

## ROLE AND IMPACT OF HOLISTIC AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

**Dr. Bhavesh M. Jasani**

N.M.D.College, Gondia

Email Id-bhjasani@rediffmail.com

Mob. No.- 9028366072

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### **Abstract :**

*A holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings – intellectual, aesthetic, social, emotional in an integrated way as per Yash Pal Committee Report. The report notes “There is a need to expose students, especially at the undergraduate level, to various disciplines” (Yash Pal, 2009, p. 21).*

*National Education Policy: 2020 is ground-breaking step taken by Indian Government in the field of Education. We are living in the post modern virtual world where the boundary of the education of a country is kaput and enriched with the affluent global thoughts. Indian education has the greatest heritage and glorious past. It has been altering its form according to the passage of time on the demand of the crisis influenced by social, political and economical issues. The present study will focus on the holistic and multidisciplinary dimension of New Education Policy: 2020. The researcher will discuss how holistic attitude of education plays an important role in the field of ‘all round development’ of the child; and the researcher will find out how much multidisciplinary approach is relevant in contemporary education system in the respect of global education. As part of holistic development students will be provided an opportunity for internship with local industry, business for a longer exposure so that they may actively engage with practical side of their learning and as a bye product further improves their employability.*

*One such measure is the introduction of the scheme of multidisciplinary education in the universities and colleges under which an attempt is made to break down the narrow specialism which divides humanities from Sciences, and Sciences from Social Studies, and fine Arts and Music from both. The Policy emphasizes the importance of multidisciplinary education through both disciplinary and professional programmes for developing competencies of critical thinking, adaptability and self-management amongst learners. The Policy seeks fundamental transformation in higher education by implementing innovative and ambitious plans while recognizing the complexities and challenges of higher education.*

**Key words:** Multidisciplinary, Global, Competencies, Humanities, Self-Management

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### **Introduction :**

The National Policy (NEP)-2020 emphasizes holistic and multidisciplinary education with an aim to provide 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to learners. NEP-2020 states that such “education would be aimed at developing all capacities of human beings- intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral in an integrated manner” (NEP,2020). Multidisciplinary and holistic learning is an ancient method used in Indian education system as well as the other parts of the world. This is the reason that such type of education system was advocated by scholars like Kautilya, Banabhatta, Plato, and Aristotle among many others. One can trace the evidence of such an education system in ancient Indian literature and practices. It is seen in the Indian



Gurukul system where students had to learn Science, Mathematics, Geometry along with vocational skills, professional skills, soft skills, ethics, morality, human values and so on. The multidisciplinary approach of education allows a student to come and fro among the various streams of knowledge where he can quench his thirst of knowledge and decide future. Multidisciplinary approach of education is holds many benefits and utilities. Multidisciplinary approach teaches the students to understand the thing as a whole or in holistic view. The child can take problem as whole to understand. Any problem, situation, lesson and learning have various dimensions to understand. Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary strategy teaches how to correlate between them. The child can take the lesson from the factual stand point. The approach of the child becomes much more realistic in nature. In this curriculum the child learns many a thing at once. The child develops strong ability to think critically in it that produce a real leader or mentor. The life itself is a big problem which we solve in every moment. Multidisciplinary approach teaches a child how to solve a problem in real life situation. In the class room, the child experiences excellent learning ability. Practical projects attract the noble brains and create interest to unfold new opportunity. In this way, the human child becomes human resource by learning multiple disciplines in single curriculum; developing skills to perform and becomes mature enough to accept a good job. New Education Policy has established a bridge between Ancient Indian Education and Modern Education. NEP says, 'India has a long tradition of holistic and multidisciplinary learning, from universities such as Takshashila and Nalanda, to the extensive literatures of India combining subjects across fields.' India is the one of the oldest civilizations of the world. If we study the history of the Ancient Education of India will feel pride to knowing the glorious past of this blessed country. When the western countries were unaware about education then 'Gurukul' system of education in ancient Vedic civilization was factual truth in India. The students would not only gain the knowledge from Vedas, Upanishads, Purans in their life of 'Bramhachariya' but they would taught every lesson of life so that they can earn their livelihood in 'garhastya' at the end of the education. Their education was life centric.

