



NCF FOR EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND DIRECTIONS

¹Toral P. Panchal, ²Nilesh Pandya, ³Sitarambhai Deshmukh

¹Researcher, ²Associate Professor, ³Professor

^{1,3}Department of Education,

^{1,3}Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, India

²Department of Education,

²Children's University, Gandhinagar, India

Abstract: Early childhood care and education are becoming a challenge in the current times. Many years ago, children were seen living happily. However, today, due to modern development, under the influence of gadgets like television, mobile, iPad, children cannot get the joy of enjoying their childhood. Like the front page of any book, this early childhood is very important for a child's entire life. Instead of enjoying this best period, children are now being seen growing up with office loads in so-called stress-free learning. Where is that childhood!! Where children used to listen stories from their grandparents, play in the mud, build boats and swim in the rain, climb trees, play steps and laugh with everyone in the family without knowing when they will grow up. The implication of saying that there was math along with learning and the teacher's stick was ringing and wisdom was coming to its place is that the Guru was so important that instead today parents go to complain about their child not being told anything by the teacher in school. All of us have created situations like cutting our own hands.

In the present paper, the new dimensions included in the 2022 NCF ECCE syllabus, the challenges in its implementation and the new directions to be opened and the changes in the education sector have been discussed in details.

Keywords: Child Development, Panchkosh, Panchkosh Development, Pre-Primary Education, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), National Curriculum Framework for ECCE, Holistic Development.

I. INTRODUCTION

Based on neuroscience research, most of a child's brain develops extremely rapidly in the early years. Apart from this, 85% of a child's brain develops by the age of 6 years. According to Newman, the developmental stage up to five years is very crucial for the body and brain of any human being.

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) is thus generally defined as the care and education of early childhood education in India. The Kothari Commission Report 1965 to 1966 laid the foundations of education in its infancy and the growth in that area seems to have been constant since then. Moreover, under the Right to Education Act in 2009, basic education was recommended for children aged from 3 to 6 years. If we talk about the existing new education policy in the context of early childhood education, it has been thought about from the bottom up, in which 3 to 8 years have been included in the initial education. Further, the stage from 3 to 6 years has been included in pre-primary education and 6 to 8 in class 1 and 2 respectively. The elementary education has been thought from a broad perspective, in which the early development and education of the infant has been thought very deeply and for that a very clear map has been prepared by the government in NEP-2020, which has been considered as one of the main priorities. This is considered to be a very important step under the National Curriculum Framework (NCF). The fruit of which

we will get in the coming days. The idea, design and implementation of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) is actually the foundation of curriculum development. The main objective of NCF is to bring the necessary changes and improvements in the prevailing situation in the field of education and to provide basic experience to children to create strong and competent citizens. For this purpose, National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage 2022 has been prepared keeping in mind the overall development of the foundational stage of the student. It is well known that the basis of progress of a nation depends on education. Hence the National Curriculum Framework can be said to be a transformative initiative to develop our country. Therefore, keeping in mind the objectives, principles and approach of NEP 2020 to make progress in the field of education to meet the challenging demands of the society in present times, the noble work of forming ECCE NCF will be a backbone to our nation in order to take the society forward through basic education and that is called “One India, Best India”, this will help to prove the foundation of a self-reliant India.

2. Objectives:

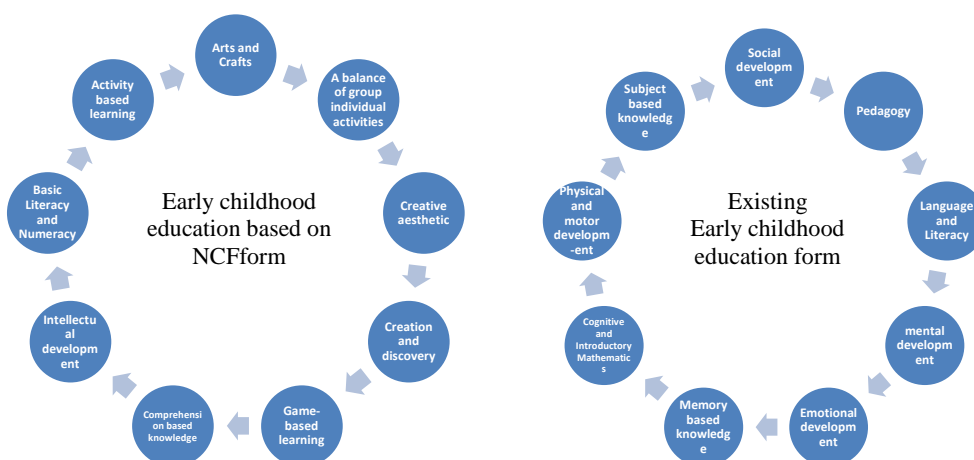
Following objectives have been proposed in the current context and they are:

- To discuss the new dimensions included in the NCF curriculum designed to bring the positive change in pre-primary education.
- To discuss the challenges of implementing the NCF based on the latest research in early childhood care and education.
- To discuss the characteristics of NCF and its objectives.
- To discuss a new direction plan from the NCF for this foundation stage keeping in mind the Indian system of pedagogy.
- To discuss the objectives of the NCF curriculum and the prospects for its achievement.

