

Multidisciplinary Approach: Impact on Multicultural Education of Learners

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Abstract

Education is the basis for progress of every country. Progressive Education Policy is must for every country's progress that should be well-defined, well-planned as well as progressive. Keeping in consideration the traditions and culture, various countries adopt different education systems. On 28th of July, 2020, Union Cabinet System approved the National Education Policy (NEP). The Indian government got feedback after a gap of 34 years from 2.5 lakh stakeholders of village- level in two national parliamentary level committees, in more than 50 workshops. NEP policy recommended multidisciplinary approach, keeping in consideration the holistic for curriculum integration that attempts to connect different domains of study for explaining any subject or theme. It is worth to mention that multidisciplinary approach is flexible as it integrates arts and sciences, curricular and co-curricular activities as well as vocational and academic streams. The creative and multidisciplinary curriculum including humanities, arts, craft, music, drama, languages, culture, health and sports well-being, is added to science and mathematics. The policy also recognizes soft skills like integration, communication, adaptability, cooperation, leadership as 'life skills. The present paper highlights the NPE Policy usage, its impact on language development of learners and impact of multidisciplinary approach on multicultural learners, thereby helping the learners to develop academic expertise with vital leadership skills boosting their career. The paper has future scope in presenting holistic and multidisciplinary education to multicultural learners the undergraduate programs in professional, technical, as well as in vocational disciplines.

Keywords: Holistic, Multidisciplinary Approach, NEP 2020, Sustainable Development

Introduction

A holistic and multidisciplinary approach consisting of curriculum integration and attempts to connect different domains of study for explaining a subject, theme or issue. It is worth to mention about NEP 2020 that this policy is flexible in the sense that it integrates arts and sciences, curricular and co-curricular activities as well as vocational and academic streams. It further throws light on creative and multidisciplinary curriculum including humanities, arts, craft, music, drama, languages, culture, health and sports well-being, in addition to science and mathematics. The conclusion is drawn that this policy has true essence of Man- making Education from Swami Vivekananda philosophy, Integral Education of Sri Aurobindo's ideology, and Basic Education of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy. The policy recognizes soft skills like integration, communication, adaptability, cooperation, leadership, accountability, empathy etc. as 'life skills. The mastery and proficiency in a particular field of knowledge as 'hard skills' are also necessary to attain growth in any student's life. The combination of both the skills makes a good balance

between knowledge and interpersonal attributes. In this way, multi-disciplinary approach is helpful for students to develop academic expertise with vital leadership skills boosting their career. To address the issues of teaching and research and to produce competent leaders, NEP 2020 provides an insight for holistic and multidisciplinary education, the aim to which is to develop all abilities among pupils like physical, social, emotional and moral. NEP 2020 proposes an approach of holistic and multidisciplinary education of all undergraduate programs such as in professional, technical, as well as in vocational disciplines.

Objectives of Multidisciplinary Approach

- To integrate Arts stream with STEM.
- To incorporate the study of the humanities, language, arts, drama, dance and music along with the study of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.
- To enhance the happiness and well-being of students.
- To improve the problem-solving skills among pupils.
- To develop critical thinking among pupils.
- To develop various traits like perseverance, responsibility and citizenship thereby making them affluent throughout their lives.
- To develop understanding for application of science and technology in a rationale way.
- To enrich the students by enabling them for value based moral and ethical responsibility.
- To enable the students using their individual actions in terms of principles of constructiveness, fairness and wisdom.
- To widen the learner's field of vision thereby promoting the spirit of curiosity and dialogue.
- To train the learners to live creatively, responsibly and peacefully in a society.
- To enable the students for becoming agents of change for the betterment of society.

Implementing NPE Policy and its Usage

- The policy focuses on the flexible and innovative curricula of higher education institutions that covers credit-based courses as well as projects in the spheres of value-based education, community engagement & service as well as environmental education, The real motive of developing holistic and multidisciplinary education is not far behind.
- The policy lays emphasis on ethical and constitutional values for creating an enlightened citizenship that is essential for deepening the country's democratic roots..The abovesaid idea will provide empowerment to learners as active promoters of more peaceful, secure, inclusive, and sustainable society.
- It further depicts a careful shift towards competence-based learning thereby helping the pupils to improve their core skills instead of following a rigid course selection process. .For professionals, both hard and soft skill sets are necessary for making them stronger applicants and performers in the world of work.
- Berliner (2002) found that higher education researchers face problems regarding disseminating knowledge in higher education sector while choosing the methodological approach in which the learners are specialized. They face problems within higher education programs in gaining access to graduate methodological classes in specialized fields. It requires high levels of prior training in making research an

important one reasoning to learners. To acquaint this, multidisciplinary approach is likely to add methodology. It will finally prepare researchers for future courses in research methodology courses taught within educational psychology.

Impact on Language Development of Learners

By developing attitudes and values of integration, hard work, discipline, cooperation, adjustment and communication enable the pupils to develop healthy interpersonal relationships resulting in facilitating their language is a medium where literacy plays an important role in the development. Chumbow (2005) found language factors responsible for growth in educational achievements. These are referred as effective communication and critical thinking. Robinson (1996) finds that language will be given priority in case the country is at the Centre of development process. Djite´ (2008) makes statements in favour of language awareness as a key component for attaining sustainable development in fields like health & Education as well as governance & economy. All this has put great influence on various areas of development. The National Education Policy, 2020 has emphasized on “language usage, the medium of instruction at least at Grade 5, preferably be till Grade 8 and beyond it, mother tongue/ home language/local language/regional language” for both public and private schools. Pirrie, A., Hamilton, S., & Wilson, V. (1999). Studied that a few challenges came forward on the way to realize the NEP principles and maxims. Teachers are not recruited on the basis of languages understood, spoken and written by them. NEP 2020, policy strongly recommended the mother tongue usage through development and execution of a curricular framework to achieve the benefits of learning in mother tongue in schools. The high-powered committee, the Ministry of Education explored and recommended the pathways for the promotion and growth of Indian languages. The policy advocated text books and teaching resources as course material for Grades 1-12, on DIKSHA portal. It has option of availability in not only in Sign Language but also in 32 Indian languages. The role of NISHTHA 3.0 is also not ignoring as it has incorporated teaching training module on multi lingual teaching for early grades. If we speak about Vidyanjali portal, it is really useful for volunteers to get familiarize with the mother tongue to assist teachers as well as learners. In this way, NPE 2020 provides a platform to learners to use the resources, books, video tapes, e-content, bilingual text books for higher retention and improving their grade scores, thereby enhancing language proficiency.

