

## Cultivate a context and content of 5Rs at the Secondary education : A Need Discourse

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In the very Epilogue, the curriculum is being set as the Mantra to seek..... "an understanding of issues relating to children's learning, the nature of knowledge and the school as an institution. This approach to the curriculum draws attention to the importance of the school ethos and culture, the classroom practices of teachers, learning sites outside the school, and learning resources, as much as to the dimensions of the system that exert direct and indirect influence....(NCF,2005)". Curriculum is most vital part of teaching learning process. That is why the developed kepon on developing it and the developing find it difficult to regularly update it. In Indian context, its after a long period of time that the curricular changes are effected. The curriculum in its own has a dynamic constitution -on the one side its related to the development and the other side is the fulfillment and the achievement through it. In fact, there is no line separating the two. Curriculum development is not an entity that stops before going into classrooms and curriculum is not a package that stops developing in the classrooms. It is a continuous process of constructing and modifying. India after lot of the testing times, could devise a curriculum which is to be the real life line for the future society fulfilling the aspirations both in the manifest or in the Hidden manner.

India after its Independence, for about 47 years remained in the pursuance of the Tyler's Model of the curriculum management as well as the construction(NPE,1986). As argued by Tyler (1949, p. 1): The rationale... developed begins with identifying four fundamental questions, which must be answered in developing any curriculum and plan of instruction. These are:

- "What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
- How can these educational experiences be effectively organised?

How can we determine whether the purposes are being attained?" This model itemises the four main components of the curriculum: purposes, experiences, methods and evaluation. It is a logical and sequential approach, which shows that curriculum planning is a task of careful consideration and monitoring. The Whole of India for the fifty years was toiling on it and the stu-

dents were being prepared for the factory model management. It was heavily industrialised because it was devised in response to the world of industrialisation of the society, which is the process of harnessing inanimate power to machines attended by workers in a factory. Moreover the four components were very similar to the Management functions of Drucker (1974): planning, organising, leading and controlling. The resemblance between the planning approach and the managerial approach is no accident because both institutional systems- the schools as well as the industry, are embedded in the same social environment and both demand the same sort of manpower.

### The social change and the schools :

The Indian society was showing much of resilience to the change in the the eighties not because that it had not the guts to change but the shift model of the change was equally confusing. In the First half of nineties, the Society of India started to show off its resistance to the always and never ending Tyler Model, which was going on since the twentieth century, making the students as well as the teachers to adopt to the new change. As the Society changed and the work of teachers became more complicated and demanding as per the new work culture. So, its important to understand the context of the society and how the changes were incorporated in the education due to the changes in the society. Social changes can be seen from different theoretical perspectives.

The social order approach (Parsons, 1966) views the social system as working to maintain equilibrium. According to this approach, schools aim to maintain order and integration among the parts of society. The problem with this said model is that changes can never be sudden but through the contradictions and confrontations. Contrary to the social order model, the conflict approach (Lanski, 1966; Turner, 1984) argues that change is inevitable and disruptive. Conflicts occur among different parties, based on social class, economic interest, religion, political beliefs and so forth. The dominant group that holds power will attempt to shape schools for their own interests. There is also a more balanced model (Postiglione & Lee, 1997), which views change as an integral part of the system. In other words, change can be disruptive or can help schools adapt to different demands from society. But

the logic is that change is always inevitable and always present. It can emanate from different sources. Thus, the school system relies on feedback from the environment around and hence adopts naturally. Our world is at such a time that when things are changing at an unthinkable speed may be due to human or non human factors. The process of change originates from stresses both within and beyond the education system. For instance, changes in population size and composition, in pedagogy, in technologies and in political parties will all produce stress to education. Education is also affected by expectations of people about their future. Hence, schools do not only respond to social changes, but can act as a leading force for and of the change. That is why, Cheung (1997, p. 127), 'one implication of such an argument is that major changes in curriculum planning at the system level should not be seen merely as changes in methods of education. They are, as it were, changes in the wider society translated in changes within the educational system.'

