CHAPTER V

HIS IDEAS OF EDUCATION

This chapter deals with Kripalani's educational ideas and also some of the educational activities which he undertook as an extension of his ideas. The chapter is organised into two broad sections. The first section traces the evolution of the educational policies and ideas in the recent history of India and dwells mainly on the contribution of Kripalani to the development of basic education system under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. After this rather detailed section comes a case study. Chronologically, the case study comes somewhere between the evolutionary part of the first section and the analysis of basic education. In order to avoid the interposing of the case study, the case study is located at the end of the first section. The case study deals with the activities and experiments of education which Kripalani conducted when he stayed in Banaras in the early part of his career. The case study section and the basic education section are complementary in terms of Kripalani's ideas and concerns.
We may say that the year 1835 was the turning point in the history of Indian education. In this year, Lord Macaulay, the Law Member of the Governor General's Executive Council and also President of a Committee on Public Instruction, presented his minute to Lord Bentinck. In his minute he had strongly favoured the introduction of English as the medium of instruction. The reason for this was that he had neither the knowledge of Sanskrit nor of Arabic.

Lord William Bentinck, Governor General of India, accepted the arguments propounded by Macaulay and said, "I give my entire concurrence to the sentiments expressed in this minute."

Several Indian leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy welcomed the introduction of English education in India. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who came on the scene much later had on the whole a favourable view of this kind of education. He held that "English education brought a widening of Indian horizons,

an admiration for English literature and institutions, a revolt against some customs and aspects of Indian life and a growing demand for political reform."

But there are several other leaders who have argued that English education in India has produced several unfortunate results. Ramsay MacDonald, one-time Prime Minister of England, observed that English education had made Indian people feel inferior despite their own culture and created in them the mental Eurasianism which is appalling. He said that the minds of such people educated in such a system are nomads. They do not belong to any civilization, country or history. Their ideals are unreal and they have no living connection with their cultural past.\(^2\)

The outcome of the Western system of education was that it created a special community that lived in India without being genuinely India.

MacDonald was right in pointing out that these Western educated men lived in the country in the geographical sense of

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The term. They were not at home here nor did they join in the organic life of their community.4

The Western system of education has been responsible for cutting off the child totally from the mainstream of the physical and social activities in the country. The system of education has created new castes, of those who are English-knowing and those who are not English-knowing. This system has also disrupted the traditionally prevalent Gurukul system of education. Western education lays too much emphasis upon literary education.

This system of education has failed to develop a sense of citizenship and social efficiency among the children. There was slow progress in primary education. The following figures show the very slow rate of literacy in India during the British rule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been a great waste of money in the name of education. The Western system neglected mass education and the compulsory measure of the system proved ineffective. 6

When Gandhiji came on the political scene of India, he began to give thought to a new scheme of education for the country. According to him knowledge should include all types of training. He felt that education should be given through craft and art etc. His educational experiments in South Africa and India had convinced him that education was useless unless it was productive. To him education meant drawing out the best in man. Literacy was not the end or even the beginning of education. It was only one of the means of education. Left to himself, he would begin the education of a child by asking the child to produce or undertake some useful handicrafts. The

school in his scheme would be self-supporting and the state was to make arrangement for taking over the products of the crafts in such schools.7

As per the wish of Gandhiji, the first National Education Conference was held at Wardha, under his presidency, on 22 and 23 October 1937. The conference was attended by eminent educationists like Dr. Zakir Husain, Prof. K.T. Shah, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Nana Kalelkar and ministers of education. Gandhiji, in his inaugural speech, explained the salient features of his new scheme of education. On the second and concluding day, important resolutions on the following lines were passed:

1. Free and compulsory education should be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.

2. The medium of instruction should be the mother-tongue.

3. The conference endorsed the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout the period should centre around some

form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should as far as possible be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

4. The conference expected that the system of education would be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers.

Later, a committee of experts, with Dr. Zakir Husain as its Chairman, was appointed to prepare a curriculum in the light of the above resolutions. The committee submitted its report on 2 December 1937. The scheme came to be known as Wardha Scheme and also as Basic National Education Scheme.

Why is it called Basic Education? The answer to the question could be attempted as follows:

1. It is basic as it is based on the Indian culture.

2. It is basic because it is expected to find correlation with important human activities and interests.

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8. B.D. Bhatt and J.C. Agarwal (eds.), op. cit., p. 44.
3. It is basic because it lays down the minimum educational standards which every Indian child should attain.

