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Re-conceptualization of Modern Curriculum in the Backdrop of Socio Cultural Strata in India

Suchana Roy
Assistant Professor, Department of BBA (H), Institute of Engineering & Management, Kolkata, India

Abstract: ***If "the scholastic strata of curriculum construction is entrenched in national culture" (Pinar 2005) and our own societal, chronological, and institutional locations impose on the questions we ask and the answers we provide, then this attempt to inscribe curriculum studies needs to accept the explicitness of India. In this paper, I attempt to comprehend meaning and structure of the space of curriculum studies in India with the help of two intertwined axes: societal perception, trajectory, behaviors, and brawl of realm building and democracy in India to trace curriculum in relation to bigger framework and developments. This paper aims to know how the modern curriculum fits into our community's academic needs against the socio-cultural Indian context, by giving an overview of the field of curriculum studies in India, its silences, disputes, and budding areas of study. The study could help state and central educational bodies to revamp–curriculum, and textbooks to aid in comprehending the thoughts that have fashioned curriculum studies and debates in India till now and thereby suggest changes.***
Keywords: Curriculum, Curriculum development, Socio cultural aspects, Academic studies, Changes

I. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum conventionally had been assembled over many decades and it was the result of varied socio cultural, political and financial dimensions of society and the same has been transformed to suit the detailed needs and objectives of the era but the elementary spirit remains unchanged through ages. The curriculum is used by a learning system as the outfitted definition of its educational institutions. It classifies both the content of learning as well as the level of learning to be attained through the prearranged content. It is in this sense that a school curriculum is intended to offer the totality of learning experiences given by a learning system. The term 'curriculum' is one of the most uncertain terms in modern educational discourse. It can be used to signify a mere subject-wise catalog of topics to be taught in a class on the one hand and something that includes the entire experience provided to the students in as well as out of educational organizations on the other. Appreciation of the term 'curriculum' should be the initial step in mounting an apt curriculum blueprint. The perception of curriculum varies from the conventional notion as a listing of subject and subject areas to be taught to the advanced scientific explanation that it should symbolize the complete range of practices to be provided by the educational institutions to accomplish all the anticipated behavioral changes on the part of the students. The term curriculum should stand for a entire enclose of operation which spells out the objectives of education, content areas to be incorporated for learning for a specific juncture of education, direct or indirect vacillation of the favored strategies to be adopted for attaining the probable learning outcomes, as well as the measures to be adopted for evaluating the consequential outcomes. The term, interpreted as above, stands for the complete range of educational operations, provided under the control of educational institution to guarantee the preferred levels of learning on the part of the learners.

II. DEFINITION of CURRICULUM

According to Albert Oliver, 'curriculum' is the educational program consisting of three important elements, such as studies, activities and guidance. The second concept, described by Philip Phenix, relies on a carefully thought out scheme of values which constitute the aims and objectives, or purposes of education. Etymologically, the term curriculum comes from the Latin word "currere" which suggests run or run-way or a running course.

III. MODERN CONCEPT of CURRICULUM

Contemporary curriculum is the amalgamation of two active processes i.e. individual growth and process of socialization, which is universally known as modification according to societal environment.

A. Acquisition of Present Socio Cultural Scenario Of India In Modern Curriculum Development

Characterized as one of the longest surviving gamut of cultures, India is a multi-cultural and multi-lingual society with a perpetual undercurrent of fundamental harmony. Thus the heterogeneity in social configuration is an idiosyncratic aspect of the Indian society.

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The learning system does not function in segregation from the culture of which it is a part. Hierarchies of social group, financial status and gender biases , societal diversity as well as the patchy fiscal growth that typify Indian society also profoundly manipulate access to curriculum development and participation of students. This is mirrored in the jagged differences between varied societal and economic groups, which are seen in school admission and completion rates. On the one hand, we are observing the increasing commercialization of education and curriculum development, and, on the other hand, scarce public support for education. These features indicate a shifting of accountability for curriculum development from the central to state to the family and the society The increasingly competitive environment into which educational institutions are being drawn and the aspirations of parents place a terrific burden of trauma and anxiety on all children, including the very young, to the damage of their individual growth and development, and thus hindering the inculcation of the bliss of learning. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments grant chances for local communities to take part in decision making in education and curriculum development for their children. But even after that political discourses and biases can be seen in curriculum development. The societal context of education in India thus portrays a handful of challenges, which must be tackled by the curriculum framework, both in its aim as well as its implementation. The debate on guiding principles has drawn interest to these challenges as well as some of the ways in which they can be dealt with. Understanding the notion of knowledge to include novel areas of knowledge and skill, inclusivity in selecting learning lessons, academic practices that are prepared to promote involvement, building self-assurance and critical consciousness, and an openness to be betrothed with the society to elucidate and share curricular decisions are among the new ideas. To denote this, modern curriculum addresses dimensions of socio cultural circumstances of India i.e secularism, democracy, equality, liberty, fraternity, justice, national integration and patriotism. Modern-day curriculum not only constructs in the child appreciation for constitutional rights as well as duties but also acquires the ideology of impartiality towards the disadvantaged section of the society. The socio-cultural viewpoint when obtained by the modern curriculum, deals with the implication and position of children's societal, intellectual and substantial world in the learning process. From a social constructivist point of view, the student is viewed as an element of the society and learning is viewed as progress that occurs as individuals interprets their experience, including exchanges with others (Vygotsky, 1978; Kozulin, 2003; Valisner, 2008).

