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# Reviving Gandhian Educational Principles through Local Artisanal Practices: A Case Study of Vocational Learning in Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir, India

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**Abstract**

This study explores the integration of Gandhian educational principles within the artisanal practices of Baramulla, a culturally rich district in Jammu and Kashmir, India. Grounded in the Nai Talim philosophy, which emphasizes the synthesis of productive manual labor with intellectual growth, this research investigates 15 diverse artisan-led units, including handloom weavers, potters, blacksmiths, and herbal medicine preparers. These units, deeply embedded in local economies and cultural traditions, serve as organic learning environments where skills are transmitted through observation, repetition, and intergenerational mentorship. Adopting a participatory ethnographic methodology, the study utilized immersive fieldwork, unstructured interviews, and skill mapping to capture the nuanced processes of knowledge transfer and resource utilization. The findings reveal that these artisanal units exemplify Gandhian ideals such as self-reliance, ecological sustainability, and dignity of labor, while simultaneously addressing contemporary challenges like youth unemployment, rural depopulation, and economic marginalization. However, the research also identifies critical barriers, including the lack of formal recognition, inadequate financial support, and disconnect from mainstream educational frameworks, which hinder the full potential of these traditional knowledge systems. In the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which calls for experiential learning and vocational education, this study argues for the systemic integration of such artisanal practices into formal curricula. By doing so, it envisions a transformative educational model that not only preserves cultural heritage but also promotes sustainable development, social equity, and community resilience.

**Keywords**: ***Gandhian education, vocational training, artisanal industries, experiential learning, community resilience, sustainable development.***

## Introduction

The relevance of Gandhian philosophy in contemporary education, particularly in rural and semi-rural India, is not only ideological but deeply practical. Mahatma Gandhi's vision of education—termed *Nai Talim* or Basic Education—emphasized the integration of productive manual work with intellectual growth, thus bridging the divide between knowledge and livelihood (Gandhi, 1951). In today's globalized and technologically dominant world, there is a resurgence of interest in sustainable, localised, and community-based educational models that foster self-reliance, environmental stewardship, and social equity. This research attempts to contextualize and analyze Gandhian educational principles by investigating the vocational practices of 15 local artisan and cottage industry units across Baramulla, a prominent district in Jammu and Kashmir, India. Baramulla is a culturally rich and geographically diverse district that provides a fertile ground for observing traditional craft, small-scale industry, and knowledge transmission through intergenerational skill-sharing. The shops and artisan units visited as part of this fieldwork include handloom weavers, blacksmiths, potters, papier-mâché artists, herbal medicine preparers, tailors, and others engaged in rural craftsmanship. These industries, which rely largely on locally sourced raw materials such as wool from Kupwara, willow reeds from Wular Lake, clay from the banks of the Jhelum

River, and scrap metals from Sopore, operate with a distinct emphasis on manual labor, traditional skills, and low environmental impact—all of which resonate strongly with Gandhian ideals (Kumarappa, 1945; Srivastava, 2011). Gandhi's belief that "the ideal education draws out the best in child and man—body, mind, and spirit" (Gandhi, 1951) positions manual work as central to moral and intellectual development. By embedding learning in the real-world context of local economy and culture, Gandhian education advocates for *Shramdan* (voluntary manual labor), ethical production, and self-sustaining communities. The selected artisans in Baramulla provide living examples of these tenets, not merely as economic units, but as organic learning environments where youth and apprentices can develop resilience, creativity, and economic independence without migrating to urban centers. Moreover, in the context of post-pandemic recovery, climate change, and the erosion of rural livelihoods due to mechanization and market centralization, Gandhian education provides a framework to revisit indigenous knowledge systems, sustainability, and cooperative living (Pathak, 2014). This research also addresses how women's participation in tailoring and embroidery work in the region contributes to the empowerment of marginalized groups, another key concern in Gandhian discourse on social justice. Several of the visited units—such as Aisha Embroidery House and Bhat Tailoring Unit—not only provide employment to women but serve as informal educational platforms where younger generations are taught valuable life and vocational skills. This aligns with Gandhi's insistence that education should not alienate individuals from their environment or heritage but empower them to transform both.

