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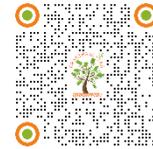
## REIMAGINING EDUCATION THROUGH INDIAN WISDOM: THE VISION OF NEP 2020

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### ABSTRACT

Education plays a crucial role in development and social transformation of any nation. Ancient India made a important contribution to global educational thought through a system that emphasized ethical values, holistic development and the pursuit of knowledge. The goal of Indian education has always been to create total human beings who would contribute to a good society. This was achieved by bringing together moral, social, cognitive and emotional aspects of learning. In such a tradition, NEP 2020 is a venture to re-imagine the Indian education system by grounding itself on the local knowledge tradition while simultaneously engaging with the contemporary global reality. NEP 2020 visualises an inclusive, equitable and qualitative education system open to all, that is accessible and affordable. NEP 2020 seeks to realise this vision by bringing together the Indian Knowledge Systems with the Modern knowledge systems of teaching and learning, creating not only an education system that is learner-centric, but also that is directed towards criticality, creativity, problem solving and lifelong learning.

**Keywords:** NEP 2020, Indian Knowledge Systems, Holistic Education, Educational Reform, Ancient Indian Education

### INTRODUCTION

William S. Burroughs made a profound statement when he emphasized that the aim of education is not just 'the accumulation of knowledge' but the inculcation of values. Education is a dynamic and lifelong process that enables human beings to develop their latent potential and work for the holistic betterment of society by tapping into their intellectual, moral, social and spiritual capabilities. In the process, it also becomes an important aspirational tool to foster respect for Constitutional values and Fundamental Duties, awaken national consciousness and develop an awareness of the role and responsibilities of the individual in the rapidly transforming environment. A holistic education framework, thus, aims not only at cognitive development, but also builds character and creates socially responsible, ethical, and emotionally balanced individuals who can also contribute to society.

Education is important in developing oneself, one's profession, and the society by igniting curiosity, creativity, empathy, and the urge as well as commitment to solve problems and serve society. Such an enabling and holistic role of education has much in common with the traditional Indian view of education understood as a lifelong process of inner growth and self-realisation, and as a means of serving the fellow beings. However, with the advent of the modern education system during colonial period, especially after the promulgation of the views enshrined in Lord Macaulay's minute of nineteenth century thinking, there was a decisive break from the indigenous educational processes. Establishment of a system based on Western knowledge and values and their usefulness for

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administering the system became the focal point of the colonial educational policies. This framework was carried forward by subsequent educational interventions as well and the Indian knowledge and wisdom traditions got increasingly marginalised.

Indian knowledge systems have been somewhat separated from education as a result of colonial education policies and their long-lasting effects. Recent educational approaches continue the trend to separate the learner from culture and local knowledge. In light of this, it is essential to understand India's educational heritage and to study various traditional Indian texts. These texts demonstrate the importance of India's educational philosophies today.

### **ETHICAL DIMENSIONS AND CHALLENGES OF MODERN EDUCATION**

India had always maintained an ethos and value-based education system even from an age-old period. But its modernity, industrialization and advancement in technological skills are throwing up new challenges in maintaining that ethos. Modernisation, while bringing in access to knowledge and skills at the global level, and has an element of homogenization of culture and a decline in traditional knowledge systems. Hence education cannot just information disseminating, but it has to generate analytical, evaluative, and interpretative skills.

The traditional Indian education system was grounded in value systems. Due to fast growing in technology, industrialization and modernization, the Indian value system has been under serious threat. Knowledge transfer and integration with global knowledge systems has been aided by modernization but it also has led to a threat of cultural uniformity and rendered traditional systems, knowledge of little use. Educational purpose needs to be revisited, re-imagined. Instead of rote transfer of knowledge, education should include skills of analysis, evaluation, interpretation of knowledge among students.

It is important to teach critical thinking skills to help learners use the digital world in a meaningful, responsible way. Technology must be used as an enabler and not as a replacement for conventional pedagogical methods. Storytelling, dialogue, experimentation and learning through doing can be combined with digital resources to provide both a balanced and culturally meaningful learning environment and a deep level of understanding. But face-to-face interaction, collaborative learning and social and emotional development must also be preserved. Digital tools now being adopted by educational systems must also include ethical considerations around privacy, digital citizenship and safety.