In this argument, I would like to discuss about paths in which modern curriculum fits in the present socio cultural scenario of India.

B. How Indian Philosophy fits in the Development of modern Curriculum

Values offer curriculum experts with an outline of extensive concerns and tasks and the knowledge and actions to stress in a classroom. The reasons for which a curriculum has been developed constitute the philosophical determinants of a curriculum. In the modern curriculum, acquisition of Indian philosophy helps in all-round development of a student and also to develop national ideals, desired values, a proper philosophy of life, cultural, social, cognitive, and other desirable values. In total, it aims at preparing a person capable of growing individually as well as contributing to the progress of the nation and for the good of humanity. As an example we can see the inclusion of Yoga education in the modern curriculum which helps in calming students' minds and enhancing their learning abilities with the use of ancient Indian philosophical traits.

C. How Socio cultural strata of India fit in the development of modern curriculum

As society is one of the major influencers of contemporary curriculum, the school curriculum instills and cultivates a sense of pride in being an Indian through a conscious understanding of the development of Indian civilization and also contributions of India to the world civilization. Strengthening of national identity and unity is closely linked with the study of the cultural heritage of India, rich with diverse hues. It is proved that curriculum has to play its twofold role of being traditional and dynamic — bringing about a fine synthesis between change-oriented technologies and the country's continuity of cultural tradition. It develops a national awareness, a national spirit and national unity necessary for national identity. The inclusion of India's socio cultural context helps in understanding the nature of the country's pluralistic society and its amalgamated culture. The national spirit and the sense of national identity assumed enormous significance during the long saga of India's freedom struggle. For that, the study of this freedom struggle at all stages of school education shall continue to be significant.

Modern curriculum, in order to be pertinent and significant must relate to the socio-cultural context of the Indian students. Our indigenous Indian curriculum not only celebrates the ideas of the country's thinkers such as Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, Dayananda Saraswati, Mahatma Phule, Gandhi, RabindranathTagore, Zakir Hussain, J. Krishnamurti and Gijubhai Badheka but also inculcates the desire to live together in their own society on the one hand, and the global village on the other through the teaching of universal values such as broadmindedness and civil rights, the multiplicity of cultures, admiration for others and for the surroundings.

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D. Curriculum reforms in India

To acquire socio cultural scenario of India, The curriculum has been reformed a number of times. Such as:

1) The University Education Commission 1952-53 recommended a diversified curriculum with some core subjects at the higher secondary stage.

2) The Secondary Education Commission 1964-66 considered the working of the entire system of education in the country and made suggestions for restructuring the curriculum in the light of explosion of knowledge.

3) The recommendations of the Education Commission led to the formulation of the National Policy of Education, 1968 which envisaged 10 +2+3 pattern of education for the entire country.

4) In 1975, a fresh curriculum for the prototype of 10+2+3 scheme was invented by the NCERT.

5) In 1977, the Ishwarbai Patel Committee, selected by the Government of India, recommended the insertion of Society Useful Productive Work (SUPW) at school level.

6) The 1977-78 Committee on Vocational course at the +2 phase, headed by Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah evaluated the professional courses and recommended course of action for setting up changes in professional courses.

7) The National Policy on Education 1986, provided a new direction to the curriculum. It envisages curriculum as an important instruction in realizing the ideals of society as enshrined in the constitution.

8) In recent times, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 was publicized by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (soon to be addressed as the Ministry of Education). The policy is intended at altering the Indian education system to meet the requirements of the 21st Century. The novel policy seeks out modification of literacy percentage and numeracy result linked with primary schools, decrease in dropout levels in middle and secondary schools and acceptance of the multi-disciplinary approach in the higher education system. Apart from this, the strategy also focuses on early childhood care, reforming curriculum and pedagogy; restructuring assessments and examinations, and advancement in teacher education and broad-basing their appraisal. Though the NEP 2020 seeks to bring a holistic alteration in the education system of India, its triumph depends on the determination and means in which it will be executed.