4. It is basic because it occurs in the primary period of one's education.

5. It is basic because it is given by reference to the basic necessities of life, food, clothing and shelter.

6. It is basic because it is linked up with a craft, and creative work.

The major advantages of making craft the centre of education have been listed by the Zakir Hussain Committee as follows:

Psychologically, craft-based education is desirable because it relieves the child from the tyranny of mere book instruction against which the child's nature rebels. Craft-centred education is able to balance the intellectual and practical elements in the process of learning. It secures coordinated training of the body and the mind of the child. In this process,

the child will learn how to use his intelligence and hands for constructive purposes. Craft-based education thus may be described as literacy of the whole personality of the learner.

From the social point of view, such education is of great value. When all the children of the nation participate in this process of education, they help us to pull down the barriers between the intellectual work and manual work. Such education will help us to activate among the children the concept of human solidarity and dignity of labour. This will mean an ethical and moral gain of considerable importance.

From the economic point of view, this scheme of education is very useful in increasing the productivity of the various classes of workers. This kind of education will also enable them to use their leisure hours gainfully and constructively.

When we make craft the core of education, from the educational point of view, it will give reality and substance to the knowledge acquired by the students. When knowledge is acquired in this fashion, it will be closely related to life and will not be removed from life and its problems.  

Below we present the main outlines of the seven years' course of basic education:

I. The Basic Craft

The following may be chosen as basic craft in various schools:

a. Spinning and weaving
b. Carpentry
c. Agriculture
d. Fruit and vegetable gardening
e. Leather work
f. Any other craft for which local and geographical conditions are favourable and which satisfies the conditions mentioned above.

II. Mother-Tongue

III. Mathematics

IV. Social Studies

V. General Science

a. Nature study
b. Botany
c. Zoology
d. Physiology
e. Hygiene
f. Physical culture
g. Chemistry
h. Knowledge of the stars
i. Stories

VI. Drawing

The objectives are:

1. To train the eye in the observation and discrimination of forms and colours.

2. To develop the memory for forms.

3. To cultivate a knowledge of and appreciation for the beautiful things in nature and in art.

4. To draw out the capacity for tasteful design and decoration.

5. To develop the capacity to make working drawings of objects to be constructed.

6. Designing.

7. Scale drawing, graphs and pictorial graphs.

VII. Music.

VIII. Hindustani. 11

11. Ibid., pp. 47-54.
### Distribution of Work in the Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The basic craft</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music, drawing and arithmetic</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mother-tongue</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies and general science</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical training</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 5 hours 30 minutes

Gandhi said: "Our system of (Basic) education leads to the development of the mind, body and soul. The ordinary system cares only for the mind." 13

Acharya Fripalani was not such an original thinker. He was an interpreter of Gandhi's ideas of education. He himself admitted the fact. He said, "I believe that if nature has not made one an original thinker, the next best thing for one is to appreciate the great thoughts of others. To have

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neither of the two capacities is to be doubly unfortunate.
I believe I have the latter capacity and I am not ashamed
to be a mere follower and an interpreter.” 14

We have narrated earlier, the activities of Kripalani
before he came into contact with Gandhiji. During his term as
a teacher and later as a professor in Muzaffarpur, his main
aim was to fight for freedom. He believed in the political
ideology of Tilak. After his contact with Gandhiji, he changed
over to the Gandhian mode of functioning, the non-violent mode
of doing things. This mode of functioning has been amply
reflected in his thinking and experiments in the field of
education.

Although Gandhiji’s scheme of basic education came
into effect in 1938, Kripalani had already been under its
impact owing to his association with Gandhiji. As an ardent
follower of Gandhiji he had already assisted in the
implementation of a number of programmes chalked out by
Gandhiji, specially at Varanasi and Ahmedabad. The constructive
work programme was also one of the educational activities
conducted by Kripalani. Although, technically, Kripalani

14. J.N. Kripalani, The Latest Fad: Basic Education
completed his educational assignments in 1927, he continued to participate in the educational activities in the broader sense of the term. His scholarly activities of reading and writing were kept up without any break. Nearly two dozen books and hundreds of articles or similar smaller pieces bear witness to his scholarly and educational activities.

