadhyay** in his treatise on the various strands of peace studies practiced in India, where “despite Gandhi, everything he abhorred like nuclear weapons exist.” Pointing to the need to clear some common assumptions and misconceptions about peace, he advocated the need to approach peace education and peace research through Gandhian lens, rather than the notions of national security or external threats usually practised and studied at nearly 500 institutions across India. A different brand altogether, Gandhi’s idea of peace should be taught from an early stage, in primary and secondary schools, Prof Upadhyay believes.

***“Peace studies is entirely experiential”.***



## **SPECIAL ADDRESS BY THE CHAIR**

Outlining the *raison d'être* of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) – to support research in the global south, collaborate with policymakers, and convene dialogues much like this one – **Dr Anindya Chatterjee**, Regional Director, IDRC Asia shared his views on why it's necessary to look at Gandhi's life and teachings, today more than ever. The Mahatma was a proponent of change and experimentation while being thoroughly committed to his core beliefs like self-determination and nonviolence, Dr Chatterjee noted. Much of his ideas and thoughts came from his own experiential learning.

# LEARNING ROOTED IN REALITY

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For Gandhi, the spirit was the most important and the permanent element, with the body and mind aiding it. Thus, education must divulge the qualities of spirit and must lead to a holistic development of the body, mind and spirit.

Knowledge imparted by the existing education system can only develop the mind but certainly not the spirit or the body - of this Gandhi was sure. He was sceptical of the wholesome development of the mind too, because the current education system bombards the students with excessive often useless information that finds no direct applications in everyday life and practice. Gandhi said:

***“My experience has proved to my satisfaction that literary training by itself adds not an inch to one's moral height and that character-building is independent of literary training. I am firmly of opinion that the Government schools have unmanned us, rendered us helpless and godless. They have filled us with discontent, and providing no remedy for the discontent, have made us despondent. They have made us what we were intended to become, clerks and interpreters.” (Gandhi, 1921)***

The ordinary meaning of Education is the mere knowledge of letters. This knowledge of letters often undermines the ordinary knowledge of the world.

***“A peasant earns his bread honestly. He has ordinary knowledge of the world. He knows fairly well how he should behave towards his parents, his wife, his children and his fellow villagers. He understands and observes the rules of morality. But he cannot write his own name. What do you propose to do by giving him a knowledge of letters? Will you add an inch to his happiness? Do you wish to make him discontented with his cottage or his lot? And even if you want to do that, he will not need such an education”. (Gandhi, 1910)***

From the very beginning, Gandhi's politics of education staunchly opposed the lure of inculcating Western thought into the traditional systems. For Higher Education in particular, Gandhi emphasized that the subjects which are being taught at the level of universities have barely any relevance or bearing on realities around us. Education imparted by Indian Universities keep students away from their sense of duty, Gandhi criticized. He did not entirely discard the knowledge of letters but cautioned the masses against fetishising it. Knowledge is valuable only when it is of use to the masses and helps them sober their senses and find an ethical footing.

Another interesting and relevant aspect of Gandhi's idea of education was the insistence of training all bodily organs alike. Apart from the development of mental faculties, Gandhi was a strong believer of imparting physical training, now known as vocational education, to the learners. To attain an indivisible whole, it is imperative to educate the body, mind and the spirit alike. For Gandhi, a training of skills was important because it makes a student self-reliant and capable of leading her/his own life in an autonomous fashion. An education which is clubbed with skills training is more self-sustainable, and long lasting. The time Gandhi was speaking for insisted on teaching the skills like handicraft, agriculture, cattle rearing etc. to the students which will aid the sustenance of a rural lifestyle suiting of the requirement of the time for which he was speaking. These propositions might appear obsolete on the outset but on a deeper introspection it is realized that with the onset of increasingly volatile economies, dynamic digital technologies, rapid change of social spaces and social relations; it is worth to embed the useful training of skills like digital into the mainstream educational pedagogies.

"Gandhi believed in holistic education, not separating one from the other," Dr. Rajesh Tandon, UNESCO Co-Chair in Community Based Research, said in his opening note explaining the rationale behind the title of the event. He stressed on the need for lifelong learning from and within society to bridge menial and mental labour, also challenging the dichotomy between knowing and doing that has insulated academia. As the esteemed speakers each presented a blueprint for alternate methods of knowing and doing, it soon became clear that the Gandhi's vision – Higher Education should produce experts who are relevant for society's needs –if university education occurs in tandem with Gandhi's notion of karma.