IV. CONCLUSION

Curriculum development is a total process in which different components such as formulation of a curriculum policy, curriculum research, curriculum planning, its implementation and then its evaluation play an important role. The changing socio cultural context of India is transforming too fast. These would not wait for the normal ten or twelve year curricular cycle in order to be included in the school curriculum. Every learner in a dynamic learning society has to be familiar with such areas of knowledge in various disciplines of learning in the contemporary context. In order to keep the learners' knowledge base up to date, a small quantum is to be added to the regular curricular content every two or three years. Simultaneously, the redundant portions of information in the existing curriculum may be carefully deleted so that the exercise may not result in any additional curricular load for the learners. In this way Indian socio cultural strata fits in the modern curriculum for the betterment and the progress of society.

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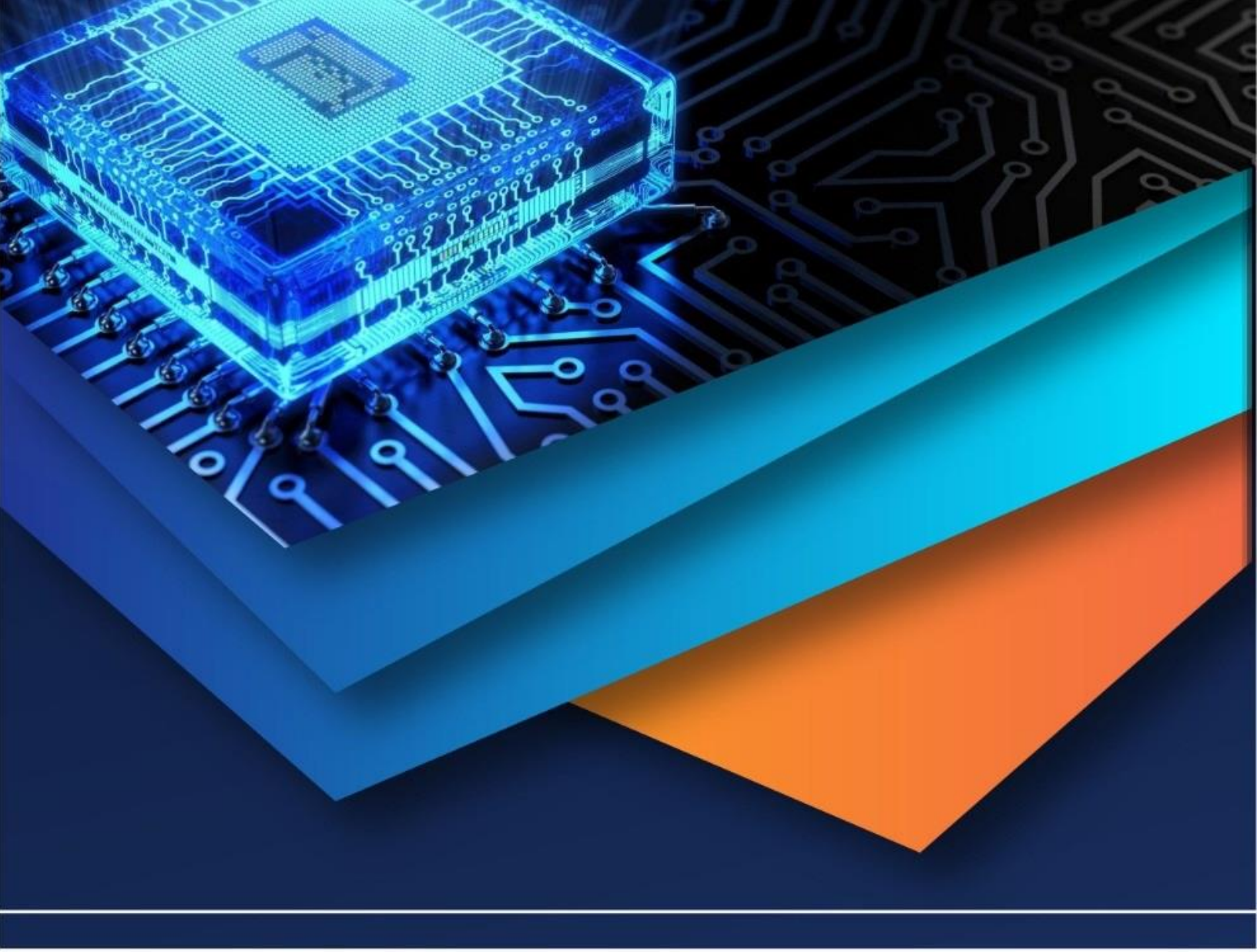

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