When the basic education scheme was announced in 1938, it was opposed by a number of educationists including several Vice-Chancellors. Kripalani not only strongly supported the scheme but also put up a spirited defence of it against the criticisms of the educationists. He was sarcastic in his comments:

"I believe they belong to an age which, though it has left some curious specimens, has already passed. Those worthies are the Rip Van Winkles who went into intellectual slumber in the days of our beloved Queen Victoria of blessed and happy memory. Now that their sleep has been rudely, unc hormoniously shaken by the mad stirrings of the revolutionary times we live in, they are unable to adjust themselves to the change circumstances and consequently get angry."\(^{15}\)

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In Kripalani's opinion, the Western system of education was totally bad. Its defects were legion. It violated all principles of good and scientific education and ran counter to the laws of pedagogy and psychology. The system was formal and cut off from real life. It was narrowly intellectual. It heavily depended upon the written word and the memory of the learner. It was passive and abstract. It was far removed from practical affairs. From the physical point of view, the system was lifeless. It provided nothing like a healthy activity to the growing children. It shut them up in the classroom. The knowledge it imparted was neither unified nor integrated.

According to Kripalani, "Failing to develop all the faculties of the pupil, specially his will, it hampers the growth of his personality. In spite of all its show of intellect, it encourages dubious orthodoxies." 16

The Wardha scheme was an attempt to replace the Western system of education by a more dynamic one. Kripalani held that Gandhi had initiated reforms in diverse fields and the reforms and changes could be brought about if a radical system of education is implemented at the foundational level in our society. 17

16. Ibid., pp. 11-12.
17. Ibid., p. 72.
Acharya Kripalani outlines the main principles of basic education as follows:

1. Education up to a particular standard should be universal. To begin with it may not be compulsory. But it should be compulsory as and when more facilities are available. While the Western system was anti-national, the system of basic education was national in aspirations and design.

2. Basic education was to run for seven years, beginning with the age of seven.

3. Right then, basic education was not concerned with the other related stages, the pre-school stage or the post-basic stage.

4. All basic education was to be imparted through the mother-tongue of the child.

5. Basic education should be built around some art or handicraft. Intellectual education should be given through the art or craft.

6. The learning of the craft should be both a means as well as an end. It should not be learnt as an intellectual task or for economic self-sufficiency.
7. The product resulting from the practice of the craft must be economically paying.

8. Basic education should be able to produce things whose money value will be enough to cover the pay of the teachers.

9. For basic education the state was to bear the cost of the overheads like the buildings, furniture, books and the tools, etc. for the particular craft.

10. The state and the local bodies had the responsibility to absorb the goods produced by the basic education institutions. The state was to provide marketing facilities for any excess production of the schools. 18

Though Gandhiji's new method seemed to be simple, natural, and scientific there were difficulties in its introduction. According to Kripalani, "The greatest difficulty is to find and train the necessary teachers for the scheme. Most of those who are already in the profession are incapable of initiating and working out new ideas. Gandhiji's method, however, requires careful and constant attention, vigilance and missionary zeal." 19

18. Ibid., pp.72-73.
19. Ibid., p.74.
Eripalani felt that basic education had a great potential for developing the character of students. Character is developed not in isolation but in dynamic social contexts. Basic education was designed to provide such constructive and creative contexts for the development of the learner's character. 20

The Wardha scheme had the distinct advantage of the underlying philosophy. The success of the philosophy took for granted an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and sympathy among the different individuals and groups. The scheme could not be a success in the hands of those who believed in some rigid philosophy or who had some vested interest in promoting their own ideology or who did not believe in mutual understanding and give and take. Kripalani feared that the communists might take over the Wardha scheme and distort it for their own ulterior purposes. He said,

"Let them know that they cannot at their sweet will cut off items of the programme and graft on to other ideologies. They cannot have an ounce of non-violence and dilute it with a bucketful of Bolshevism. Such a procedure will not work. They may for want of a device of their own accept basic education but they

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20. Ibid., p.78.
will so mutiliate it that it will not work. Let them know that such opportunist conformity will not strengthen their own ideology or programme but will be demoralising, if not for the leaders, surely for the rank and file. Let them also realise that in the world today there are two distinct ideologies and two revolutionary principles, the one advocated by Gandhiji and the other derived from Marx and worked out by Bolshevists. These two ideologies are separated by an unbridgeable gulf. They are based upon diametrically opposite moralities and philosophies of life." 21

Kripalani also believed that the adoption and practice of basic education would facilitate the practice of democracy in the wider sense of the term. A true democratic society can be built on mutual understanding and cooperation which are presupposed by the Wardha scheme. The Wardha scheme also assumes that the teacher and the students of the craft which is central to their education come together in a spirit of cooperation and discipline. Kripalani observes that "the labour and the craft principle therefore supplies the greatest impetus to democratic self-government in schools. It also provides opportunities for

the cultivation of political and civic virtues under the expert leadership of the teacher."

