
National Education Policy 2020: A Hope for Holistic Development of Learner

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Abstract

Development of any nation depends on the education system that prevails in it and the education system get its strength from the educational policies through which they turned their educational aims into reality. In India many educational policies have come and gives their significant contribution in developing the potentialities of our future holders ie. learners. But, somewhere lags in holistic development of the learners. Now NEP 2020 has come up with such a solid structure of education system, that brings hope to ensure holistic development of an individual. The present paper is a modest attempt to describe the meaning of holistic development as per our Indian Philosophy/ Psychology, some methods like- play method and experiential learning that enhance the holistic development of the learner. It also put light on the fact that how NEP 2020 is a sincere attempt to facilitate the holistic development of learner.

Keywords: Experiential learning. Holistic development, NEP 2020 and Play method.

Introduction

It is rightly said by the National Education Commission (1964-66) that the destiny of India is being shaped in its classroom. In its very first paragraph NEP 2020 has mentioned, "India will have the highest population of young people in the world over the next decade, and our ability to provide high quality educational opportunities to them will determine the future of our country". National development can be promoted by achieving full human potential. Till date all the Education commissions and policies has stated that the aim of education as all round development of an individual. This is first time that NEP 2020 focussed on holistic development of the learner as the aim of education.

When one says all round development of individual, it means development of different dimensions of human being such as physical, mental, cognitive, emotional, social and moral. In other words, human being has different dimensions of development. This gives the misconception about human development as all dimensions of development are independent or discrete. That is why one can focus on one dimension of human development more irrespective of others e.g. present education system has been criticised by NEP 2020 for focussing only on the cognitive development of learners and it neglects the other dimensions of development such as social, emotional and moral.

Though the definition of human development (e.g., as given by Hurlock "Development refers to an orderly and coherent changes leading towards the goal of maturity") and the concept of human 'development' states that all dimensions of human development are interrelated. One dimension can't be developed without proper development of other E.g. proper mental development takes place when there is a sound physical development. Aristotle has mentioned this very beautifully- Healthy mind lives in the healthy body. Similarly, social and moral development can't be done without proper mental and cognitive development of the individual. One can't expect any type of social value or morality from a mentally challenged individual though he may have proper physical development. The term

'Holistic Development of Learner' used by NEP 2020 will correct above mentioned misconceptions about human development.

From Ages the main core concern of Indian Philosophy/ Psychology is holistic development of human being. Indian Psychology still stands with the literal meaning of Psychology i.e., study of soul. It is worthwhile to mention Gandhiji's definition of Education "By Education I mean an all-round development of individual body, mind and soul". Indian Psychology is very broad and helps an individual to rise from physical awareness and attain supreme bliss, self- realisation and nearness to God. This process can be understood through the concept of Panchkosha found in Shankaracharya's book Vivek Chunamani. It is believed that originally the concept of Panchkosha was given by Tritiya Upanishad.

Panchkosh is referred to five layers of human being and related to the development of various aspects of human being. These are as follows:

1. Annmaya Kosh (birth to 5 years): It starts from Ann, develops by Ann, lives by Ann and after destruction get assimilated into Ann. It is upper and concrete form of human body or outmost covering of human body. It is believed that what one eats influence one's thought process.

2. Pranamaya Kosh (5 to 10 years): It is made up of five Prana and motor organs (internal parts of the body). Vayu is distributed in five Prana as follows-

- a. Pranavayu- in Heart
- b. Apanvayu in Guda
- c. Udanvayu in Kanth
- d. Samanvayu-in Nabhi
- e. Vyanvayu in whole body

3. Manomaya Kosh (10 to 15 years): It is situated next to the Pranamaya Kosh and made up of five sense organs and Manas. It controls various activities of the human body. Five sense organs are as follows - Eyes, Ears, Nose, Tongue and Skin. These sense organs are considered as the gateways of knowledge. Further there are five ways to gain knowledge (intellectual development) as follows -

- a. Pramana-True and direct knowledge with evidence.
- b. Vikalpa alternate knowledge with description of something in its direct absence.
- c. Viprayaya false knowledge or doubts
- d. Nidra-dream or illusions
- e. Smriti-memory

According to Yajurveda there are five states of mind (Manas). These are as follows -

- a. Shiptt-restlessness
- b. Mugdha-absorbed in pleasure
- c. Vishiptt-state of destruction

d. Ekagra-state of concentration

e. Nirudha-when all conflicting ideas are stopped

4. Vigyanmaya Kosh (15 to 20 years): It is located inner to the Manomaya Kosh. It consists of Buddhi. According to Indian Psychology there are various types of Buddhi.

a. Yatharth Buddhi is dominated by Satva. People having this type of buddhi live in reality and do right things. They are patient, satisfied, courageous and honest.

b. Ayathavad Buddhi is dominated by Raja. People having this type of buddhi are moderate and balanced.

c. Vipreet Buddhi is dominated by Tama. These types of people have destructive qualities like sluggish and lazy.

