



**The Social Science Review**  
**A Multidisciplinary Journal**  
ISSN: 2584 – 0789

**(Open Access, Peer-Reviewed, Refereed, Bi-Monthly Journal)**  
**www.tssreview.in**

## **HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ART INTEGRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF NEP 2020**

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### **Abstract**

The world in 21<sup>st</sup> century has witnessed technological development to such an extent that technology has engulfed almost everything of day-to-day life. On the one hand, one can access the ocean of knowledge at fingertip, and on other, technology has somewhat led the work to be of mediocre standard. A machine is created by a human being, but machine itself is not creative. It shows the related results of the inputs provided by human beings. Human beings who were previously aesthetic have now developed a tendency towards mechanical and methodological thought processes which can lead towards mediocrity in human performance. This can hamper the holistic and aesthetic development of the learners. Art Education not only helps the learners to develop a particular skill but also improves holistic development. The new National Education Policy (2020) invokes art-integrated learning which may appear to be a cross-curricular pedagogical approach and will also create a strong bridge between education and culture. We need to leave behind the concept of art as an ‘extra-curricular’ activity or ‘co-curricular’ activity. Knowledge and skills vary as they are unique to every individual. So, developing these abstract components, art education for the learners is very important at the early stage and should continue till higher studies. It will help them to challenge the world they see around them, looking for multiple ways to solve problems and create something new.

The present study will be conducted as a qualitative research study, with document analysis method of the primary and secondary data to evaluate how far the statement of NEP 2020 is appropriate and practicable. The documents of NCF 2005 and NCF 2000 will also be considered the sources of primary data and the views of other researchers and experts will be treated as secondary data to reach the objectives of the paper.

**Keywords:** *Art, Integration, Curriculum, NEP 2020*

### **Introduction**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world has borne witness to an unprecedented surge in technological advancements, revolutionizing the very fabric of daily existence. The omnipresence of technology has granted individuals access to an immense repository of knowledge at their fingertips. However, this technological infiltration has not been without its consequences. On one hand, the ease of accessing information has empowered individuals, while on the other, there is a discernible trend towards the

standardization of work, potentially leading to a mediocrity in human performance. It is worth noting that machines, although created by human ingenuity, lack the innate creativity that characterizes human thought. Instead, they operate within the confines of predetermined algorithms, reflecting the inputs provided by their human creators. A compelling argument, as posited by R. Raja and P. C. Nagasubramani (2018), suggests that the inappropriate and excessive integration of technology in education can have deleterious effects on learners. The overreliance on technology, they contend, may stifle imagination, diminish critical thinking abilities, and erode interpretation skills among students. This raises a poignant concern, especially when considering the pivotal role education plays in fostering the holistic development of individuals.

In the context of child development, a comprehensive approach is indispensable, encompassing physical, mental, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. The very essence of education lies in nurturing rational, integrated, and creative thought processes. The 21st century has witnessed a transformative shift from traditional classrooms to constructivist environments, where knowledge is not merely imparted but actively constructed. This paradigm shift is encapsulated in the National Education Policy (2020), which underscores the importance of experiential learning and art-integrated education.

Art and culture emerge as linchpins in the holistic development of a nation. They embody the values, attitudes, and socio-economic well-being that define a society's goals. Acknowledging the role of cultural awareness and expression in shaping individual and societal well-being, the National Education Policy (2020) advocates for the development of these competencies in children. By fostering a strong sense of cultural identity through an exploration of history, arts, languages, and traditions, learners can cultivate positive self-esteem and appreciation for diverse cultures. This approach not only prepares individuals for life but also contributes to the preservation and enrichment of Indian culture in the teaching-learning process.

In this evolving landscape, the synthesis of technology and a holistic educational approach becomes imperative, striking a delicate balance that leverages the benefits of innovation without compromising the depth and richness of human experience.

### **Objectives**

1. To highlight the concept of art integration in the curriculum with respect to NCF 2000, NCF 2005 and NEP 2020.
2. To explore the role of art integration in the process of holistic development of learners with respect to NCF 2000, NCF 2005 and NEP 2020.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the concept of art education in the curriculum with respect to NCF 2000, NCF 2005 and NEP 2020.
2. What is the role of art integration in the process of holistic development of learners with respect to NCF 2000, NCF 2005 and NEP 2020?