Kripalani defended basic education on the ground that it was more scientific than other schemes. He emphasized the acquisition of education in a scientific fashion and not in a mechanical way. He gives an example of how scientific instruction is to be imparted. Suppose a child's basic craft is cloth-making. When the child has to work, he has to know his material, cotton, the history of cotton, the cultivation of cotton and so on. The child will also have to learn about the weather, water and soil conditions required for the growth of cotton. In this way, without mechanically memorising the information about cotton, he will acquire a good knowledge of cotton through the craft of cloth-making."

As regards the relationship of the process of learning through the craft and the place of books and conventional written word, Kripalani says that books and written word will be discovered by the students and learnt or mastered by doing the creative work in cooperation with one another under the direction of the teacher."

22. Ibid., p.60.
23. Ibid., p.19.
It may be stated here that Rousseau, one of the radical thinkers on education of the modern times, also favours the introduction of this kind of method and learning of science in schools. He admonishes the teacher not to hurt the child by giving him mechanical information about sciences. He tells the teacher to see that the student is given a taste of science and is taught the method of learning them. The child should be encouraged to think for himself and accept propositions not on somebody's authority but because he finds them valid through his own process of learning.25

The educational philosophy of Pestalozzi agrees with the theory of basic education explained by Kripalani. Both basic education and Pestalozzi philosophy emphasize mental, moral and physical aspects of education.26

According to Karl Marx, educational development implies three clear aspects: 1. intellectual development; 2. physical development; and 3. polytechnical education.27

26. Ibid., p.27.
27. Ibid., p.35.
In the context of basic education, Kripalani pays attention to the problems of urbanisation and industrialisation. According to him, in the West the industrial revolution which was brought about in various countries resulted in the disruption of the handicrafts and the disturbance of the village life. The pattern of agriculture and small-scale industries was disrupted and the skilled workmen and craftsmen became unemployed because their skills were not wanted any longer. Production was centralised in the urban place and hence anyone who wanted to sell his skill and labour had to migrate to the city. This seriously interfered with the style of life and the daily round of activities of the individuals who migrated to the city. In the village context these people had received a good part of their education and commonsense knowledge from their natural surroundings. In the cities they were isolated and deprived of the natural sources of their knowledge. Their children became further dependent on the urban atmosphere which could not provide sufficient means of education to them. Kripalani believed that this kind of Western system of education was imported into India and this had created in the country similar

29. Ibid.
distortions and evils with regard to the education of people. This is why, to overcome these deprivations and evils, the system of basic education was necessary.

Kripalani states how Mahatma Gandhi started the constructive work programme as a means of education for individuals as well as the nation. He says that the principles and stages of the programme were organically connected. They expected a particular character from the individuals as well as the nation. The new system of education was designed with this particular character, the ideal character, in view.30

Kripalani points out that the Wardha scheme was designed to meet the needs of the Indian society and realise the ideals of the Indian people. This scheme of education was the most constructive aspect of the various socio-political programmes initiated by Mahatma Gandhi. According to Kripalani, the system of basic education was the coping stone of the edifice of Gandhiji's various programmes and activities.31

Kripalani traces the roots of the student disturbances in India to the relevance of the Western system of education.

30. Ibid., pp.101-02.
31. Ibid., p.102.
He believes that the Western system was introduced in place of the ancient and traditional Gurukul system which was deliberately disturbed and set aside. In the Gurukul system of education the child was treated as the centre of education and was taken seriously throughout. The child was initiated into the Gurukul system and this was regarded as the second birth of the child. The first step taken by the initiated child was to beg for bread. This was an indication that he had become an individual and now he had a place in society.

