

A Study on Similarities between Gandhiji's Basic Education and New Education Policy 2020

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Introduction

Free and compulsory primary education could be given to every child if the process of schooling could be made self-supporting by imparting education through a useful and productive craft. Gandhiji expressed his views on education through a series of article in 'Harijan' in June 31, 1937, which later on developed into the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education. The views of Gandhiji created controversies in the academic circles. Therefore, it was desirable to get the scheme examined by experts and educationists. Finally, Gandhiji placed his Basic Education System to the nation in the Wardha Conference in 1937. His educational plan fits nicely in this ordering of priorities. If the march of industrialization could be slowed down and shaped in accordance with a plan for social and political progress, basic education could serve a definite purpose in such progress. More specifically, if purposeful industrialization meant protecting the right of villages to produce what they could without competition with large-scale mechanized establishments, basic education could enhance the productive capacities of village children under such a plan. The ideal citizen in Gandhi's Utopia was an industrious, self-respecting and generous individual living in a small community. This is the image underlying his educational plan. This image of man and the production system sustaining it brings to mind the American philosopher John Dewey (1859–1952), and it is useful to probe the similarities between the educational visions of these two contemporaries.

Problem -Is there any similarities between Gandhiji's Basic Education and New Education Policy 2020?

Objective- To find out similarities between Gandhiji's Basic Education and New Education Policy 2020

Methodology- Enquiry method

Hypothesis- There is significant similarities between Gandhiji's Basic Education and New Education Policy 2020

Gandhiji 's Basic Education-

Basic Education is a principle which states that knowledge and work are not separate. Mahatma Gandhi promoted an educational curriculum with the same name based on this pedagogical principle. It can be translated with the phrase 'Basic Education for all'. However, the concept has several layers of meaning **Basic education** can be very important in helping people to get jobs and gainful employment. This economic connection, while always present, is particularly critical in a rapidly globalizing world in which quality control and production according to strict specification can be crucial. A love for manual work will be injected in the mind of children. "Earning while learning" was the motto of this education. This will increase the creativity in a student. As Gandhi wanted to make Indian village self-sufficient unit, he emphasized that vocational education should increase the efficiency within the students who will make the village a self-sufficient unit. (Paresh K. Shah)

Principles of Gandhiji's Basic Education Policy 1937

1. From 7 to 14 years of age, education of each child should be free, compulsory, and universal.
2. The medium of teaching the students should be in mother-tongue.
3. There should be no place for English in the education of a child.
4. Mere literacy cannot be equal to education.

5. Also, education should develop human values in the child.
6. Education should develop all the powers of the child according to the community of which he is an integral part.
7. Also, education should achieve the harmonious development of the child's body, mind, heart, and soul.
8. Education should be craft-centered so that the child gains economic self-reliance for their life.
9. All education should be imparted through some productive craft or industry and useful correlation should be established with that industry.
10. Further, education of all subjects should be taught through some local crafts of productive work.
11. The industry should be such that the child is able to achieve gainful work experience through practical work.
12. Education should be made self-supporting through some productive work.
13. Education should lead to economic independence and self-reliance for livelihood.
14. School should be a place of activity where the child gets busy in various experiments and gains newer and newer experiences bringing forth new researches.
15. Education should create useful, responsible, and dynamic citizens. (N.R. Swaroop Saxena)

Introduction of New Education Policy 2020-

The **National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020)**, which was approved by the [Union Cabinet of India](#) on 29 July 2020, outlines the vision of India's new education system.^[1] The new policy replaces the previous [National Policy on Education, 1986](#). Dr K. Kasturirangan was chairman of this committee. This policy is comprised in four parts, part 01 covers school education, part 02 higher education, part 03 Other Key Areas of Focus (such as adult education, promoting Indian Languages and online education etc.), and part 04 covers 'Making it Happen' which discusses the policy's implementation.