### **Methodology**

The present study will be conducted as a qualitative research study, with document analysis method of the primary and secondary data to evaluate how far the statement of NEP 2020 is appropriate and practicable. The document of NCF 2000 and NCF2005 will also be considered the sources of primary data and the view of other researchers and experts will be treated as secondary data to reach the objectives of the paper.

## **Analysis and Interpretation**

### **1. Art Integrated Education in the Context of NCF 2000, NCF 2005, NEP 2020**

**National Curriculum Framework – 2000:** Within the framework of a comprehensive educational approach, the development of learners' experiences in the realm of fine arts is identified as a foundational stage under the overarching theme of 'Art of Healthy and Productive Living.' This early exposure lays the groundwork for a multifaceted engagement with artistic expressions that contribute to holistic development.

As learners progress into the upper primary and secondary levels, the focus shifts towards cultivating awareness and interest in classical and folk forms of art and culture. The rationale behind this approach is to instill a sense of cultural appreciation and understanding, fostering a connection with both local and national heritage. The emphasis on classical and folk-art forms not only broadens the aesthetic horizons of the learners but also serves as a conduit for preserving and celebrating the rich tapestry of India's cultural diversity.

The imperative for an art education program, as outlined in NCF 2000 (National Curriculum Framework), is to concentrate on exposing learners to folk arts, local-specific arts, and various cultural components. This exposure is designed to nurture an awareness and appreciation of the nation's heritage, encompassing diverse cultural elements. Activities and programs within this framework are strategically chosen and designed to promote values aligned with India's common cultural heritage, the history of the freedom movement, and environmental protection.

Crucially, the concept advocates for a holistic and integrated approach to art education, discouraging fragmentation. The learning process is envisioned as dynamic and participatory, with an emphasis on 'learning by doing.' Through active engagement with diverse art forms, learners are not only encouraged to express themselves creatively but also to broaden their own experiential horizons. This experiential approach emphasizes that art education should not be confined to theoretical understanding but should actively involve practical application, ensuring a more profound and lasting impact on the learners.

In essence, the call for an integrative approach to art education underscores the interconnectedness of various components in the learning process. This approach is recommended throughout all educational stages, up to Class X, emphasizing the enduring importance of art as a catalyst for self-expression, cultural awareness, and a broader understanding of the world. The principles laid out in NCF 2000 form a blueprint for an enriched and comprehensive art education program that goes beyond the boundaries of conventional learning, fostering a lifelong appreciation for the arts and their integral role in the fabric of society.

**National Curriculum Framework - 2005:** NCF 2005, with its overarching theme of "learning without burden," serves as a transformative guide for curriculum development, encapsulating five pivotal principles aimed at fostering a more holistic and meaningful educational experience. These principles underscore a paradigm shift, steering education towards relevance, creativity, and a deeper connection with the world beyond the classroom. The guiding principles are as follows:

*Connecting Knowledge to Life Outside the School:* NCF 2005 advocates for an educational approach that seamlessly integrates classroom learning with real-world applications. The curriculum is envisioned to resonate with the practical aspects of life, ensuring that learners can apply their knowledge to navigate and contribute meaningfully to the world around them.

*Ensuring Learning Shifts Away from Rote Methods:* A fundamental departure from rote memorization is emphasized, signalling a move towards fostering a deeper understanding of subjects. The focus is on cultivating critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and analytical reasoning, encouraging learners to engage with the material in a more profound and meaningful manner.

*Enriching the Curriculum Beyond Textbooks:* The curriculum is envisioned as a dynamic and multifaceted entity that extends beyond the confines of textbooks. NCF 2005 encourages the inclusion of diverse learning materials, resources, and interactive methods to provide a comprehensive educational experience that goes beyond traditional instructional approaches.

*Making Examinations More Flexible and Integrating Them with Classroom Life:* A significant departure from rigid examination practices is advocated, with an emphasis on flexibility and integration with the ongoing classroom learning process. The goal is to create assessments that align with the principles of continuous evaluation, reflecting a student's holistic development rather than focusing solely on memorization and regurgitation of information.

*Nurturing an Overriding Identity Informed by Caring Concerns within the Democratic Polity:* The curriculum is envisioned as a tool for cultivating values such as empathy, social responsibility, and an understanding of democratic principles. NCF 2005 places a strong emphasis on nurturing learners who are not only academically proficient but also socially conscious and ethically grounded, contributing positively to the democratic fabric of the country.