The question of giving the child practical knowledge along with theoretical knowledge was solved in the context of the Ashram. The child became a part of the household of the Guru. He was under his constant care and supervision. Since this traditional system was disturbed, children under new system have become disturbed and disoriented and they have rebelled against the mere book-learning of the Western system of education. This is the root cause of the student unrest.

Kripalani believed that education was a continuous process. There was no such thing as termination or stop to the process of education. If the benefits of education are to be fully

acquired, then education at all stages and in all aspects must be pursued. Education must go on throughout life. He gave the example of Mahatma Gandhi in this respect. When Mahatma Gandhi was working among the Hindus and Muslims at Noakhali in East Bengal during the period of communal riots, he was learning Bengali at the advanced age of 77. Kripalani believed that this kind of thirst for knowledge and curiosity to know things is the soul of every worthwhile system of education and the system of basic education was designed with this end in view.

To today's students Kripalani had a word of advice to give. He advised the students not to be taken in by the wiles of the politicians who needed them for their own game of power politics. The students' first duty was to their studies. When the students devote themselves to their studies, they become an asset to their nation. The nation needs experts and specialists in every field of life and the experts and specialists can be provided only when the students mind their college and university studies. During the days of the freedom struggle, the leaders were patriots. When they gave the call to the students to give up their studies, it was for the cause...

of freedom. Unfortunately, today’s politicians were not patriots. They had taken to politics as a profession and they needed the students to serve their interests. Hence the students should clearly and in time understand these problems and dangers and build their academic career instead of dabbling in cheap politics. 34

While commenting on the number of commission reports on education, Kripalani conceded that the leaders were trying to improve the Western system of education prevailing in India. But he believed that we were trying to build the edifice of education from the roof downwards. The Radhakrishnan Commission was appointed to examine the problems of higher education. Soon it was found that the problems of higher education were connected with those of the secondary education. We appointed another commission to suggest reforms in the secondary education. Then we discovered that the secondary education was based upon the primary education. After that was appointed the Kothari Commission which reviewed all the stages of the educational system. Since then other commissions have also been appointed to survey and suggest improvements in the system of education. But by and large our system of education has remained Western in origin and operation. Now we are told that the new system

34. Ibid.
consists of $10 + 2 + 3$. This is supposed to mean that the boys study for 10 years in the primary school and high school, two years more in the higher secondary school or junior college in a pre-university context, and then further three years in the college for taking a degree. The professional degrees like those of law, medicine, agriculture or engineering are supposed to be taken by studying at the respective professional institutions attached to the existing universities.  

The system of basic education has remained confined to the particular context in India. It has remained special and experimental in character. It has not been generalised to cover any extensive areas of the school system and has not been allowed to replace the Western style primary or secondary education which prevails in the country. After the departure of Mahatma Gandhi and Acharya Kripalani from the scene we have not had any such inspiring leaders to sustain and expand the experiment of basic education. Nonetheless the system of basic education illustrates the educational ideals and ideas and the valuable missionary work of Acharya Kripalani over a considerable period in the history of Indian education.

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35. Ibid., p.177.
Section II

Kripalani's Educational Activities in Banaras

A Case Study

In 1918 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the founder of the Banaras Hindu University, requested Mahatma Gandhi to send him an able person to work as his private secretary. By this time Kripalani had come in close contact with Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi therefore asked Kripalani to go to Banaras to work as the private secretary of Malaviya. Thus Kripalani came to Banaras. Soon Kripalani impressed Malaviya with his systematic work.

After a year, Malaviya asked Kripalani to take classes in the university. Malaviya knew that Kripalani had worked earlier as Professor at Fuzaffarpur. Kripalani gladly accepted the assignment. He began to teach in the Department of Political Science of the university. His ability and skills as a teacher came to be appreciated by the students in the university. Kripalani went beyond the textbooks. To him the class-room was a platform. He encouraged his students to think boldly and freely and raise their voice against the alien rule in the country.
In September 1920 Kripalani went to Calcutta to attend a special session of the Indian National Congress. After his return to Banaras, the students of the university wanted him to deliver a lecture on the prevailing situation in the country in the common room of the hostel. Permission for the lecture had been granted by the hostel warden, Day. But Malaviya, when he came to know about the lecture, objected and did not allow the lecture to take place. The proposed lecture was not cancelled. It was held at a different place.