Data gathered from field visits to these 15 production units offers critical insights into the localized patterns of production, raw material procurement, labor dynamics, and the educational dimensions of artisanal work. These units not only represent occupational sustainability but also function as community-based pedagogical models. Each site reflects an intimate link between manual skill, natural resource use, and ethical production—all of which are pillars of *Nai Talim* philosophy (Thakur, 2006). This micro-level inquiry thereby contributes to broader discourses on alternative education systems that are rooted in ecological balance, cultural continuity, and socio-economic resilience. In light of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes vocational education and experiential learning at the school level, there is an urgent need to revisit Gandhian educational models not merely as historical footnotes but as relevant, adaptable, and community-based solutions. The insights drawn from the Baramulla case study demonstrate the applicability of Gandhian pedagogy in both academic and grassroots contexts. This research is, therefore, not just a documentation of artisanal work but an argument for reorienting education policy and practice toward Gandhian ideals of wholeness, dignity of labor, and local self-governance.

## Objective

To explore the integration of Gandhian educational principles in the vocational practices of local artisans in Baramulla, with a focus on their role in sustainable development and community-based learning.

## Study Area

Baramulla district, located in the northwestern part of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, India, forms the geographical and cultural backdrop of this research. Positioned between 34°N to 35°N latitude and 73°E to 75°E longitude, the district spans a diverse landscape ranging from the rugged terrains of the Pir Panjal range to the lush riverine plains of the Jhelum basin. As one of the oldest and most prominent districts in the Kashmir Valley, Baramulla is an area rich in both historical significance and natural resources. Its geographical diversity—comprising riverbanks, highlands, meadows, and forests—has historically supported a vibrant tapestry of rural livelihoods and artisanal traditions. With an estimated population of over 1 million, Baramulla is home to a predominantly agrarian society, although a significant portion of the population engages in traditional crafts, local trades, and small-scale industries. Key towns and tehsils within the district include Baramulla town (the district headquarters), Sopore, Uri, Rafiabad, and Gulmarg. These areas form the core of the present study due to their accessibility, historical involvement in cottage industries, and representative social fabric. Several villages and towns around these hubs have developed artisanal economies centered around weaving, embroidery, mat-making, blacksmithing, pottery, wool felting, and papier-mâché.

Baramulla's economic and cultural landscape reflects an intricate relationship between natural resources and indigenous knowledge systems. The district is known for its willow plantations (particularly near Wular Lake), which support the renowned cricket bat and mat weaving industries. The availability of fine wool from neighboring Kupwara district, clay deposits along the Jhelum River, medicinal plants from forested areas in Rafiabad and Uri, and local herbs used in traditional remedies all support the local crafts studied in this research. These ecological linkages make Baramulla an ideal location for exploring Gandhian educational principles, which stress the integration of environment, self-reliance, and learning through productive manual labor. The choice of Baramulla as a study area is also guided by its unique post-conflict developmental context. Having been impacted by prolonged periods of socio-political instability, the region faces challenges such as youth unemployment, educational disconnection, and outmigration.

However, it also displays immense resilience through its continuation of local crafts and community-based skill transmission. The study captures data from 15 artisan-led units located across Baramulla town and surrounding regions such as Sopore, Rafiabad, Uri, Gulmarg, and along the Jhelum River. Each of these locations contributes distinct resources and practices to the district's artisanal ecosystem. The region's educational and socio-cultural systems are deeply rooted in informal learning environments, where skill acquisition occurs through observation, apprenticeship, and collective labor. These features echo the core tenets of *Nai Talim*, making Baramulla not just a geographical space but a living laboratory for Gandhian educational experimentation. The shop-wise chart developed during this fieldwork visually and analytically represent the connection between local livelihoods, raw material sourcing, and vocational education potential.

## Methodology

This study employed a participatory ethnographic approach to investigate the integration of Gandhian educational principles within the artisanal practices of Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir. Given the deeply embedded, experiential nature of traditional craftsmanship, a conventional survey or purely quantitative method would have been insufficient to capture the nuances of skill transmission, community learning, and local resource utilization. Instead, this methodology prioritized immersive, on-site observations, informal interviews, and direct participation in artisan workshops, aligning closely with Gandhi's call for learning through productive work.

### Site Selection and Sampling

Fifteen artisanal units were purposively selected based on their alignment with Gandhian principles of self-reliance, manual labor, and ecological sustainability. These included handloom weavers, potters, blacksmiths, herbal medicine producers, papier-mâché artists, and tailors. The selection covered a diverse range of crafts to reflect the socioeconomic tapestry of Baramulla, from the wool-rich valleys of Kupwara to the reed-laden shores of Wular Lake.