3. The concept of early childhood education under the NCF ECCE 2020 curriculum

According to the current situation, up to the age of 3 years, many children spend most of their time in the family between their parents or grandparents and sometimes with their siblings. After 3 years, children spend a lot of time in preschool, kindergarten or anganwadi. It is observed that quality primary education and care are not easily available to socially and economically backward class children nowadays. A rash of pre-schools has erupted everywhere. This school is benefiting students whose parents are financially able to pay the fees expected by these organizations. Thus, if we look at the current situation, all the primary education children of the country are not getting equal opportunity for education. Hence it can be concluded that only the children whose parents are financially capable can get the opportunity to take this education. Thus the objective is to ensure that every child in India has access to quality early childhood care and education by 2030. A proper system of high quality pre-school education is essential. Hence, NCF has been considered under NEP 2020, whose target is very large.

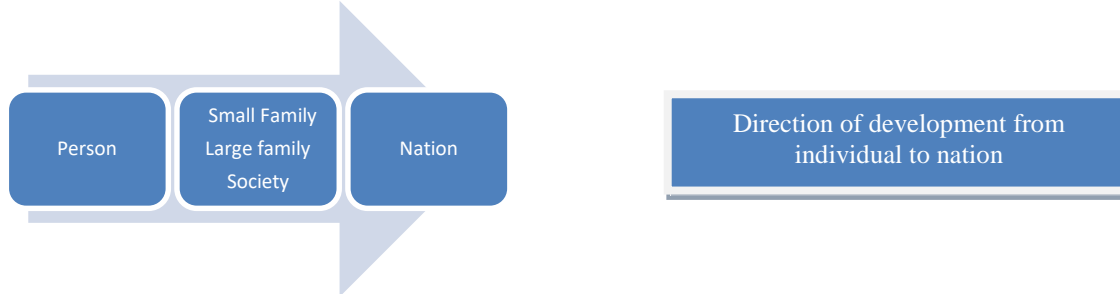
4. Existing and New NCF Syllabus of Early Childhood Education:



'Curriculum' is a very broad term, which in the present situation has been narrowed down to curriculum. In fact, curriculum encompasses the overall experiences a student has in school. Currently the curriculum emphasizes only reading and writing. In an education system that assesses children's ability to read, children are given priority over reading comprehension. By means of which the mental development of children is also being stunted. Parrot knowledge without understanding is stunting the child's development. As outlined

in the NEP 2020, 'Sport' is at the core of this curriculum concept. ECCE NCF will play a vital role in inculcating the sense of fraternity and developing goodwill among the students through education. In order to successfully implement the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage 2022, researchers in early childhood care and education, education practitioners, school leaders and education system workers such as project officers, examination boards and textbook development teams will have a shared contribution to the survey.

5. New aspects included under NCF:



The National Curriculum Framework is a step in the direction of individual to holistic development. NCF is the 'constitution' for the future of education. National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE), National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCF ECCE) focus on overall development of children, skill development, trained teachers, education in mother tongue and cultural roots. Through the curriculum, a deep sense of respect for pedagogy, fundamental duties and constitutional values, a sense of bond with one's country, and awareness of one's roles and responsibilities in a changing world can be developed. Apart from this, a deep sense of pride in being an Indian not only in thought but also in intellect, as well as in daily life can also be developed. The NCF ECCE curriculum is structured to include survey aspects that help to develop functions, knowledge, skills, values and dispositions in the children. In which the following aspects are covered.

A high-quality learning environment

Early childhood care and education presents a highly complex profile, in which environment is a very important factor at this stage. Freeman studied 18 pairs of baby twins who were housed in different environments. On checking the result, a lot of differences were observed in their intellectual achievement. Thus, the school environment has also been given importance in the new curriculum. The curriculum envisages that children between the ages of 3 to 8 years get an appropriate institutional environment for interesting learning.

Provision of education centers with adequate facilities:

As per NEP, early childhood education programs or pre-schools are arranged in Anganwadis, Balvatikas for children aged 3 to 6 years. In which, rich with new resources and with new construction, air-lighted houses will be built.