Principles of New Education Policy 2020-

The fundamental principles that will guide both the education system at large, as well as the individual institutions within it are;

- 1-recognizing, identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each student, by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non – academic spheres;
- 2- according the highest priority to achieving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy by all students by Grade 3;
- 3- flexibilities, so that learners have the ability to choose their learning trajectories and programs, and thereby choose their own paths in life according to their talents and interest;
- 4- no hard separation between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra – curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc.in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning;
- 5- multidisciplinary and a holistic education across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary world in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge;
- 6- emphasis on conceptual understanding rather than rote learning and learning -for -exams;
- 7- creativity and critical thinking to encourage logical decision- making and innovation;

- 8- ethics and human and constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice;
- 9- promoting multilingualism and the power of language in teaching and learning;
- 10- life skills such as communication, cooperation, teamwork and resilience;
- 11- focus on regular formative assessment for learning rather than the summative assessment that encourages today's coaching culture;
- 12- extensive use of technology in teaching and learning, removing language barriers, increasing access for Divyang students, and educational planning and management;
- 13- respect for diversity and respect for the local context in all curriculum, pedagogy, and policy, always keeping in mind that education is a concurrent subject;
- 14- full equity and inclusion as the cornerstone of all educational decisions to ensure that all students are able to thrive in the educational system;
- 15- synergy in curriculum across all levels of education from early childhood care and education to school education to higher education;
- 16- teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process- their recruitment, continuous professional development, positive working environments and service conditions;
- 17- light but tight regulatory framework to ensure integrity, transparency, and resource efficiency of the educational system through audit and public disclosure while encouraging innovation and out of the box ideas through autonomy, good governance and empowerment;
- 18- outstanding research as a corequisite for outstanding education and development;
- 19- continuous review of progress based on sustained research and regular assessment by educational experts;
- 20- a rootedness and pride in India and its rich, diverse, ancient and modern culture and knowledge system and traditions;
- 21- education is a public service; access to quality education must be considered a basic right of every child;
- 22- substantial investment in a strong, vibrant public education system as well as the encouragement and facilitation of true philanthropic private and community participation.

Similarities between Gandhiji's Basic Education and New Education Policy 2020-

1-Job Oriented Education-Gandhiji in his Basic Education Policy emphasized that education should be job oriented. If we see our education system it is more theoretical than practical syllabus and heap of degrees are unable to produce job rather giving frustrations. New Education Policy 2020 has tried to improve as on page 43, point 16.1-16.8, titled as "Reimagining Vocation Education" NEP recommend that our education should include vocation education so that students would be able to earn his livelihood after completing his education. 16.4 point of the report "This policy aims to overcome the social status hierarchy associated with vocational education and requires integration of vocational education

programmes into mainstream education in all education institutions in a phased manner. Beginning with vocational exposure at early ages in middle and secondary school, quality vocational education will be integrated smoothly into higher education. It will ensure that every child learns at least one vocation and is exposed to several more. This would lead to emphasizing the dignity of Labour and importance of various vocations involving Indian arts and artisanship.” (New Education Policy 2020 report MHRD)

2-Medium of teaching in primary classes as mother tongue- Gandhiji were always in favor of mother tongue as medium of teaching specially in primary classes. Because interest development and conceptual clarity is the main objective in primary classes which can be fulfilled by only mother tongue. Our New Education Policy also support mother tongue in primary classes. New Education Policy 2020 has mentioned it on the page 13, point 4.11 titled as “Multilingualism and the power of language”- “Home language is usually the same language as the mother tongue or that which is spoken by local communities. Wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language / mother tongue/ local language/regional language. Thereafter, the home/ local language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible. This will be followed by both public and private schools.” (New Education Policy 2020 report MHRD)

3- Value based education- Gandhiji had full faith and respect for Indian values, that is why he wanted to introduce in education also. New Education Policy 2020 also have provision of value-based education. It is reported on the page 11, point 4.4 titled as “Holistic development of learner”- “Specific sets of skills and values across domains will be identified for integration and incorporation at each stage of learning, from preschool to higher education. Curriculum frameworks and transaction mechanisms will be developed for ensuring that these skills and values are imbibed through engaging processes of teaching and learning.” (New Education Policy 2020)

4-Holistic development of the child- Gandhiji always recommended multidimensional development of the child. Gandhiji ‘s opinion was that education is medium of making a child into a complete man. He wrote in his book ‘Harijan’ on 11th September 1937 “True education is that by which a child’s physical, mental, and spiritual development would be motivate.” (N.R. Swaroop Saxena). That is why he believed that all the subjects should be taught as correlate each to other to develop integrity of all knowledge. Our new education policy 2020 also favor it. On page no.36 as well as on 12 of NEP 2020 MHRD report under heading 11” Towards a more Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education”, and 4.4 “Holistic development of learners” it is reported – “The aim of education will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating holistic and well -rounded individuals equipped with the key 21st century skills.”