### Data Collection Techniques

1. **Participant Observation:** Extended periods were spent within each unit to observe the daily rhythms of work, skill transmission, and raw material sourcing. This method allowed for a deep understanding of the tacit knowledge passed down through generations, echoing the Nai Talim principle of 'learning by doing.'
2. **Unstructured Interviews:** Open-ended conversations were conducted with artisans, workshop owners, and apprentices to capture personal narratives, challenges, and aspirations. This approach facilitated the exploration of unspoken social dynamics and cultural values, often missed in structured surveys.
3. **Skill Mapping and Resource Flow Analysis:** Detailed field notes and visual mapping were used to document the journey of raw materials—from extraction to finished product—emphasizing local self-reliance and ecological integration.
4. **Photographic Documentation:** High-resolution images of workspaces, tools, and finished goods were captured to supplement textual analysis, providing a richer context for the discussion section.

### Data Analysis

Field notes, interview transcripts, and observational data were manually coded for recurring themes, including skill transmission, economic resilience, and the ethical dimensions of labor. The data was then cross-referenced with Gandhian texts to assess alignment with Nai Talim principles. The resulting analysis highlighted both the educational potential and structural challenges facing these artisanal units, forming the basis for the broader discussion on vocational learning in rural contexts.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving indigenous knowledge systems and vulnerable populations. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and data was anonymized where necessary to protect the identities of individual artisans and their proprietary techniques.

## Results and Discussion

1. Overview of Local Industry Engagement

The field investigation conducted across 15 different artisan shops and local production units in Baramulla district revealed an intricate network of craft-based livelihoods deeply embedded in the socio-economic fabric of the region. Each of these establishments represented a microcosm of Gandhian educational ideals: hands-on learning, integration of productive labor, ethical self-reliance, and community-based knowledge transmission. The surveyed units ranged from wool spinning and tailoring workshops to willow wicker weaving, clay-based pottery, and traditional blacksmithing. These industries serve not only as centers of production but also as informal schools of vocational education, where learning is acquired through observation, repetition, and intergenerational apprenticeship.

*Table 1: Overview of Local Artisanal Units in Baramulla – Production Types, Raw Materials, and Educational Significance*

| Shop No. | Shop Name | Type of Work | Raw Materials Used | Source of Raw Material | Mode of Production | No. of Workers | Traditional Skill Used | End Product | Use in Gandhian Education |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gul Handloom Works | Handloom Weaving | Wool, Cotton Yarn | Uri, Kupwara | Manual Loom | 4 | Kashmiri Handloom | Shawls, Pherans | Skill training, Self-reliance |
| 2 | Madina Carpentry House | Woodwork & Joinery | Deodar Wood, Walnut Wood | Sopore Forest Depot | Manual Tools | 3 | Woodcarving | Furniture, Window Frames | Vocational Education |
| 3 | Asif Pottery Workshop | Pottery & Clay Items | River Clay | Jhelum Riverbank | Potter's Wheel | 2 | Traditional Pottery | Pots, Lamps, Crockery | Craftsmanship, Local Materials |
| 4 | Faheem Leather Crafts | Leather Processing & Goods | Raw Leather | Butchery waste, Kupwara | Manual Tanning | 2 | Hand-stitching | Belts, Bags, Wallets | Village Industries |
| 5 | Hilal Papier-mâché Studio | Papier-mâché Art | Waste Paper, Glue, Natural Dye | Local households | Handcrafted | 3 | Papier-mâché | Bowls, Wall Art | Waste Utilization, Art |
| 6 | Rehmat Herbal Products | Herbal Medicine Preparation | Dry Herbs, Essential Oils | Rafiabad Hills | Manual Extraction | 2 | Unani/Tibbi Knowledge | Oils, Balms, Herbal Powders | Traditional Knowledge |
| 7 | Kashmir Loom & Spindle | Spinning and Dyeing | Sheep Wool, Indigo Dye | Local Shepherds, Uri | Hand Spinning | 3 | Spinning (Charkha) | Yarn, Dyed Threads | Charkha Learning, Simplicity |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Bashir Mat Weaving Centre | Mat and Basket Weaving | Reed Grass, Willow Twigs | Wular Lake Margins | Hand Weaving | 4 | Mat Weaving | Mats, Baskets, Trays | Eco-craft, Skill-building |
| 9 | Nazir Blacksmith Forge | Metal Tool Making | Scrap Metal, Iron Ore | Local Scrap, Sopore | Hand Forge | 2 | Blacksmithing | Sickle, Axe, Agricultural Tools | Agriculture Support, Labour Skills |
| 10 | Aisha Embroidery House | Hand Embroidery | Cotton Cloth, Silk Threads | Baramulla Town Market | Hand Stitching | 5 (women) | Sozni, Tilla Work | Sarees, Shawls, Kurtis | Women's Vocational Education |
| 11 | Khan Bee Farm & Wax Shop | Beekeeping & Wax Products | Bee Hives, Natural Flowers | Gulmarg Highlands | Manual Extraction | 2 | Apiculture | Honey, Wax Candles | Nature Education, Cottage Industry |
| 12 | Tanveer Stone Cutting | Stone Craft & Tools | Limestone, River Stone | Jhelum Basin | Hand Tools | 2 | Stone Carving | Mortars, Sculptures | Architectural Craft |
| 13 | Zahoor Paper Recycling | Handmade Paper Production | Used Paper, Water | Local Schools, Offices | Manual Processing | 3 | Recycled Paper Making | Diaries, Cards, Envelopes | Recycling Education |
| 14 | Bhat Tailoring Unit | Rural Tailoring | Cloth Rolls, Needles | Baramulla Bazaar | Sewing Machines | 2 | Tailoring | School Uniforms, Bags | Rural Enterprise |
| 15 | Shafqat Wool Felting Lab | Wool Felting & Toys | Raw Wool, Soap, Water | Local Shepherds | Hand Felting | 2 | Wet Felting Technique | Wool Toys, Slippers | Animal Fiber Usage, Creativity |