In course of the lecture, Kripalani said that the non-cooperation movement resolution could not be accepted in the Calcutta session due to some difficulties. However, the plan of the non-cooperation movement would not be dropped. The plan would be implemented shortly. His speech evoked a wide reaction.

During this period the students of the university started raising the demand for the conversion of the university into a National University. About 750 students signed the memorandum and presented it to Malaviya. The situation in the campus deteriorated rapidly and, viewing this, Malaviya ordered that no student meetings would be allowed on the campus. The irritated students purchased a plot of land near the university for Rs.150/-
and named it "Liberty Ground." The students started inviting national leaders like Motilal Nehru and Satyadeo to address them on this ground. Kripalani fully supported the activities of the students.

The students who had submitted the memorandum for the conversion of the university into a National University started creating an atmosphere in favour of the non-cooperation movement. In the meantime the Indian National Congress adopted a resolution approving the non-cooperation movement at the Nagpur session.

Kripalani too had attended the Nagpur session. Immediately on his return from Nagpur, he intensified the movement in Banaras. A number of students of the university backed Kripalani in intensifying and strengthening the movement. They offered to leave the university. Malaviya addressed the students at the Liberty Ground for five and half hours; he explained to them the significance of the Indian history from the Vedic times to the British period; Malaviya said that the time had not yet come for the students to leave the university.

After hearing Malaviya, about 370 students out of 750 changed their mind. The remaining students were firm in their decision. The students wanted to hear Gandhiji. Malaviya too
wanted to invite Gandhiji so that the issue would be settled once for all. Malaviya sent an invitation to Gandhiji. Accordingly Gandhiji came to Banaras and addressed the students for about 15 minutes. The function took place on the same Liberty Ground.

Gandhiji in his address explained to the students and staff the need of the hour. He appealed to the students to participate in the non-cooperation movement. As a result, many students decided to join the movement and the strength of the movement grew enormously. The students also took the decision to leave the university. When Malaviya came to know about the decision of the students, he went round to the hostels and appealed to the students not to leave the university. But the students were adamant. Malaviya wanted to convince the students and therefore he asked them to meet him at his residence. Accordingly, about 25-30 students, prominent among whom were Vichitra Narain Sharma, Napil Deo Pandey, Raja Ram Sharma, Dhirendra Majumdar and Ram Surat Mishra, went to the residence of Malaviya. In this effort too Malaviya had no success. At that time Kripalani had been to Mughalsarai (about 15 km. away from Banaras) to see Gandhiji off. After his return he learnt that some students had been to Malaviya's residence. He scolded those students.
When Malaviya learnt that Kripalani was the brain behind the student movement, he straightaway went to Kripalani and said, "Oh! Kripalani, why are you spoiling the life of these students?" Fortunately the students were also there. They said to Malaviya, "Our life is not being spoiled by Kripalani."

Kripalani sent in his resignation of the professorship. He was the first man to resign from the post at the call of Gandhiji. About 250 students left their studies and came out under the leadership of Kripalani on 29th November 1920.

In the meantime, Kripalani had an invitation from Maulana Mohammad Ali to join the Aligarh University. Kripalani sought the advice of Gandhiji. Gandhiji advised him not to leave Banaras at that moment. Gandhiji also asked him to explore the possibility of establishing a national educational institution especially for those who had left their studies to participate in the non-cooperation movement. Therefore Kripalani stayed on in Banaras although he was no longer the professor.

As there was no immediate alternative for the students who had left the Banaras Hindu University, many of them went to their native places. About 30 students remained in Banaras. Though these students had left their studies in the university,
they had not vacated the hostels. These students met the local leaders and land-lords like Babu Bhagwan Das, Shiv Prasad Gupta, and Shriprakash in connection with the establishment of a national educational institution for them and such other like-minded students. But the leaders and land-lords were not ready to open such an institution as it required a huge amount. They expressed their inability to collect such a large amount. Having failed in their efforts, the students met Kripalani for his suggestion.

Kripalani said to the students, "It was wrong on your part to stay in the Banaras Hindu University hostels after leaving your studies. First you come out of the hostels and search for a place for your stay. Then only I will think of what we should do next." The students promised that they would vacate the hostels the moment they got a place for their stay. Kripalani gave them some money and asked them to look for a place where all of them (including himself) could stay together. They succeeded in their efforts. They found a house the same day. The next day they informed Kripalani about the house. Kripalani asked the students to vacate their rooms in the hostels and come to the new place before sunset. They did accordingly and Kripalani joined them.
After the housing problem came the food problem. Kripalani gave the students some money to purchase earthen pots, firewood, food-grains and vegetables. That night they prepared Khichri, which was half boiled. It was due to their inexperience. They ate the Khichri as it was.