Health, safety, care and nutrition:

As Aristotle said, a healthy mind is built in a healthy body. Thus health of children is a primary need. Development of good health habits through various activities is included in this curriculum. Apart from this, attention has been focused on safety, care and nutrition.

Other Essential Skills

Apart from this, emphasis is placed on self-help skills, motor skills, hygiene, physical development through movement and exercise, expression and communication, thoughts and feelings for parents and others, as well as drama, conversation, stories, toys, and music.

Moral and holistic development

Emphasis is placed on value development along with education for moral development of children through activities.

Game-based learning is one of them. Emphasis is placed on play and activity based teaching methods to teach any new concept to the children so that the children can easily learn a new concept while playing with enthusiasm.

Interacting with the child:

In this age range, the focus is on developing the child's innate abilities, and to satisfy curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, cooperation, teamwork, social interaction, empathy, compassion, cultural appreciation, playfulness, as well as the ability to interact successfully and respectfully with teachers.

To develop basic numeracy and reading ability.

Literacy and numeracy education at an early stage is very important. Learning about alphabets, languages, numbers, counting, colors, shapes, drawing, painting, indoor and outdoor activities, puzzles for logical thinking, art, crafts, music are important elements of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). The importance of FLN for overall education is well understood and fully emphasized in NEP 2020.

An Approach to Mother Language Education and Literacy

जननीजन्मभूमिश्चस्वर्गादपिगरीयसी ||

It is recommended that primary education should be done in the mother tongue because according to the views of great educationists like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, MaharshiAurobindo, if a child is educated in the mother tongue, it becomes easier for him/her to understand any concept. Even the great scientist Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam recommended to educate the child only in the language in which he dreams.

Panchakosh Development:

A person's body is made up of Panchakosha. These are called the five sheaths or layers, which are AnnamayaKosha (physical layer), PranamayaKosha (life force energy layer), ManomayaKosha (mind layer), Vigyanamaikosha (intellectual layer) and AnandamayaKosha (inner self). Each cell shows specific characteristics. The overall development of a child is based on these five cells. Each of these cells are inter-related so the activities are also designed to focus on each. Thus the concept of panchakosha is also conceptualized in ECCE.

6. Challenges for successful implementation of National Curriculum for Framework for Foundational Stage 2022

It is said that the beginning of any good work is very difficult, but just like the flow of water keeps flowing and finds its own way, after starting the work, you start to find the way ahead. The National Curriculum Framework designed for foundation stage development is a challenging imperative.

The necessary standardized materials and literature should be made available before the implementation of the course.

There are many challenges to be faced in implementing the NCF, the first of which is to prepare the relevant literature for the curriculum, in which preparations like textbooks, essential equipment package etc. have to be done in advance for which this package has to be made under the guidance of experts, and expert researchers etc. who are connected and working in this field. One that is certified is very important.

To prepare classrooms with necessary infrastructure and ventilation.

Environment is also considered to be a necessary and important factor for children to learn. Therefore, classrooms with necessary ventilation and necessary resources for children to study also have to be set up before implementing the curriculum. This is because of the fact that the psychologists and the researchers have determined that the environment is also an essential factor in the development of children.

Need for competent teachers

Once Mahatma Gandhi has said that education means bringing out the best parts of the body, mind and soul of a child or human being. According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, a teacher should be one who makes students willing to learn through his exemplary influence. There is a need at an early stage for such teachers who can recognize and develop the latent potential in children.

Teachers must be committed to providing interesting learning experiences to children by developing innovative methods and approaches and materials to ensure that the curriculum is appropriate and serves the purpose of each aspect of the curriculum. In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, the teachers have to be trained and the teacher himself has to be dedicated to the objectives of the study.

Providing funds in education sector.

Funding education sector. To increase education sector from 3% of GDP currently to 6%. If the required funds are not provided, the required resources, man power to implement it properly cannot be met.

Recommending mother tongue for primary education is challenging.

One of the key highlights of NEP 2020 is the decision to make mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction up to class 5 while this may create a long term impact in nation building. It is also ensured the transition from mother tongue or regional language to foreign language and helps inculcate human values and emotions and stay connected to their own social and cultural fabric. (Narayan, 2020)

Nowadays, students understand different languages study in the same classroom. So if the teaching work is done in the mother tongue of that state then it cannot be easily possible for the teacher. Because the children whose parents work frequently in other states have to study in any state and it is very difficult to understand the local language as the language of study. Therefore this is also challenging part.

Lack of ability to use technology:

According to NSSO's 75th National Survey (2017-18) male and female literacy gap in rural and urban areas, children from urban area can operate the computers as well as can use internet by himself better than rural area.