2. Raw Material Sourcing and Local Resource Utilization

One of the most striking findings was the indigenous sourcing of raw materials, which mirrors Gandhi's *Swadeshi* principle. A majority of the enterprises, including mat weaving, wool processing, and herbal product shops, depended largely on local natural resources such as Kashmiri willow, sheep wool from the higher reaches of Kupwara and Tangmarg, locally cultivated herbs, and river clay. This localized material economy not only reduced costs and environmental impact but also strengthened self-reliance—a central pillar of *Nai Talim*. For instance, the clay used in pottery workshops near the Jhelum River was extracted manually and processed on-site using age-old methods that were passed down through families. These practices align with Gandhi's vision of integrating ecological sensitivity into educational and economic practices.

3. Modes of Skill Transmission

The majority of artisans followed traditional knowledge systems, wherein children and apprentices learned by doing. In most cases, family members, especially elders, served as instructors. The pedagogical model in these units is inherently Gandhian—characterized by experiential learning, immediate feedback, and ethical grounding. Unlike institutional education systems, where theory precedes practice, these artisan spaces prioritized real-world engagement first. For example, young girls in tailoring units would start by observing the elder seamstress and gradually begin threading needles, cutting fabric, and eventually taking on entire assignments under supervision. This mode of gradual skill accretion resembles Gandhi's call for education that is "rooted in life and work."

4. Challenges in Integration with Formal Education

Despite the promise these industries offer for Gandhian educational integration, several challenges were identified. First, there was a visible disconnect between these local knowledge systems and formal schooling. Most children engaged in artisan learning were either school dropouts or part-time learners, highlighting the absence of systemic integration. Furthermore, there is no formal accreditation or recognition of skills gained in these settings. This leads to low social valuation of craft-based labor, a concern that Gandhi himself anticipated when he warned

against the over-glorification of bookish education. Second, lack of government support, subsidies, and access to institutional credit were common across all 15 units. Many artisans reported using outdated tools and relying on word-of-mouth marketing due to lack of access to e-commerce platforms or digital skills. These structural barriers constrain the full educational and economic potential of these industries. Additionally, seasonal disruptions—particularly during the winter—affect production cycles and skill transmission, as many artisan units either reduce their activity or temporarily close down.