Vigyanmaya Kosh is decisive power of body. Buddhi takes decision in various situations.

5. Anandmaya Kosh (20 years and above): It is inner most layer and most significant to attain supreme bliss. It is ultimate state of pleasure and life away from worldly pleasure.

All levels of Panchkosh are not exclusive rather during the process of development they get transformed into the next level. This concept of Panchkosh helps one to understand the concept of Holistic Development of Learner in a better way. Thus, the development of learner occurs step-wise and teaching-learning activities must be in accordance to that for holistic development of human being.

Need not to mention the real connotation of Education here. The English word 'Education' has been derived from the Latin words Educere, Educatum and Educare; means Education is to bring out innate capacities of the individual. Practically it is a difficult task for parents and teachers to identify the innate capacities of each and every child i.e., why they find themselves incapable to do the justice with the child. In other words, they do not facilitate the holistic development of the child. Teachers and parents may find the solution in the definition of Education provided by Swami Vivekanand.

"Education is the manifestation of perfection (divinity) within the individual."

It means that all individuals have the capacity to grow and develop up to the inner most layer. In other words, all have the function of Education is to make realise the human Page 20 A1280yen Qaving power. This is the Holistic Development of Learner to which the NEP 2020 states as follows-

"the rich heritage of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge and thought has been the guiding light for this policy. In ancient India aim of education was not just the acquisition for knowledge as preparation of life in this world, or life beyond schooling, but for the complete realisation and liberation of the self." (p. 5)

Further NEP 2020 has already suggested the ways and methods being implemented for the holistic development of learner. One of them is PLAY. Play means a work or tasks in which learner experiences a pleasure in performing that. In other words, whenever an enjoyment is introduced in an activity is called Play. During learning learner engage in two types of activities; Physical Activity and Mental Activity. Children below 7 years learns more through physical activities and after 7 years of child learning involves physical as well as mental activities. As the child grows older physical activities reduces and mental activities increases in the learning. The new approach to learning i.e.,

Constructivism focussed on Activity Based Learning; means learner should be active to learn. There are various methods such as Kindergarten method,

Montessori method, Dalton method, Project method which focuses on Learning by Doing at an early stage of schooling and Heuristic method, Problem-solving method for the learning of grown-up children.

An article entitled 'Play: Brain's Most Preferred Way of Learning' published in Times of India, Lucknow reported some of the characteristics of play as follows-

In play thought process are infinite. E.g., when children play as Doctor, as Engineer, as Pilot, they engage themselves in one role and disengage themselves to engage themselves in another role. In this way play enhance creativity in learners.

Discontinuous learning is play, means play involves variety. Variety should be an integral feature of teaching-learning.

Play involves unpredictability. Surprise and anticipation make play enjoyable. Bruner's Concept Attainment Model of teaching-learning also involves anticipation and surprise.

In play there is a loss of sense of time and suspension of ego.

Through play the ability to face the real situations of life can be inculcated. It provides freedom to learners as well as the ability to bear the responsibilities. Play can in-built the ability of self-regulation in learner. The present education system has been criticised because it teaches certainty, rigidity and linearity to the learner. Play teaches uncertainty, change and complexity to the learner which is the need of the hour.

Though many psychologists have given importance to play in the holistic development of the learner but Erickson in his theory of Psycho-social development of human being proposed one stage as 'Play Age' out of eight stages. These eight stages are as follows-

1. Infancy (0 to 1 year)
 2. Early Childhood (1 to 3 years)
 3. Play Age (3 to 6 years)
 4. School Age (6 to 11 years)
 5. Puberty Adoles
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6. Young Adulthood (20 to 24)
 7. Middle Adulthood (24 to 65 years)
 8. Maturity (65 to till death)

Erickson's Play Age is also known as Pre-school Age. The characteristics of the learner of this stage are as follows-

- The social environment of the learner challenges him to remain active. He has to perform new tasks so he has to acquire mastery on skills required to perform these tasks. Therefore, to gain social approval, the learner has to be Productive.
- Learner of this stage starts to behave in a responsible way. They show responsible behaviour towards themselves as well as towards others like small siblings, pet animals and toys.
- Due to loco-motor skills and language development, learner of this stage came into contact of environment outside the home. They enjoy social gatherings and play with other children.
- They start taking interest in the work of elder siblings, new tasks and work given to them by family and school.
- Learner of this stage starts to realise that they are considered as individual by others.