In the context of art education, NCF 2005 advocates for the inclusion of art as a subject at all stages, covering the four major spheres of music, dance, visual arts, and theatre. The emphasis is placed on interactive approaches rather than mere instruction, aligning with the overarching goal of promoting aesthetic and personal awareness. Importantly, the curriculum recognizes the significance of India's heritage crafts, both economically and aesthetically, underlining their relevance to school education. This holistic approach to art education aligns seamlessly with the broader principles of "learning without burden," enriching the educational experience for learners and fostering a deeper appreciation for the arts and cultural heritage.

**National Education Policy 2020:** Art integration is a cross-curricular pedagogical approach that utilizes various aspects and forms of art and culture as the basis for learning of concepts across subjects. As a part of the thrust on experiential learning, art-integrated education will be embedded in classroom transactions not only for creating joyful learnings, but also for inculcating and imparting the Indian ethos through integration of Indian art & culture in the teaching and learning process at every level. This art-integrated approach will create a strong bridge between education & culture. (NEP 2020)

Comprising four parts and 27 chapters, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emerges as a transformative blueprint, placing a paramount focus on holistic, integrated, enjoyable, and experiential learning. At the core of this educational philosophy is the commitment to adopting experiential learning at all stages, emphasizing hands-on learning, arts integration, sports-integrated education, and storytelling-based pedagogy. This standardized approach spans across subjects, encouraging the exploration of relationships among different disciplines.

A crucial aspect of the NEP 2020 is the shift towards competency-based learning and education to bridge gaps in the achievement of learning outcomes. This move aims to revolutionize classroom transactions and ensure that assessment tools align seamlessly with specified learning outcomes, capabilities, and dispositions for each subject in a given class. The policy envisions a dynamic learning environment that transcends traditional boundaries, fostering a comprehensive and deep understanding of concepts.

Art integration, a cross-curricular pedagogical approach, assumes a pivotal role in the NEP 2020's vision for experiential learning. It harnesses various aspects and forms of art and culture as catalysts for understanding and learning concepts across subjects. This approach extends beyond the conventional boundaries of subject-specific instruction, promoting a rich and interconnected learning experience.

As a cornerstone of experiential learning, art-integrated education is not merely confined to creating joyful learning experiences; it also serves as a vehicle for inculcating and imparting Indian ethos. The

integration of Indian art and culture into the teaching and learning process at every level reflects a commitment to nurturing a strong connection between education and cultural heritage. This art-integrated approach becomes a bridge, seamlessly connecting the realms of education and culture, reinforcing a sense of identity and appreciation for the rich tapestry of Indian heritage.

In essence, the NEP 2020 sets forth a visionary framework that goes beyond traditional educational paradigms. By emphasizing experiential learning, competency-based education, and art integration, the policy strives to create a vibrant and engaging educational landscape that not only imparts knowledge but also fosters a deep connection with one's cultural roots, making learning a truly holistic and enjoyable journey. This forward-looking approach aligns with the evolving needs of a dynamic society, preparing learners to navigate the complexities of the modern world with a rich tapestry of experiences and a profound understanding of diverse subjects.

## **2. The Role of Art Integration in the Process of Holistic Development of Learners with Respect to NCF 2000, NCF 2005 and NEP 2020**

In the realm of educational policies, the recognition of the arts' significance has been a recurring theme, echoing through NCF 2005 and reiterated in NEP 2020. Despite this acknowledgment, there has been a historical tendency to relegate the arts to the realm of 'useful hobbies' and 'leisure activities,' fostering a perception that steers students toward subjects deemed more academically weighty. NCF 2005 highlights the imperative to steadily instil general awareness of art and culture not only among students but also their guardians, teachers, policymakers, and educationists.

The arts are not mere leisure pursuits; they are powerful tools for individual development. Art engages and refines motor skills, enhances language proficiency, fosters innovation, sharpens decision-making skills, and cultivates cultural awareness. NCF 2005 emphasizes that neglecting the arts would be a disservice, as they are living examples of India's secular fabric and cultural diversity.