**DR. KK AGGARWAL, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL BOARD OF ACCREDITATION (NBA) AND FORMER VICE CHANCELLOR OF GURU GOBIND SINGH (GGS) INDRAPRASTHA UNIVERSITY GAVE A STRIKING METAPHOR OF INTEGRATING THE MIND, BODY AND HEART IN LEARNING TECHNICAL COURSES LIKE ENGINEERING. HE STATED THAT STUDENTS OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION SHOULD ALSO BE TAUGHT MUSIC, MATHS AND GYMNASTICS TO INTEGRATE HEART, MIND AND BODY AND THUS ENSURE A HOLISTIC LEARNING.**

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Principles and Perspectives in Higher Education Policies in India



Vice Chairman of University Grants Commission (UGC), Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan, highlighted the importance of Gandhi and his thoughts on Higher Education and stated that there had been 'a lot of injustice with these thoughts by not putting them into action'. He discussed how there was a need for change in the education system. He shared his views on how the universities had monopolized the education system and had undermined the education coming from outside the classroom. He stated that,

***“Teaching no longer today is a unilateral process, it is a dialogue. And it has been so in the Indian tradition. And the dialogue is one through courageous and bold questions and equally bold answers”***

Dr. Patwardhan then discussed the various initiatives that were being undertaken by the UGC and how there was a change in approach by taking up the task of 'deregulating the committee since regulations is based on mistrust'. Some key schemes and changes in the UGC policies highlighted are as follows:

1. Scheme to increase social and community connect
2. With the over domination of scientists in the field of research, there was a new scheme 'Trans-disciplinary Research work in India's Developing Economy'.

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This includes three basic components:

- Research capacity building
- Funding open to any discipline as long as the prime focus of the research was in helping the community.
- A special target at impact humanities projects

Lastly, he discussed a new project which is still in its development phase, an idea which aims at introducing a semester long programme wherein students can get a hand-on experience in working with the community so as to sensitize and expose them to the real world. With an open invitation for the participants to join in & help in this journey, he said,

***“UGC is not just some building rather it is constituent of universities, teachers and students and unless they become better and help us become better. Indian Higher Education system cannot become or any system cannot become better unless the stakeholders also participate.”***

# INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Gandhi's ideal accords to the 'bread and butter' scheme wherein education should aim to put to use to acquire basic necessities of life. He envisioned a life devoid of materialism and believed firmly in a self-supporting life and systems which aids the economic as well personal development of individuals. He felt that Education is the foundation of character building in a student which encompasses altruism and a life devoid of materialism.

This Education is ingrained in the concept of service to others, including community service and service to the needy and deprived sections. In a more contemporary sense, several theorists and practitioners have been urging to promote deeper interactions between Higher Educational institutions and local communities to identify and solve real life problems and therefore nurture a spirit of mutual benefit (GUNI 2017, 2017). A number of contemporary initiatives in Higher Education also promote facilitating partnerships between local communities and institutions of Higher Education so that students and teachers can learn from local knowledge and wisdom. [1] This dialogue paved the way for highlighting many such innovations in Higher Education which don't just resonate with Gandhi's principles but also exhibit a strong sense of social responsibilities of Higher Education.



This Dialogue was also graced by the presence of two special delegates invited by UNESCO New Delhi Regional office. Left: **Mr Dawa Tshering** from Higher Education and Planning Division, Dept. of Adult & Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Bhutan. Right: **Professor P.S.M. Gunaratne**, Vice Chairman UGC, Sri Lanka

[1] [http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/pdf/resource/Knowledge%20&%20Engagement\\_26-09-16\\_pdf%20ver-mail.pdf](http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/pdf/resource/Knowledge%20&%20Engagement_26-09-16_pdf%20ver-mail.pdf)

**"I don't see the idea of innovation in isolation.**

Your knowledge and actions should benefit your local community," said **Dr. Albogast Kilangi Musabila** from *Mzumbe University, Tanzania*, one of the international delegates who spoke at the international dialogue. He believes that the challenge lies in implementing them; for which one needs to be responsive to societal needs, and respectful of others' ideas which includes our forefathers' values.

Describing Education as the path to salvation, **Prof. Wahidah Zein br Siregar** extolled the value of morality and ethics in bringing happiness to the world.

She also promoted religious education as an important stepping stone for character-building and selfless service.

"The best of you is one who is the best for society," she quoted Gandhi before elaborating on the community engagement practices at *UINSA*, some of which are centered on literacy, microeconomics and corporate social responsibility.