#### **Curriculum as a catalyst of the Change**

Curriculum is a vital part of education. It is constantly evolving and is the total 'stuff' students take away from schools. The terms, curriculum and curriculum development, are problematic themselves as they imply two well-defined stages - the stage of development and the stage where the curriculum is completed. In fact, there is no line separating the two concepts. It is a continuous process of constructing and modifying. Various parties contribute to this process, which include government, publishers, parents, teachers and learners. This list is endless. However, the effect that each party exerts or influence upon is different in many of the ways. Some are more powerful than others, meaning that they can influence the process at a greater extent or even control the behaviour of other parties. Therefore, to comprehend the process, we should not limit our study to the curriculum structure or curriculum contents, but should be aware of the roles of different contributors and the influences which are there upon. And then to believe that the curriculum is only to restricted to formal course content, would not be only disastrous but incomplete to the sense of education. Daniel (2001, p. 6) proposes that a curriculum encompasses the following components: programme and content, learning objectives, teaching and learning strategies, organisation and administration, assessment methods, resources including books, materials and equipment), learners' prior experience, language(s) and language use, the relationship between teacher and learner, inter-institutional relationships and participation of different sectors (e.g. community groups) internal and external to the learning institution. It is why, "By contextualising the

challenges involved in curriculum renewal in contemporary social reality, this document draws attention to certain specific problems that demand an imaginative response. We expect that it will strengthen ongoing processes of reform, such as devolution of decision making to teachers and elected local-level bodies, while it also identifies new areas for attention such as the need for plurality of textbooks and urgent improvement in the examination system. (NCF, 2005, chpt 1) Curriculum change is such a tool which is to be fundamental for any corresponding changes in the society. Bernstein (1975) maintains that the consequences of social reproductions cannot account for the ways in which social relationships and identity are reproduced. Researchers need to explore how the society transforms itself and becomes the structural components of curriculum so as to facilitate social reproduction.

#### **The present context of 3Rs and its future**

The Indian education system did come up nicely in making a successful campaign of the SSA whereby the literacy rate in the country has got the massive boost not only to strengthen the fundamentals but also to redeem itself for the RMSA. But we need to ask the question that do we still have the same requirement of same kind of the curriculum as we had in the industrialised society of the 20th century?,

The context of curriculum has changed "Some of these traditions today face a serious threat from market forces and the commodification of knowledge in the context of the globalisation of the economy. The development of self-esteem and ethics, and the need to cultivate children's creativity, must receive primacy. In the context of a fast-changing world and a competitive global context, it is imperative that we respect children's native wisdom and imagination. (NCF, 2005)" It doesn't mean that the 3Rs are not fundamental to the system. It is the basic to our social economic as well as for the newly launched RMSA. But as the SSA and prior to it other programs could secure 3Rs of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic among the Indians, similarly, RMSA should focus for the additional 2 Rs.

#### **The 2 Rs of Responsibility and Relationship:**

In the Indian context, it is assumed that while in the schools, the students have easy understanding of 2Rs of Responsibility and the Relationship automatically creeps into while attaining the 3Rs. Should we call it a Hidden or the latent curriculum both for the teachers and the parents, because the definition of . . . the latent curriculum has been defined as the one that no teacher explicitly teaches but that all students learn. It is that powerful part of the school culture that communicates to students the school's attitudes towards a range of issues and problems, including how

the school views them as human beings (Banks, 2001 p. 23). This is the most debated and confused issue that how school should visualise the students to be responsible as well as establishing the relationship of the self with many of the other non human factors. Precisely the same feelings have been projected by NCF,2005,... "Forming and sustaining relationships with the social world, with the natural world, and with one's self, with emotional richness, sensitivity and values. This gives meaning to life, providing it with emotional content and purpose. This is also the basis for ethics and morality....It needs to be understood that the many of the school going population in India still, belongs to the first generation, who haven't ever understood these 2 Rs as an additional responsibility besides of learning 3Rs because these are the out of the box terms The Social Sciences and Humanities have their own concepts, for example, community, modernisation, culture, identity, and polity. Each of these knowledge areas involves a special vocabulary, concepts, theories, descriptions and methodologies. Each provides a 'lens' through which to view the world, to understand, to engage, and to act in it and be performed as per the expectations of the society.