Ability	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Able to operate computer	12.6	7	37.5	26.9
Able to use Internet	17.1	8.5	43.5	30.1

7. Development direction of successful implementation:

India is a secular country. Thus, keeping in mind the unity and diversity of India and keeping in mind the children of all the states, planning is necessary for the implementation of the skilled curriculum as per the stages shown in the figure below. The success of any planning depends on the effectiveness of its implementation. A committee of experts will be formed to evaluate the development of this curriculum designed to ensure access to high-quality and equitable education for all children, who will evaluate the work done and formulate a plan to determine the direction for further development. This curriculum will strive to reach the goal of enrolling all children in school by 2030 and reach the height of sustainability in a successfully implemented state by 2040.

Basic planning

- Enrollment of children in maximum schools.
- Required funds
- Creation of necessary infrastructure.
- Recruitment of trained teachers
- TLM creation
- Implementation of curriculum
- Formation of Advisory Board

Lerning Objectives

- Continuous evaluation and quality assurance
- Research
- Organizing various seminars
- Organization evaluation
- Books and textbooks process
- Parental engagement with the school
- Parental response
- Solving Problems experienced at a competent level

Organization of academic training programs

- Organization of international seminars
- Enabling and empowering teachers
- Organization of child development programs
- Parent education program
- Suggestions and corrections by the Advisory Board

Conclusions:

According to the Indian system, the concept of education is not just content-based but has a much broader objective. Under which, the new education policy has been approved by the central government after 34 years. Pursuant to which NCF ECCE has been designed and implementation of which is a big challenge. However, this new curriculum will be the first basic step to make the best citizen of India in the future. This has been a hotly debated topic nowadays. It has been welcomed by many, while critics remain at the beginning of any auspicious work but the basic aspects of which have been left behind. It has been reconsidered and included in the new syllabus. In short, through this curriculum, we have worked tirelessly to provide the best experience to the children in the initial stages and have moved in the direction of its

implementation. Through this, the feeling that the world is one family will be developed and the best nation will be built by the best citizen.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All the authors are thankful to Gujarat Vidyapith to carry out this research work.

REFERENCES

- [1] NCERT (National Council Of Educational Research and Training). National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage ECCE 2022. New Delhi: NCERT.
- [2] GOI (Government of India) National Education Policy (2020). New Delhi: Ministry Of Human Resource Development.
- [3] Khaitan, S. 2020, NEP 2020: Why learning in mothertongue is effective but hard to implement business standard.Way forward (2020 August 7) Indian Policy Collective.
- [4] Gautam, M,Singh, S, Fartyal, G, Tiwari, A & Arya, K.2016. Education System in modern India International Journal of Scientific ReserchAnd Education 04(01), 4876-4879.
- [5] Singh, B Opinion: The Language Conundrum of National Education Policy 2020, ET Government, Economic Times, October 9, 2020.
- [6] Narayan, B. NEP 2020 : Teaching Students in mother tongue will help inculcate human values in their outlook, July 31, 2020.
- [7] Prasad, H, National Education Policy 2020 Major Impact on Your child curriculum & Future, Uni-variety, August 3, 2020.
- [8] Achumi M, Joseph s. (2022) An Interface between NEP 2020 and Early Childhood Care and Education.
- [9] Kaul, V. ECCE in National Education Policy (NEP 2020) Addressing the Learning Continuum.
- [10] NCERT (2019): Early Childhood Education Programme. National Council for Educational Research and Training. New Delhi
- [11] Satpathy, Bishwajit (2018): Panchkosha Theory of Personality. The International Journal of Indian Psychology, 6(2), 33-39.
- [12] Cresswell, J. W. (2009). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. Thousand Oaks: SAGE
- [13] Uchat, DA (2009). Research methodology in education and social sciences. Rajkot. PARAS PUBLISHING.
- [14] Education International (2008): Response to the Global Monitoring Report elementary schools. Proceedings of the National Workshop on the Studies Various Issues Concerning Children and Families in Ethiopia.4-5, 1998.
- [15] Neuman, W. L. (2007). Social ReserchMethods : Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. New Delhi :PresstechLitho Pvt. Ltd.
- [16] Katdare, Indumati (2006): Shishuvatika : Elements and Practice.Vidyabharati Training Centre. Ahmedabad.
- [17] Uchat, D. A. (2006). Qualitative Reserch. Rajkot.
- [18] Chowdhury, A. and Choudhury, R. (2002).Preschool Children: Development, Care and Education. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.
- [19] Johnson, R. (1987). Approaches to early Childhood Education. New York: Merill
- [20] Ramswaroop Sharma (1988): Panchkosh Vivek, Kesari Press, Agra
- [21] Hurlock E (1978). Child Development (6th Ed.) New York: MCGraw-Hill Book Company.