### **INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS: BHARATIYA GYAN PARAMPARA**

Bharatiya Gyan Parampara, or Indian Knowledge System, is a vast and continuous knowledge tradition that has been passed down through generations and is still developing and evolving. It includes knowledge in various fields like philosophy, literature, arts, various sciences, mathematics, astronomy, agriculture, economics, polity, health, medicine, and technology. Rooted in the civilizational experience, this holistic knowledge tradition embodies the philosophies of Jnan, Pragyaa, and Satya – Knowledge, Wisdom and Truth, along with Inquiry, Ethics and Holistic approach.

The world sees ancient India's intellectual contributions as almost eternal. The country's many streams of philosophical thought—Vedanta, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, Jainism, Buddhism—have all sought to engage with questions of life and its meaning, consciousness, creation, the universe, and the relationship of the human person to it, the meaning of reality and selfhood. So have the contributions in linguistics, which had Panini's Ashtadhyayi and Patanjali's works on grammar offer a scientific, systematic approach to language analysis.

Indian astronomy developed through exact observation and complex calculation, as evidenced in the texts of Aryabhatiya and Siddhanta Shiromani. Treatises on statecraft and ethics, such as Kautilya's Arthashastra, Dharma-shastras and Niti-shastras provided frameworks of governance, social order and moral conduct. Apart from these, knowledge systems of architecture, metallurgy, agriculture, shipbuilding and trade, poetics, aesthetics, logic (Hetu-vidya) and medicine also developed. Ayurveda is among the world's oldest holistic medical systems, encompassing knowledge of health, anatomy, pharmacology and environmental balance.

### **VISION AND SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020**

The NEP 2020, India's first education policy of the twenty-first century, is a bold and ambitious effort to reform and transform India's education system. The NEP attempts to reform education holistically, covering everything from early childhood education to higher education and research. It can be seen as being composed of four broad parts: school education, higher education, other key areas such as adult education, language, technology, etc. and mechanisms of financing and implementation.

NEP 2020 views education as a holistic, learner-centric, and lifelong process. It aims to enhance quality, equity, and accessibility while responding to the demands of a rapidly evolving digital and knowledge-driven world. By recognizing the inseparable relationship between education and culture, the new policy incorporates the modern principles of education in the Indian context of cultural traditions and values, and knowledge of the ancient and continuing Indian intellectual heritage. It emphasizes on multidisciplinary education, flexible curricula, creative combinations of subjects, integration of vocational education, project-based learning, and an overarching emphasis on experiential learning to reduce rote learning.

## INTEGRATION OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY UNDER NEP 2020

NEP 2020 highlights the need to enhance Indian Knowledge Systems including lokvidya with modern-day scientific knowledge systems. It is reminiscent of Gurukul system of education, which kept society in centre and sought to impart it with necessary education under the guidance of a guru/mentor. It stresses that education must be related to the needs of real life, society and to skills in addition to the conceptual understanding.

The policy further highlights how well-prepared and passionate teachers shape young lives, including teachers through rigorous preparation and a positive working environment, with competency-based frameworks, continuous professional development, and academic freedom. NEP 2020 emphasizes the significance of the confluence of the purity of spiritual knowledge from the East and the scientific temper of the West, as propounded by Swami Vivekananda and many other great thinkers. Vivekananda's concept of education as the process of man-making, character building, and assimilation of ideas, his rationale for spiritual knowledge and secular knowledge, and his emphasis on self-realization and social service is deeply ingrained

Entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity are further promoted by NEP 2020, with the goal of producing job creators rather than job seekers. Multidisciplinary institutions, flexible learning pathways, and learner-centric curricula are promoted in Higher Education. By focusing on critical thinking, problem-solving, experiential learning, and ethical citizenship, the policy aims to prepare learners for the challenges of the twenty-first century.

## CONCLUSION

Indian education is changing a lot now. It is mixing new ways with old Indian knowledge. National Education Policy 2020 is using old Indian knowledge to rethink how we teach. The new plan wants to keep old Indian ideas but also make education better for everyone and help them grow in every way. New teaching is added to old Indian knowledge and this makes us believe NEP 2020 can make India grow smarter in its own way in the world. NEP 2020 can also give India a future it wants.

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