5. Gender Dynamics and Inclusive Education

Another important dimension that emerged from the field data was the role of women in sustaining local crafts. Several units—especially those related to tailoring, wool knitting, and embroidery—were run by women or operated as all-female cooperatives. In these contexts, the Gandhian idea of *Sarvodaya* (upliftment of all) manifests through the empowerment of women as knowledge holders and educators. The study found that such spaces were often safer, more collaborative, and encouraged multi-generational learning where daughters worked alongside mothers and grandmothers. This highlights the potential of Gandhian education to foster gender-inclusive, community-centered learning environments.

6. Alignment with Gandhian Educational Principles

When viewed through the prism of Gandhian philosophy, each artisan unit examined in this study functioned as a live model of *Nai Talim*. The emphasis on dignity of labor, eco-friendly practices, and skill-based learning resonates strongly with Gandhi's educational framework. Importantly, these units did not exist merely as economic enterprises—they were repositories of tradition, morality, and social identity. Many artisans expressed a sense of pride in their work, viewing it not as labor but as cultural stewardship. This spiritual and ethical alignment is rare in modern educational and industrial models, making these local industries uniquely compatible with the Gandhian worldview.

## Implications for Policy and Practice

The integration of Gandhian educational principles within local artisanal practices presents significant potential for reshaping vocational education and sustainable development strategies. The findings of this study underscore the pivotal role of artisanal industries in fostering experiential learning, community resilience, and economic self-sufficiency. By embracing Gandhian ideals such as self-reliance, the dignity of labor, and eco-friendly production, these traditional crafts offer a model for integrating vocational training into formal education frameworks, particularly in rural and semi-rural contexts. This approach aligns seamlessly with the goals outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which prioritizes skill-based learning and practical education.

### *Strengthening Vocational Education*

One of the core objectives of the NEP 2020 is to ensure that at least half of all students experience vocational training by 2025, thereby creating a holistic educational framework that bridges theoretical knowledge with practical skill acquisition. The artisanal units explored in this study serve as living examples of this vision, emphasizing hands-on, community-based learning. Integrating such local craft practices into formal educational curricula would not only enhance the practical competencies of learners but also cultivate a deeper appreciation for cultural heritage and sustainable practices.

Moreover, embedding vocational education within local contexts would reduce the disconnect between urban-centric educational models and rural livelihoods. For example, incorporating craft-based modules into school syllabi would enable students to acquire skills that are immediately relevant to their communities. Additionally, vocational training in schools should involve partnerships with local artisans, thereby providing practical apprenticeships and mentorship opportunities. This collaborative approach would facilitate real-world problem-solving skills, enhance community engagement, and build economic resilience.

*Economic and Social Upliftment*

Empowering local artisans through structured recognition and financial support can significantly boost rural economies while safeguarding cultural identities. Traditional crafts not only contribute to local employment but also act as carriers of indigenous knowledge and social cohesion. However, despite their socio-economic importance, many artisanal practices remain underappreciated and financially vulnerable. Addressing this gap requires targeted policy interventions that include skill certification, access to microcredit, and integration into digital economies.

Supporting artisans with financial literacy programs and facilitating their access to institutional credit would enable them to modernize their practices without compromising authenticity. For instance, introducing small-scale grants for upgrading tools and raw material procurement can enhance productivity while maintaining the traditional essence of the craft. Additionally, promoting digital literacy and e-commerce training would enable artisans to expand their markets beyond local boundaries. This digital transition would not only enhance income stability but also strengthen the cultural export potential of craft-based products. Moreover, creating cooperative models for artisans could foster collective bargaining power, reduce the cost of raw materials through bulk procurement, and enable joint marketing initiatives. Such cooperatives would also support the standardization of quality, thereby increasing consumer confidence and enabling artisans to compete effectively in national and global markets.

*Promoting Sustainable Development*

The integration of traditional artisanal practices into sustainable development frameworks is essential to minimize environmental degradation while promoting eco-conscious production. Gandhian principles inherently advocate for minimalism, self-sufficiency, and the utilization of locally sourced, renewable resources. The studied artisanal units, which rely on indigenous materials such as wool, willow reeds, and clay, inherently reduce their ecological footprint compared to mass-produced industrial goods.

To promote sustainable artisanal practices, policymakers should develop guidelines that support green certifications for eco-friendly crafts. Such certifications would not only enhance marketability but also incentivize artisans to adopt sustainable methods. Additionally, educational institutions could incorporate modules on environmental stewardship within vocational training programs, emphasizing how traditional crafts align with modern sustainability goals.