The following morning they sat together to chalk out their future plan. Kripalani advised the students, "We have begun our new life. The place where we are staying is like an Ashram. Now onwards we should engange ourselves in the nation's work." Kripalani told the students to work with devotion. He said, no matter what the particular task was, it was bound to be accomplished if it was done with devotion. He made it clear to the inmates of the Ashram that if anybody felt that the work assigned to him was inferior, he had no place in the Ashram.

Kripalani wanted to maintain discipline in the Ashram. He knew that the students of the Ashram still had affection for their friends in the Banaras Hindu University. Kripalani told them not to visit the university frequently. There should be some gap, some distance. Kripalani told the students that they were not going to get any financial help from the local leaders or rich people as they (the students) were new and unknown to them. They were also not to expect any financial aid from Gandhiji. They were to depend upon their own limited resources.

* Khichri is a seasoned mixture of cooked rice and Dal/s etc.
At that time the students of the Ashram used to get 3.30/- p.m. from their parents/guardians. Kripalani advised the students to write to their parents/guardians to send only 3.5/- p.m. instead of 3.30/- p.m. Kripalani knew that the expenditure on food and rent per head came to about 3.5/- p.m. Kripalani wanted the parents or guardians to shoulder only the minimum burden. He wanted to introduce simplicity and economy.

The inmates of the Ashram used to cook their food and clean the pots themselves. Though all the inmates were Hindus, they belonged to different castes. The Brahmin students took the kitchen work in their hands as there was a strong feeling among them regarding untouchability. For a few days Kripalani was not aware of this. When he came to know that the other caste inmates were not allowed into the kitchen by the Brahmin students, he became very angry. The same day he entered the kitchen and himself prepared vegetables. (Kripalani was not a Brahmin.) From that day untouchability was banished from the Ashram. Removal of untouchability was one of the tasks undertaken by Mahatma Gandhi. Kripalani had implemented the reform early enough.

As the inmates could not take an immediate decision about their future programme, they spent time on reading, writing, an
Charkha after the domestic work was over. Kripalani started taking classes in the ashram. He used to give lectures on Rousseau’s *Social Contract Theory* in the morning and Mazzini’s *Duties of Man* in the evening.

One morning some school students including Kamlapati Tripathi, Rishi Narain Shastri etc. met Kripalani and told him that they too had left their studies to take part in the non-cooperation movement. Kripalani asked them whether their leader, if any, had made any alternative arrangement for them. They said no such arrangement had been made. Then Kripalani asked them to come, along with their books, to the Nepali Kothi (the ashram). From the next day the classes for the new students started. Kripalani assigned the additional teaching work to the senior inmates of the ashram. The study centre was named “Gandhi Rashtriya Vidyalaya” (Gandhi National School).

In the beginning the number of students was limited. When the news spread that Kripalani had opened a school for those who had left their studies in favour of the non-cooperation movement, the strength started increasing. Within a few days Kripalani had to face the problem of numbers. The accommodation proved to be too small. Realising the problem faced by Kripalani, the local land-lord of Banaras, Shriprakash, donated a big building (Kashmirimal Haveli) to accommodate the growing numbers.
The school was being run systematically under the able guidance of Kripalani. The strength rose to 500. L.N. Singh, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Kamalapati Tripathi, Mamath Nath Gupta, Raghunath Singh, Veereshwar Ayyar were among those who received their education at this school.

Kripalani's activities and enthusiasm impressed the local leaders and land-lords. The leaders and land-lords, Bhagwan Das, Shiv Prasad Gupta, offered their help in establishing a national university especially for those who had left the Varanasi Hindu University. Kripalani was happy.

He worked hard for the establishment of the national university (Kashi Vidyapith). Thus the Kashi Vidyapith came into existence in the beginning of 1921.

Gandhiji was invited to inaugurate the Vidyapith. On that occasion Kripalani asked Gandhiji what he and his students should do next. Gandhiji said they should also do the Khadi work side by side. Kripalani was appointed as Vice-Principal of the Kashi Vidyapith.