Fast forward to NEP 2020, and the message remains consistent: the promotion of Indian arts and culture is not just a national imperative but an essential component for individual development. Cultural awareness and expression are deemed major competencies crucial for children's sense of identity, belonging, and appreciation for diverse cultures and identities. NEP 2020 recognizes that a strong sense of cultural history, arts, languages, and traditions is foundational for building positive cultural identity and self-esteem, contributing significantly to both individual and societal well-being.

Drawing inspiration from Rabindranath Tagore's musings on art and personality, the NEP 2020 underscores that the arts play a pivotal role in cultivating feelings, expressing the bond between individuals and the universe, and exploring the unique and individual at the heart of the universal. The diverse artistic traditions in India, with their richness and variety, become integral in nurturing happiness, cognitive development, and cultural identity in individuals at all levels of education.

However, the observed continuity of guidelines across NCF 2000, NCF 2005, and NEP 2020 signals a critical reflection on the past. The persistent need to reiterate the importance of art integration suggests that earlier guidelines were not fully realized, prompting the implementation of new policies with the same fundamental principles. This underscores the enduring significance of prioritizing the arts in education.

Despite the presence of art rooms in institutions, a material deficiency and insufficient time allocation hinder the nurturing of artistic ideas. The call for increased frequency and extended time periods for utilizing art facilities reflects the urgency of enhancing art education. Moreover, a transformative shift in the teacher-student dynamic is advocated, with teachers assuming the role of guides rather than dominators, encouraging a constructivist approach where students are empowered to share and explore their ideas.

Art practice is proposed as an interdisciplinary approach, suggesting its integration into science, humanities, and other disciplines. This interdisciplinary engagement aims to develop learners' aesthetic sensibilities and challenge them to critically engage with the world, fostering problem-solving skills and creativity. Acknowledging the uniqueness of knowledge and skills for each individual, the importance of continuous art education from the early stages to higher studies is underscored. This sustained exposure equips learners to confront and navigate the complexities of the world, encouraging them to seek multiple perspectives in problem-solving and innovation. In essence, the call for comprehensive and consistent art education echoes the conviction that nurturing artistic capabilities is not a luxury but a fundamental necessity for fostering well-rounded, creative, and engaged individuals.

## **Conclusion**

The evolution of the education system from a traditional approach to a more methodological one has brought forth a discernible divide among learners. While a specific group benefits from the structured process, there exists another group struggling to evolve in terms of creative thought processes and the assimilation of new ideas. This disparity underscores the need for a paradigm shift, and the introduction of art-integrated education, as connected to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emerges as a transformative solution.

In the context of the evolving educational landscape, NEP 2020 serves as a guiding force, emphasizing the importance of holistic, integrated, and experiential learning. Traditional approaches often lean towards rote memorization and standardized methods, inadvertently stifling creative thinking and inhibiting the exploration of innovative ideas. Recognizing this limitation, NEP 2020 envisions a departure from the conventional, encouraging educators to adopt art-integrated education as a means to bridge the gap.

Art-integrated education is not merely an auxiliary component; it becomes a catalyst for nurturing and unlocking the creative potential within students. By intertwining artistic expressions with academic subjects, students are not confined to a rigid structure but are encouraged to explore, question, and synthesize knowledge in a dynamic and engaging manner. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of concepts, encourages critical thinking, and allows for a more personalized and enriching educational experience.

The infusion of artistic elements into education is not just about creating aesthetically pleasing outputs. It is a method that stimulates the imagination, cultivates a sense of curiosity, and promotes an open-minded approach to learning. Through art-integrated education, students are not only exposed to diverse perspectives but are also empowered to express themselves creatively, breaking free from the limitations of conventional thinking.

Moreover, the holistic nature of art-integrated education aligns seamlessly with the overarching goals of NEP 2020, which seeks to develop well-rounded individuals with a comprehensive set of skills and competencies. By providing a platform for creative expression, this approach contributes to the overall cognitive, emotional, and social development of students, preparing them to navigate the complexities of the modern world.

In conclusion, the introduction of art-integrated education, as advocated by NEP 2020, represents a pivotal shift in educational philosophy. It is a recognition of the inherent value of creativity, innovation, and diverse perspectives in the learning process. By embracing art as an integral part of education, we not only empower students to think beyond the confines of traditional methods but also equip them with the tools to help them sail through the constantly changing and dynamic environment. It is a step towards fostering a generation of learners who are not just adept in following a process but are also capable of envisioning and implementing novel ideas, thereby enriching the educational experience for all.

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