Her presentation is made available here.

**Prof Asyirah Abdul Rahim** spoke about the interrelationships between human (cultural and economic) activities and the environment.

The philosophy and vision of the institution rests on looking at sustainability, humanity, universality, and working for change – with a focus on the bottom billion. Closely linked to Gandhian ideas is the Indonesian idea of *jatra* or wellness (i.e. to actualise harmonious mental, physical, moral, spiritual wellbeing, of students and the society at large and empower the future torchbearers to transform socio-economic wellbeing).

**"Whatever we do is about the community."**

**Prof. Mahazan Abdul Mutalib** is the principal researcher at *USIM's* Mizan Hub that creates sustainable livelihood opportunities. Mizan Centre associated with the hub supports multidisciplinary research that aims to give back to the community, and engages scholars in disciplines ranging from Islamic studies and the arts to medical science, engineering, and technology. Echoing the title of the dialogue, the leadership programme he helms is based on a heart-guided model. Four basic cardinal verities are outlined for all academics, namely wisdom, courage, justice and temperance, qualities common with all transformative leaders around the world like Gandhi.

**NEW PRACTICES IN DURBAN UNIVERSITY  
OF TECHNOLOGY AND GANDHI DEVELOPMENT  
TRUST, SOUTH AFRICA**

Ms. Kanyakumarie Padayachee, Coordinator of the Gandhi Development Trust, Durban (South Africa) presented a paper titled **“Rethinking Higher Education for Social Responsibility in South Africa - Considering Synergies between Gandhian principles and Ubuntu.”**

She drew from Gandhi’s writings, activism and examples, to draw parallels between his concept of the human and humane collector with that of the indigenous African ethic encapsulated in Ubuntu which says “I am because you are,” to demonstrate how these ways of life can be instructive in reinforcing social responsibility through community engagement in high educational institutions in SA.

“South Africa was the crucible that shaped Gandhi’s political activism,” Padayachee remarked, whilst speaking of her country’s post-colonial, post-apartheid history and how western knowledge had sown a culture of economic competitiveness. Subjecting South African students to the grind of western curriculums in college has had demonstrably adverse effects on their mental health, she says.

“We are too near our own time to judge the enormity of the damage done,” she quoted Gandhi in this regard. So a switch to sustainable indigenous knowledge systems is desirable at this point, as there are modelled after a symbiotic relationship between theory and practice.

To buttress her argument, she outlined SA government’s 1997 policy mandate to commit to the common good, by making universities more responsive to the socioeconomic development of the country, desegregating racially divided institutions and diminishing the gap between learning centres and society.

Her presentation was followed by remarks from Prof. Darren Brendan Lortan, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Durban University of Technology (SA) who spoke on behalf of the university narrated emotional accounts and anecdotes of community-based researchers at DUT whose work remain outside the ivory tower despite limited support for community engagement in academic circles. As an educational practitioner himself, he hoped to be able to continue to advocate that the purpose of universities is to affect lives and livelihoods of people not just in strategy but “show that we have made a qualitative impact on society.”

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**INCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES,  
SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF  
VICTORIA, CANADA**

Dr. Crystal Tremblay, community activist and professor of geography at the University of Victoria, shared her vibrant journey working alongside the indigenous Lekwungen people of Canada, listing some of the core principles of indigenous research that can be traced back to the relational and holistic aspects of Gandhian ideas like nurturing a spiritual relationship with land and water. A practitioner of principled indigenous research, Tremblay’s first tryst with participatory research was during her work with waste pickers in Brazil as a postgraduate student. Now, as a professor of geography and a community activist, she works with maps and conducts innovative exercises such as community mapping (not very dissimilar to Prof Margaret Pierce’s developing a decolonized map of Canada and names of its places.) She went on to list some of the principles of indigenous research as laid down by Charlotte Loppe – respect for community protocols and processes, community priorities, distribution of decision-making powers, accommodating complexities and diversities, valuing relationships over projects, allocating funds to communities directly rather than through universities that creates power imbalances, and due credits to diverse knowledge systems.



## Perspectives from East Africa: The case of Gulu University

**Professor George L Openjuru**, Vice Chancellor of *Gulu University in Uganda* spoke about the concept of University Community Engagement and discussed how the university had 'an important role in producing useful knowledge for the community, knowledge that makes life better'.