As a true follower of Gandhiji, Kripalani started the Khadi work in the Bhadaini area where the Kashi Vidyapith was established.
The Congress, in its session held at Vijayawada in March 1921, resolved that the following three goals were to be realised in three months:

i. to introduce 20 lakh Charkhas in the country;

ii. to enrol 20 lakh members; and

iii. to collect Rs.1 crore as "Tilak Fund."

Kripalani devoted his energy to the realisation of the above objectives. He sent about 15 members of the Ashram to the different places like Sultanpur, Pratapgarh, Faizabad, and Rae Bareilly. Kripalani, along with the students, started carrying on shoulders, for sale, the Khadi cloth produced by the Ashram inmates. He went into the streets and lanes of Banaras and in some other neighbouring districts, to sell the Khadi cloth. He used to educate and urge the people of Banaras to participate in the non-cooperation movement.

In the second week of December 1921, the Prince of Wales was to arrive at the Banaras Hindu University. Kripalani wanted to boycott the Prince and organise a strike in the city. He approached the local leaders. But they were not in favour of this. They declined their support. So Kripalani himself proceeded to meet the challenge with the help of the students.
He divided the students into groups of about 10-15 each and asked them to go to the different parts of the city to urge the citizens to participate in the strike. He and some of the students were arrested and sent to the district jail. Kripalani was kept in barrack number 6 of the district jail.

In the jail too, Kripalani used to give lectures on Mazzini's writings. After a few days Kripalani was transferred to the Lucknow Central Jail. When the 1921 non-cooperation movement was suspended, he was released from the jail. From Lucknow he came back to Banaras and resumed the Khadi work.

Later the Gandhi Rashtriya Vidyalaya was shifted from the Kashmirimal Haveli to Chaklabagh (present Shastri Nagar) area. Here Khadi production was taken up on a large scale. Kripalani wanted to give a suitable name to Ashram. When he discussed this subject with the students, they suggested that the Ashram should be called Gandhi Ashram. Though Kripalani was not in favour of giving an individual's name to the Ashram, he agreed to the preference of the students.

During those days a Sadhu by name Satishchandra Mukherjee, lived in Banaras near Jangamawadi Post Office. He was regarded as an experienced politician. Through an intermediary Kripalani
came in contact with the Sadhu. When the Sadhu came to know about the Gandhi Ashram, he suggested that "Shri" should be added to the name of the Ashram. Since Kripalani and the students had a great regard for the Sadhu, they agreed to call the Ashram "Shri Gandhi Ashram." This was the story of Shri Gandhi Ashram. The Sadhu had a large personal library which he donated to the Ashram.

Kripalani himself prepared the bye-laws of the Ashram. He got the Ashram registered under the Charitable and Endowment Act.

In the initial period the finances of the Ashram were always a cause for worry. The Ashram depended on the money received from the parents or guardians. Later, when the Tilak Fund was collected, Kripalani was given Rs. 15,000/- from the fund for the Khadi work and the financial position of the Ashram improved.

A number of Shri Gandhi Ashrams came into existence in the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh due to Kripalani's efforts. After a few years the head office of Ashram was shifted from Banaras to Meerut. In this way Kripalani's Khadi work spread to the western districts of U.P., then to Delhi, and Madhya Pradesh etc. Now we have hundreds of such Ashrams all over India.
The annual production of Khadi is of the value of Rs.3.25 crores, woollen cloth of Rs.68 lacs, blankets of Rs.40 lacs, silk production of Rs.21 lacs and other goods like leather, oil and soap etc. of Rs.47 lacs.

The Gandhi Ashram is one of the biggest rural industries in India. Kripalani may be justly said to be one of the founding fathers of the Khadi industry in India. But the production or sale of Khadi was only instrumental as far as Kripalani was concerned. He was interested in teaching these production skills to his countrymen so that they would become self-reliant and productive individuals. During his stay in Banaras, roughly between 1918-1923, Kripalani's role as an experimenter of educational ideas and projects was most noteworthy. He proved to be a builder of seats of education on nationalist lines. After completing his Banaras assignment he went over to the project of Gujarat Vidyapith at Ahmedabad. This experience at Banaras and at Ahmedabad was to stand him in good stead when he was called upon to evolve the main ideas and techniques of basic education later.