Multicultural Education

One of the distinctive features of our era is multiculturalism. It is a multidimensional process as it involves various cultures and streams of different disciplines. Students from different background on the basis of gender, race, religion, environment come to learn in a formal society. The interpersonal skills, confidence, Mutual enrichment and sharing of cultures based on sharing human values enables the learners to develop their interpersonal skills, thinking ability, boosting energy and confidence. The learners being migrated from various cultures creates the phenomenon of multiculturalism in an accepted and balancing mode. The role of educational institutions is not neglected as it helps in transmission of knowledge, skills as well as development of cultural reality to all kinds of learners. These educational bodies are able to reflect the society by change in the education structure through the concept of multiculturalism. These are the reformers as they enable the learners to develop their personality according to the norms, standards and criterion of a given set of formal society. University is not far away from the development process as it helps to cultivate universal human values among the learners, thereby developing national consciousness.

Challenges faced by teachers in Multicultural Education

Gordan (1999) explained that the major challenge in multicultural education is that to provide a fair education for students of achieving social justice. It deals with the perspectives of different groups like Mainstream centric perspectives are taken into account as significant. (Banks, 1988) found that high-stakes testing and teacher accountability puts extra burden on minority groups of pupils as it makes the curriculum difficult to attain in diverse cultures. For this, teachers must also have adequate skills to prepare the future generations to integrate their classroom experiences with the culture in which they are studying. Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis, (1992) illustrated that to attain multicultural competence, three levels of understanding should be developed: knowledge, awareness and skills. Garcia & Pugh, (1992) found these competencies are difficult to attain. In order to sustain this, pre service training is required to help the educators to prepare them in using this diversity influencing their teaching practices. Pre service teachers effectively plan the strategies to implement multiculturalism, thereby becoming advocates of multiculturalism society. That further prepare them to achieve equity and social justice in their classrooms. In this way, the purpose of the multicultural education is likely to be fulfilled in the light of effectiveness of professional training programs to be implemented in the teacher education colleges. It further plays an important role in bridging the gap among the diverse kind of cultures. This implies that in order to prepare pre service teachers to meet the challenges of today's diverse and multicultural classrooms, the teachers should be acquainted with the comprehensive and quality programs of multicultural education.

Conclusion

Multidisciplinary approach includes multiple academic disciplines for redefining the problems in different set of circumstances, thereby reaching at appropriate solutions and enabling the learners to foster their interpersonal skills, critical thinking and using real life opportunities for further growth in their lives. It further seeks collaboration from various professionals in various fields of their study. It is a wonderful life going project that makes challenges in the way of students come from diverse range and domains. Providing the learners a different perspective to be engage in a new set of subjects in the classroom where science subjects are to be taught with art or humanities is also a challenge before them as well as teachers. In this way, multidisciplinary education in the context of NEP provides platform to learners to develop their language proficiency, usage of mother tongue and combining the expertise of a field with other fields to a set of learners in classrooms. The advantage of using the approach is improving communication ability, collaboration skills, practical ability as well as creativity. We hope for the inculcation of this approach in our discipline as providing quality education to diverse set of learners by boosting their energy and skills. As the multicultural learners face various problems in their dimensions, multidisciplinary approach will provide the solution in future.

Future Scope

• Education and Identity

Multicultural Education, a way for generating individual qualities among the learners by showing individual qualities of each learners, whether come from different streams and cultures. By inculcating multidisciplinary approach to our future generations, learners are to be taught academic as well as curricular activities to diverse set of learners.

- **Inter and Intra culture as Essential Part of Society**

UNESCO suggests intercultural Education over multicultural one as it has future of paying respect to different cultures and groups of the world as a society. It has combined understanding with interpretation that will help the learners in getting cultural meaning in foreign sign system. The concept of inclusive identity will be attained through intra-cultural education.

Benefiting from a multidisciplinary and multi professional campus community:

Learners get benefit from multidisciplinary education in the context that integrates part of each department into the study programs of others. It enables the learners from all streams to come together and collaboration will function well in the professional world. In this way, it is a real world approach that compile and collaborate the learners from the different world.

Make our degrees abroad more valuable

Working in different disciplines together will make a harmonious and integrated perspective towards life. Learners studying abroad come from different cultures get benefit from multidisciplinary programs.

Research and ICT usage

Use of ICT as a tool in multidisciplinary approach will enable the developing countries like India a knowledge- building society. The teaching learning process will get benefit of virtual classrooms and get their usage in higher education sector to make interpersonal skills more developed. It will finally provide the learners of different streams in higher education institutions to monitor the impact of ICT during lessons delivered during teaching and research.

Way towards Globalization

The students from different domains interacted with each other and participated in research through developing e- content & MOOCs. Even students from different countries while interacted through virtual class can get the benefit of transfer of learning to each other. The knowledge and skills they attained in one domain could be prove useful for the others in different domain, thereby developing positive and social outlook.

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