#### **Research Methodology:**

The research paper is based on relevant authentic secondary sources such as research papers, articles, Government websites, and Newspapers. This data was analyzed and reviewed to reach Conclusions.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To know importance of holistic approach to the 'all-round development' of the child.
2. To know the relevance of multidisciplinary approach in contemporary Indian education.
3. To know how much NEP 2020 obeys the heritage and tradition of Ancient Education.
4. To know the modernity of NEP 2020 in the respect global education.

#### **Need of holistic and multidisciplinary education:**

Time changes and it creates the need to refine existing education models. With advancements in technology, students are more exposed to digital gadgets. So, the innovative capabilities of students have been boosted and can not only be judged academically. Let us see why holistic education is needed.

1. A holistic and multidisciplinary education would help all-round development of an individual. It is not good to make compulsion of subjects in which an individual is not



- interested. Rather than give the choice of subjects he wants and let to finish his studies at under graduate level. A holistic and multidisciplinary education helps to develop aesthetic, social, intellectual, physical and moral skills in an integrated manner.
2. India must carry its legacy of Multidisciplinary and holistic education from past to 21st century as to lead world. Creation of well learned human resources which will become the force behind the India's social, economic, scientific development is possible through only incorporating more vocational subjects and soft skills by integrating the engineering subjects with humanities. More flexibility in curricular structure will provide the multidimensional challenges and opportunities to students for multidisciplinary work, including in academic institutions, government agencies, and industrial setup.
  3. To get better results in creativity, development of critical thinking, decisions making skills, problem-solving abilities it is necessary to integrate the humanities and arts with Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), which is envisages in the nep 2020. By adopting the Multidisciplinary and holistic approach of approach of education it will help to do better in Research and Innovation.
  4. The world is interconnected where subjects overlap and impact each other. Fragmented or isolated learning fails to reflect the interconnectedness. It ultimately results in interrupting students' understanding.
  5. Holistic education promotes students towards critical thinking and making connections across disciplines. It encourages higher-order thinking skills and develops an in-depth understanding of important concepts.
  6. Real-world problems and scenarios require a multidisciplinary approach. Holistic education equips learners with the relevant skills to combat complex, interdisciplinary challenges

### **Role of holistic and multidisciplinary education :**

Creating a holistic education curriculum betters the learning experience of students. It goes beyond the subject boundaries that teachers had provided in traditional settings. STEM curriculum development also offers a holistic learning approach to students. It makes students feel more connected to their learning and education. It develops critical problem-solving skills and boosts their creativity to navigate a complex and challenging world.

Through interdisciplinary projects, collaborative planning, and thematic units, teachers can assist students in developing a holistic understanding of the world. They can become lifelong learners; the approach will assist in their future careers and make them good citizens who contribute to the betterment of society.

There are numerous role that holistic and multidisciplinary curriculum education offers for both students and teachers alike. Let us learn a few prominent ones. It is also needs to be taken into account that this step towards holistic education does not lead to the commercialization of education as there is a lack of appropriate infrastructure to provide practical education in government institutions and private players can take advantage of this. Therefore, it must be ensured that foreign universities and local private institutions work with government institutions to attain the goal of holistic and multidisciplinary education. In a nutshell NEP 2020 is a framework for New India with quantum changes in education sector.

### **In-depth Knowledge and Understanding :**

Holistic learning creates a deep, blended comprehension of subjects. By combining



various disciplines, students can grasp complex concepts, promoting a deep-rooted understanding that goes beyond isolated facts.

### **Real-life Application :**

This approach to teaching and learning provides students with skills that can be applied to real-life situations. It formulates critical thinking and problem-solving skills and will not only help them in the current situation but also prepare them for future careers. This technique creates a sense of purpose and usefulness in students, making their learning experience more meaningful and engaging.