**"By dialogue, as discussed yesterday, means accepting the other person as your equal and bringing in their own perspective & views into addressing the problems."**

Discussing the scenario in East Africa, he discussed that that there existed no explicit national policies with respect to community engagement, but there existed departments which worked with the same.

Furthermore, stating the idea of the three pillars on which a university stands upon; Teaching, Research & Outreach, he stated that Outreach was a patronizing exercise and there is a need move away from this.

**"There is a need to recognise that knowledge is not the monopoly of university, knowledge also resides outside the universities and that knowledge needs to be recognized. How to tap this knowledge and how to bring it into addressing socio-economic problems?"**

Coming to the work undertaken by Gulu University, he shared how the University was institutionalizing community engagement by putting forth Community Engagement Policy. His presentation can be accessed [here](#).

## Deepening Engaged Teaching and Research in Universities: Examples from University of Sassari, Italy

"There is a need to go back to the people, go back to persons" is a philosophy propagated by various Italian thinkers and in line with the Gandhian philosophy. **Dr. Andrea Vargui** from University of Sassari introduced the concept of "Promotional Community" which means:

**"Valorization & Promotion of community and human persons through community self-governance based on enhancement of local, spiritual, cultural and material resources, through diffused and participatory education and generalized improvement in living conditions."**

He then moved onto providing the participants of the dialogue with an example of the work undertaken by University of Sassari; "Participatory Community Project Platform for Social Innovation & Active Inclusion". This project benefits several stakeholders. It helps the students learning with and from the community. It benefits the community. And lastly, the community based research is one which is demand driven. It benefits at all stages of research whether it be design, data or analysis or the impact.

**"You can see the impact whereas with publications you don't see the impact, you see how many citations you have, you look for a proxy of a proxy, what you see directly on the ground when you engage with the community,"** says Dr. Vargui.



## **STORY OF DAYALBAGH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE**

Thousands of miles away in India, this philosophy at the centre of the Gandhian school of thought was already in practice at the Dayalbagh Educational Institute (DEI) near Agra. Dr. Anand Mohan, Registrar of DEI, shared its vision to empower the weakest sections of society, build economy through frugal innovations, achieve more with less, and contribute to better worldliness. DEI offers a novel multidisciplinary, value-based, comprehensive educational programme that aims to bring about physical, emotional, mental and ethical integration of an individual with a view to evolve into 'a complete person.' In keeping with the Gandhian thought of the day, Dr Agarwal said, "Education must bring out the best of the body, mind and spirit. That's what we practise." He went on to introduce a concept called 'Sigma 6Q' which is the outcome of 6 qualities: innovation, education, healthcare, water and air quality, agriculture, and human values. He was also pleased to announced that community participation by the students has led to afforestation and cultivation over large swatches of fallow land in Dayalbagh through practices such as organic farming, reclamation of wasteland, safe disposal of garbage and irrigation using water from DEI's government-funded sewage treatment plant.

**"No groundwater is exploited and most of the power is sourced from the local solar grid; the produce is mostly consumed and surplus water is shared with neighbouring villages – this sustainable development has transformed the area into an eco-habitat."**



Taking advantage of the presence of a large international delegation from over 15 countries, and celebrating the Gandhian spirit of community work, PRIA organized a day of Field visits for the participants.



*Work with adolscent boys and girls in Panipat, Haryana to enhance leadership and address their career ambitions*



*Addressing issues of Sexual Harrasment for female domestic workers in Gurgaon, Haryana*



*Supporting young girls & boys in government schools in Delhi to complete their education, strengthen their agency and get gender sensitized*

# GANDHI ON KNOWLEDGE DEMOCRACY



Striking a hopeful chord, UNESCO Co-Chair **Dr. Budd Hall** reminded those gathered of their peers around the world, engaged in important work in bringing community knowledge into the classroom to finding solutions to issues ranging from climate change to gender discrimination. He made the critical observation that universities, just like corporations, the state and the church, were sites of contestation.

The **Knowledge for Change (K4C)** program is one such platform that allows vibrant contestation while staying committed to bringing positive changes to the society we are a part of. He also voiced the need in this regard, to overthrow the culture of epistemicide and to decolonise knowledge systems from western hegemony with the help of Gandhian teachings relevant to the contemporary world.