This feeling adds meaning and purpose to his life. Besides the characteristic of PRODUCTIVITY, RESPONSIBILITY, PURPOSEFUL LIFE, SOCIABILITY the children of Play stage face the conflict between INITIATIVE and GUILT. If parents allow the children to perform the tasks on their own, acknowledge the curiosity of children and do not ridicule and create obstacle in the fantasy activities of them, then children of this stage imbibe the value of INITIATIVE in their personality. On the other hand, if children are not allowed to perform a task on their own and get punishment on demand of love and affection, then children imbibe the value of GUILT in their personality. The children who are not allowed to play, question and involved in fantasy activities develop GUILT feeling. In turn they fear to assert themselves. They are unable to remain in a group as a member. They unduly rely on elders. For them life is purposeless. They become unable to establish and achieve their aims. Another psychologist Vygotsky considered Play an important aspect of the proper language and moral development of children. When children play some imitative and imaginative games with some household things, eatables and toys, they talk to themselves as well as with their toys about right and wrong led to their language and moral development. During play children work and learn willingly and gladly. Play is an active way of acquiring knowledge. Learners get greatest intellectual success because they involve whole-heartedly. Play is an incentive for creative work. Students enjoy studies through play. Play is not a strategy of learning of childhood period (5+3+3 as per NEP 2020), but also for adolescence (4 years of education as per NEP 2020). Various strategies of cooperative learning are like play for adolescents and adults.

Without play holistic development of learner is impossible. Play introduces learner with pleasure and joy (Anandanubhuti). Play involves experiential learning, means subjective experiences of the learner is of critical importance in learning process. E.g. one man's meat is other man's poison. Generally, teachers understand the concept THROUGH TRAINING Page 22/280 TION OF BEHAVIOUR re emphasis on Training in comparison to Experience. Due to these students memorise the concept without understanding. It has been observed that a student of Physics can't explain the concept of Volume. A student of Biology can't explain the concept of Biosphere. Rather they define these concepts as written in the book or as told to them by the teacher. A student of History can't tell the time period of Ancient Indian History. Due to experience a rural child can move from one place to another by North, South, East and West, while an urban child uses Right-turn and Left-turn for the same.

Education prepares us for life. In other words, it teaches us to live a life. This can be learned through the education of experiences and through the education of training. Therefore, experiences play significant role in one's education.

All constructivist psychologists have given importance to experiences of learner in the learning process. Need not to mention Jean Piaget, the pro-pounder of cognitive development theory. He has proposed four factors responsible for learning. These are maturation, experience, culture and equilibration. According to Piaget out of these four the role of Experience in learning is significant. The experiences to learners can be provided in three ways. (a) Simple Exercise: the learner is provided the opportunity to repeat the learned activity to master it. It is necessary for muscle coordination among small children. Another example is of Handwriting improvement. (b) Simple Abstraction; the acquisition of ready-made knowledge is simple abstraction. E.g.- By showing an apple to students a teacher tells them that it is red in colour. He can point out to its shape. After cutting the apple the teacher tells it is off white inside. Its seeds are of small in size and so on. (c) Reflective Abstraction; when the learner interacts with the environment the knowledge that generate as a result of this interaction is reflective abstraction. E.g.- the taste of the apple can't be taught to students by telling them that it is sweet. If it is sweet in taste then like Sugar or Jaggery or Rosgulla or like something else. So, the teacher will cut the apple into slices and asked the students to eat a slice of apple to taste it. In this way teacher is creating an environment and providing an opportunity to students to learn the taste of an apple. At the same time students has to be active means they have to eat a slice of apple. Students who will not eat will not learn the taste of an apple. Further teacher has to provide this type of opportunity many times with different kinds of apple. While eating learner construct the taste of apple. For all student apple do not taste the same. This is experiential learning.

Most of the knowledge is constructed rather than acquired. Learners learn experientially. Some experiences are educative while other experiences are non-educative. To provide educative experiences teachers should understand that past experiences of learner interact with the present situation. In other words, learned experiences influence the nature of one's future experiences. Eg child abuse leads to mistrust in future.

Now it is the responsibility of the teachers to structure and organise a series of such experiences which positively influence learner's potential future experiences. The formal education which is structured should be shifted towards semi-structured manner. In which the subjectivity of experiences of learner are recognised and the experiences are guided via structured planning and reviewing process. Following is the **Confucius quote (from around 450 B.C.) by experiential educator**

Tell me, and I will forget.

Show me, and I may remember.

Involve me, and I will understand.

The NEP 2020 clearly indicates that now the time has come to involve the learner in all aspects of school life for his holistic development; the development of meta-cognitive ability, character building and life skills. (p. 13).

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