### **Being Creative :**

A holistic education curriculum allows students to be creative. It is like mixing unique colors to form a new one. When different subjects bleed together, it creates a different thought process each month for students. Hence, it creates new ideas and finds the easiest solutions for decoding issues.

### **Personalized Learning :**

The approach of holistic education understands and respects individual learning methods. Personalizing lesson plans to incorporate multiple subjects allows students to engage with the learning resource in ways that match their interests. This personalized approach enhances students' learning, boosts their morale, and makes their learning journey more meaningful.

### **The Benefits of Holistic Education:**

We can observe the benefits of this teaching approach, such as:

- Emotional intelligence;
- Confidence;
- Social ability;
- Compassion;
- Fine and gross motor coordination;
- Responsibility;
- Creativity;
- Self-agency;
- Community belonging and teamwork skills;
- Self-awareness.

### **Best Holistic Curriculum Examples in Teaching & Learning :**

Here are some examples of holistic teaching and learning approaches that embrace a well-rounded educational experience.

#### **1. Project-Based Learning (PBL):**

It involves engaging students in hands-on projects that combine various subjects. Designs sustainable communities involving aspects of science, math, social studies, and environmental science.



**2. Integrated Thematic Instruction:**

It focuses on a central theme or topic, connecting lessons across various subjects, like investing in the life cycle of plants, incorporating biology, environmental science, and ecology.

**3. Experiential Learning:**

This approach involves learning through real world scenarios and activities such as field trips to historical sites, combining subjects like cultural studies, history, and geography to increase the understanding of the subject matter.

**4. Service Learning:**

It involves community service with academic learning. Cleaning up a local park involves teamwork, gardening in the school field, etc. It will help students in building their social responsibility and team spirit.

**5. Holistic Assessment:**

Evaluate student's overall performance and development. Not just focus on academic results. Assess their creativity, critical thinking, and collaborative nature in addition to the traditional academic approach.

**6. Mindfulness and Wellness Programs:**

Involving practices that promote a child's mental well-being. Involve fruit break, morning yoga session during assembly, and session to talk their heart out to relieve any stress they may have.

These innovative holistic curricula aim to build not only academic knowledge but also essential life skills among students. Many education institutions often resort to availing professional workbook development services to create guides and refine student's learning.

**Conclusion:**

New Education Policy 2020 is landmark in Indian education. Though some innovative steps are taken in this policy for the betterment of the education system; it has a correlation with global education. The policy makers planned it according to the demand of the contemporary education. They have measured the crisis of this situation in respect of global education. India is trying to improve the standard and quality of education to the mark of western civilization or international standard. Human brain holds multiple intelligence and capability within. If the skills of the individual are developed the person will fulfill his own demand by himself. All round development of a child will not only improve his personality and family condition but make prosperous his/her motherland. The ignorance, lack, and crisis will be gone away when the person will be self-dependent. The holistic development of the child is very much helpful to understand any problem of life taking as whole or in togetherness. Same as the Multidisciplinary in higher education revolutionizes knowledge through the interactions of disciplinary knowledge and is helpful to solve problems in society. Since 1970s multidisciplinary centers and departments were established. Curricular changes allowed multidisciplinary education. Choice based credit system offered students the choices to study specialization based on disciplines as well as the option to study subjects from other disciplines. The recent initiative of multidisciplinary education of the government of India, contained in NEP 2020, is important. There are challenges of institutional restructuring as large investment is required for a single discipline institution to convert into multidisciplinary institution. However, partially the curricular restructuring will enable multidisciplinary teaching in Indian higher education.

Through Multidisciplinary and holistic education, the NEP envisioned nurturing a curious and creative mind and developing analytical and critical thinking among the learners at early age. Multidisciplinary education was there in India in ancient times. Now the time has come, we have to learn from our glorious ancient system of education and implement it in current times. Multidisciplinary education is found to be very helpful in addressing the global issues specially the pandemic situation the world is facing for last two years. Multidisciplinary Education helps to find all the aspects of the problems and enables to find the solution through collaborative research which helps to the society.

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