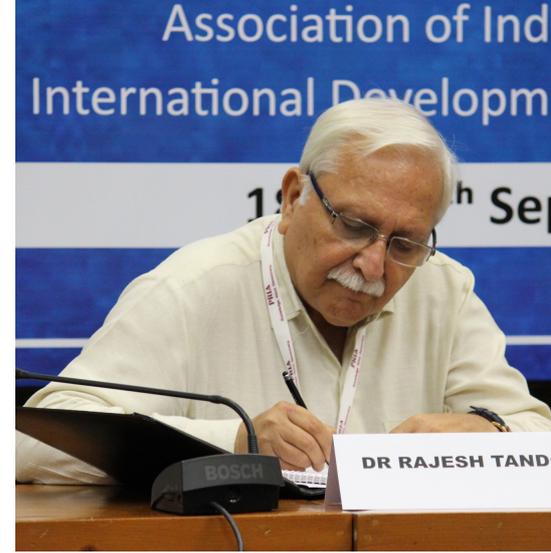
The UNESCO Co-Chairs also took the opportunity to award three graduating mentors their professional qualification certificates.

In light of the topic of knowledge democracy and the need for inclusion of community engagement in mainstream education, **Prof. Catherine Krull, Special Advisor to the Provost, University of Victoria** said,

"As we understand the institution and the university, how we have understood it, it is unlikely to be a gain because now universities do not have ownership of knowledge."

"Knowledge is something that we are only now appreciating exists in a number of different communities that before in the hierarchical model with universities at the top, we simply ignored or dismissed as folk knowledge, not real knowledge'."





In the contemporary times, for Higher Education and vernaculars; Gandhi's visions hold great importance. The need for young people to learn, think, read and write in their own vernaculars has never been more felt. With the increasing homogenization of cultures, lifestyles and thoughts; Gandhi was ahead of his time in pointing out the urgency to revive the languages which belongs to the masses and which defines them. He said that the future is going to suffer an immeasurable loss in mastering a foreign language and discarding one's mother tongue and literature. Gandhi commented:

*"There never was a greater superstition than that a particular language can be incapable of expansion or expressing abstruse or scientific ideas. A language is an exact reflection of the character and growth of its speakers. Among the many evils of foreign rule this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest. It has sapped the energy of the nation, it has shortened the lives of the pupils, it has estranged them from the masses, it has made education unnecessarily expensive. If this process is still persisted in, it bids fair to rob the nation of its soul. The sooner therefore educated India shakes itself free from the hypnotic spell of the foreign medium, the better it would be for them and the people."*<sup>[1][1]</sup> **Young India, 5-7-1928.**

## EPILOGUE

In his closing address, Dr. Tandon highlighted the disconnect in modern education that renders students unable to apply the concepts that they study to reality. Marveling at how far we have regressed in the name of progress, he highlighted the power imbalance between those who do and those who know. To ensure that knowledge is no longer accumulated in the hands of the privileged few, we must switch to community-based lifelong learning, he said. Placing the onus on traditional knowledge systems one last time, Dr. Tandon signed off with an important reminder: "If you devalue your own knowledge, you won't be powered to accept new knowledge."

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This E-Book has been conceptualized, designed and created by

**Ms. Pooja Pandey, India Coordinator, UNESCO Chair  
in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility  
in Higher Education**

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# ANNEXURE PROGRAM DESIGN



## **Educating the Mind, Body and Heart**

### **International Dialogue on Gandhi and Higher Education Today**

**Jointly Organized By:** UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education

UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office

Association of Indian Universities (AIU)