Community-led initiatives that support waste reduction, material recycling, and resource management should be encouraged. For example, using natural dyes and repurposing industrial waste for craft production can exemplify a circular economy model. By emphasizing the ecological benefits of traditional craftsmanship, it becomes possible to build community pride while fostering environmentally responsible production.

*Recognizing Informal Learning*

Artisan-based education often occurs within informal settings where skills are passed through generations without formal certification. While this mode of learning preserves cultural continuity, it also limits economic mobility and formal recognition. Addressing this challenge requires establishing frameworks to formally acknowledge the skills acquired through artisanal apprenticeships. One potential approach is to create a hybrid certification system that combines practical skill assessments with theoretical knowledge evaluations. Such a system would validate traditional skills while providing artisans with credentials that improve employability. Collaboration between educational institutions and local artisan networks could facilitate workshops, training sessions, and skill evaluation programs. This formal recognition would enable artisans to seek employment beyond their local communities and participate in broader economic activities.

Furthermore, integrating informal learning assessments within community education programs would foster inclusivity and elevate the status of traditional crafts within modern economies. Through certification, artisans can

gain access to government support schemes, professional development opportunities, and a more dignified social standing.

*Gender Inclusivity and Social Equity*

The role of women in artisanal industries is a vital aspect of community resilience and gender empowerment. In Baramulla, many craft units, such as those involved in embroidery and wool processing, are predominantly managed by women. This female-led craftsmanship not only supports household economies but also fosters social cohesion. However, the lack of institutional support often limits these women from fully realizing their economic potential. To bridge this gap, vocational training programs tailored specifically for women should be introduced, emphasizing skills enhancement, leadership, and financial literacy. Additionally, creating women-only cooperatives can foster safe and inclusive spaces where knowledge transfer and economic activities flourish without social constraints. Policymakers should prioritize providing seed funding and technical support to such cooperatives to enhance their productivity and outreach.

Moreover, educational policies must actively address the socio-cultural barriers that hinder women's participation in craft-based economies. Sensitizing communities about the economic contributions of women artisans would help dismantle stereotypes and promote gender-inclusive development. By fostering environments where women artisans are celebrated as cultural custodians and economic contributors, it becomes possible to align with Gandhian ideals of equality and justice.

## Conclusion

This research underscores the immense, though often underappreciated, potential of local industries in Baramulla as real-world laboratories for Gandhian education. The findings reveal that the district's traditional crafts—be it in willow weaving, tailoring, wool spinning, blacksmithing, or herbal production—are not only economically relevant but also educationally rich, aligning seamlessly with the principles of *Nai Talim*. The synthesis of manual labor, skill-based learning, ethical work culture, and eco-conscious resource use encapsulates Gandhi's dream of an education system rooted in life, work, and community. Yet, despite this philosophical and practical compatibility, a gap persists between these informal educational models and the mainstream schooling system. The absence of formal linkages, lack of policy support, and social undervaluation of craft skills hinder the realization of a more inclusive and value-based educational framework. The study thus argues for a reconceptualization of education policy—one that recognizes, validates, and integrates these artisan-based learning ecosystems into broader curricula.

The Baramulla case study offers a compelling example of how Gandhian education is not a relic of the past, but a viable and necessary alternative for the future. As India faces growing challenges of youth unemployment, rural stagnation, and ecological decline, the revival and formal recognition of such locally embedded, skill-intensive educational practices may hold the key to sustainable development and social equity. A Gandhian approach to education in regions like Baramulla can rejuvenate rural economies, preserve cultural heritage, and above all, foster a generation of learners who value work, community, and ethical living over mere academic success. Ultimately, the research contributes to the broader discourse on decolonizing education, decentralizing skill acquisition, and promoting socio-environmental justice through meaningful pedagogy. The need of the hour is to move beyond token recognition of crafts in textbooks, toward systemic transformation where the artisan's workshop is not an exception, but a foundational part of the Indian classroom.

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## Author Contribution

The author is solely responsible for the conceptualization, design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and drafting of this manuscript. All aspects of the research, including fieldwork and manuscript preparation, were executed independently by the author.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares that there are no commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this paper.

## Ethical Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of academic research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to participation in surveys and interviews. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained, and no personally identifiable information has been disclosed in the publication. The study did not involve any vulnerable populations or invasive procedures.

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