5- To create responsible and dynamic citizen and social worker- Gandhiji’s vision about ultimate goal of education was to make students a loyal, brave and responsible citizen of India. Our NEP 2020 also promote this objective of education. On page 33 under heading “Quality Universities and Colleges: A New and Forward-looking Vision for India’s Higher Education System” at point 9.1. in report of NEP 2020 (MHRD) it is quoted that “Higher education plays an extremely important role in promoting human as societal well- being and in developing India as envisioned in its Constitution- a democratic, just, socially-conscious, cultured, and humane nation upholding liberty, equality, fraternity and justice for all.”

6- Education to All- Gandhiji was adhere to provide primary education to each and every student. He spoke many times in his speech that it’s a nation’s as well as parent’s responsibility to educate their child which is their birth right. These children are future of our nation so we should be sensitive towards them. NEP 2020 report also has include this provision in part 01 school education, on page 07,08, and 10 MHRD has a new pedagogical and curricular restructure of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18 NEP 2020 Report given by MHRD has mentioned on page 08, under heading “Foundational Literacy and Numeracy :An Urgent and Necessary Pre requisite to Learning” at point 2.2 “The highest priority of the education system will be to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school by 2025. The rest of this

policy will become relevant for our students only if this most basic learning requirement(i.e., reading, writing, and arithmetic at the foundational level) is first achieved. To this end, a national Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy will be set up by the MHRD on priority”.

Conclusion- In this way we can say there are so many similarities between Gandhiji’s Basic education system and NEP2020. Mahatma Gandhi gave the scheme for modern India, which can be called the first blue print of national system of education, which is job centered, value based and mass oriented It is the first model of vocationalisation of education in India. In Gandhi a scheme of education, knowledge must be related to activity and practical experience. Need of the hour is to reorient education so as to channelize the manpower in the right direction. In the reports of the various committees and commissions the need and the importance of education has been emphasized to make it vocational. Thus, it is quite justified to say that the fundamental principles of basic education are still valid and fruitful in the context of our present educational reform. They are relevant to be used as guiding principles of modern education. Our NEP2020 has fulfilled Gandhiji’s dream of education in many ways. As we saw in above points. there is broad and wide layout with possible action plan for vocationalization of education.

New education policy has emphasized on development of skills and its vocational use. The report of MHRD has given detail information of vocationalization of education on page 15 at point4.23 titled “Curricular Integration of Essential Subjects, Skills and Capacities”. NEP has emphasized the importance of skills and capacities. Each person has unique personality, different traits and different skills. Each person can earn his livelihood by using his skills with minimal use of local resources. In this way everyone would be self-dependent. It would also increase their confidence and self-esteem. NEP has mentioned Vocation Education in in its report at 16th point First objective of the NEP is to device and implement robust solutions to its own problems that are in harmony with different programs and initiatives of Government of India – make in India, skill India, start-up India and latest being atma-nirbhar India.

If we look back at these schemes, we will find that these were initiated in phases since 2014 but with common goal that is to promote entrepreneurship over jobs. The current Covid19 crisis has proved the validity and necessity of such self-reliant society and it also aimed in redirecting an unemployed youth to find employment through a self-sustained skill-based model with motto “vocal to local”.

If we look at section 3, 4 and 7 of School education along with 10.8 article of NEP document, skill education is given prime importance in school and higher education. It is to be induced at school level from pre-school to class 12th and it aims to empower each student in one vocational skill. Continuing to Higher Education, it aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. Related Regulatory body - A National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE) will be constituted to set framework.

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