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

**September 18 - 20, 2019; New Delhi**

### **AGENDA**

#### **POLICY ROUNDTABLE**

**Making Higher Education Relevant to Society: Lessons from Gandhi**

**September 18, 2019**

**Hosted By: Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi**

#### **Venue**

**Lecture Room No.1**

**India International Centre (IIC) Annexe**

**40, Max Mueller Marg, Lodhi Gardens, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi,**

9. 30 am - 10 am	<b>Registration</b>
10.00 am- 10.15 am	<p><b><u>Opening Remarks</u></b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr (Mrs.) Pankaj Mittal (Secretary General, Association of Indian Universities)</p> <p><b>Co-Chair:</b> Dr. Rajesh Tandon (Co-Chair UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility of Higher Education Institutes)</p>
10.15 am - 10.35 am	<p><b>Special Address: Gandhi’s Vision and Values for Higher Education</b></p> <p><b>Dr. PV Rajagopal:</b> Managing Trustee of IGINP (International Gandhian Initiative for Nonviolence and Peace), eminent Gandhian practitioner</p>
10.35 am - 11.00 am	<p><b>Keynote Address: Principles and Perspectives in Higher Education Policies in India</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan:</b> Vice-Chairman, University Grants Commission (UGC), Government of India</p>
11.00 am - 11.30 am	<b>Open Discussion</b>
11.30 am - 12.15 pm	<p><b>Dialogue on Societal Relevance of Higher Education: International Policy Perspectives</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Policy Perspectives from East Africa:</b> Prof. George L Openjuru , Vice Chancellor, Gulu University, Uganda</li> <li><b>b. Deepening Societal Engagement of Higher Education in Canada:</b> Prof. Catherine Krull, Special Advisor to the Provost, University of Victoria</li> <li><b>c. Policy Convergence to Deepen Engaged Teaching &amp; Research in Italy:</b> Prof. Alberto Merler, University of Sassari, Italy Prof. Andrea Vargiu, Professor, University of Sassari, Italy</li> </ul>

12.15 pm - 12.50 pm	<b>Open Discussion</b>
12.50 pm - 01.00 pm	<p><b>Closing Reflections</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Budd Hall:</b> Co-Chair UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility of Higher Education Institutes</p>



## **Educating the Mind, Body and Heart**

### **International Dialogue on Gandhi and Higher Education Today**

**Jointly Organized By:** UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education

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#### **AGENDA**



## **GANDHI IN HIGHER EDUCATION: National and International Perspectives**

**Date: September 20, 2019**

**Venue:** UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office

**1 San Martin Marg, Chanakyapuri,**

**New Delhi - 110021**

10.00 am- 10.30 am	<p><b>Registration</b></p>
10.30 am- 11 am	<p><b>Welcome Address</b></p> <p>Mr. Eric Falt (Director and UNESCO Representative to Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka)</p> <p><b>Setting Stage</b></p> <p>Dr. Rajesh Tandon (Co-Chair UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education)</p>
11 am- 1 pm	<p><b>Gandhian Principles &amp; Practices in Higher Education</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr. Anindya Chatterjee, Regional Director, Asia, IDRC</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>‘Nai Taleem’ in Universities:</b> Dr. W G Prasanna Kumar, Chairman Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education (MGNCRE)</li> <li>2. <b>New Practices in Durban University of Technology, South Africa:</b> Prof. Darren Brendan Lortan, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Durban University of Technology, Durban , South Africa  Ms. Kanyakumarie Padayachee, Coordinator: Gandhi Development Trust, Durban, South Africa</li> <li>3. <b>Innovations in Teaching Peace at BHU:</b> Prof. Priyankar Upadhyay, Chairholder, UNESCO Chair for Peace and Intercultural Understanding &amp; Coordinator, Malaviya Centre for Peace Research, Faculty of Social Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi</li> <li>4. <b>Inclusion of Indigenous Perspectives, Scholars and Students in University of Victoria, Canada:</b> Dr. Crystal Tremblay, Assistant Professor and Special Advisor on Community Engaged Scholarship, Department of Geography, University of Victoria</li> </ol> <p><b>Open Discussions</b></p>
1 pm- 1.30 pm	<p><b>Lunch</b></p>

**1.30 pm- 3.30 pm**

## **Innovative Practices Inspired by Gandhian Principles**

**Chair:** Dr. K. K. Agarwal, Chairman, National Board of Accreditation (NBA)

### **Panel Discussion**

**1. Story of Dayalbagh Educational Institute**

Prof. Anand Mohan, Registrar, Dayalbagh Educational Institute (Deemed University), Agra, India

**2. Gandhi, Indonesian Islam, and Innovative Practices of Community Engagement at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya-Indonesia**

Wahidah Zein br Siregar, Vice rector for academic affairs, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia

**3. Environmental Humanities: Innovations in Community-Engaged teaching at University Sains Malaysia**

Prof. Asyirah Abdul Rahim, Senior Lecturer, Geography Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia

**4. Nyerere & Gandhi: Innovations in Higher Education in Mzumbe University, Tanzania:**

Dr. Albogast Kilangi Musabila, Director – DLTS, TESCEA - Co-Lead , VLIRUOS - 4SITE Programme Coordinator, EU - ACTEA Project Coordinator, Mzumbe University, Mzumbe, Tanzania

**5. Creating Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities Policy**

Mahazan Abdul Mutalib, Faculty of Leadership and Management, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM).

### **Open Discussions**

**3.30 pm - 4.00 pm**

**Closing Reflections: Drs. Budd Hall and Rajesh Tandon**