These areas have developed, and continue to grow in the subjects context as well as in the general contexts which require a special need of the understanding to grasp its essence, and the contributions to these concepts by the different ages and through the contributions of people in the past, is really an extra challenge for the first generation learners to come to its complexity. So, a variety of intelligence and forms of knowing come into effect while learning these areas: 'formal modes' of explicit reasoning and articulation; looking for and evaluating evidence; 'experiential' and tacit knowing through doing and undergoing the experience; coordinating and observing; and 'practical' engagement, either by oneself or in coordination with others in making or accomplishing something, in addressing problems and issues while charting a course of action. Creativity and excellence are integral to all these forms of knowledge and knowing (NCF,2005).

That all of it to expect to happen smoothly for all the first generation learners as it may happen with the other generation of learners shall be a just fantasy of making Indians as one of the most enlightened as well as related to contextual and to the co existential issues, which Mahatma Gandhi refers as "a resource for socialising the child into a transformative vision of society. Gandhi dreamt of an India in which every individual discovers and realises her or his talents and potential by working with others towards restructuring the world, which continues to be characterised by conflicts between nations, within society and between

humanity and nature...." Can we still have wildest thoughts ever even on these issues when we know that the teachers who are to handle them for the futuristic stake holders of India. The teachers as per NCF,2005, "lack basic pedagogic skills (understanding where the learner is, explaining, asking appropriate questions and, an understanding of the processes of learning to read, which range from bottom-up processes such as syllable recognition and letter-sound matching, to top-down processes of whole-word recognition and meaning making from texts. They also often lack class-management skills. They tend to focus on errors or hard spots rather than on imaginative input and articulation...."

Above to all of these considered opinions, still we have the curriculum which is of the Modernist era rather to be student centric. Although, NCF2005, has been very forthcoming in bringing out the guidelines how the practical shape of the curriculum is to be devised, yet most of the practitioners like the teachers and the principals either find it to be very difficult to contextualize or simply shy away the real concerns by simply reading out the text for the content and without the contexts. The study conducted in this regard by the author in the Rural schools of Jammu and Kashmir regions points to this grave irregularity in the transaction at the secondary levels and most of the stake holders like the teachers and the principals, lack complete understanding of the Ethical, Historical and the environmental validities mentioned in the NCF. The peace Education, in Kashmir, is being read as the misnomer because most of the stakeholders don't construe the meaning of the peace, when the violence is taking place everyday in the minds and physique of theirs and almost every stakeholder directly or indirectly is bereft of it. The construct of the peace has lot to do with the responsible as well as the relationship domains of these stakeholders with the total context of the school as well as in the home. It entails the acceptance of multiple views on social issues and a commitment to democratic forms of interaction. This is important in view of the multiple contexts in which our schools function. A critical framework helps children to see social issues from different perspectives and understand how such issues are connected to their lives. For instance, understanding of democracy as a way of life can be chartered through a path where children reflect on how they regard others (e.g. friends, neighbours, the opposite sex, elders, etc.), how they make choices (e.g. activities, play, friends, career, etc.), and how they cultivate the ability to make decisions. Likewise, issues related to human rights, caste, religion and gender can be critically reflected on by children in order to see how these issues are connected to their everyday experiences, and also how different forms

of inequalities become compounded and are perpetuated.

Are we demanding too much? It seems that when we are talking of the above contexts of bringing or including the extra 2 Rs, it seems as if we are getting quite optimistic of our educational goals which don't have any strategies. These are the related issues in the pedagogy but the role of the teachers and the curriculum development as well as its transaction at the society as well as on the individual level becomes too centric that there is always sidetracks to tread on rather than to take head on. Our teachers either due to lack of training or of the interest in the profession, in the conducted study, would never step out an inch extra of their known brief, which has been handed to them since centuries by generation of generations. As such many of the fundamentals which the teachers talk about a latent or Hidden curriculum to have transacted with the students remains deep embedded either at the school level or at the planning level because the strategies and practicalities do lack coherence

#### **Should we not look at the practices of others?**

China, a strong emerging economy in its own rights, plans the curriculum on the theory as well as on the practical lines. Can we afford to seek some suggestions out of the a neighbouring country. The author believes that all the above contexts of the Indian curriculum could also be devised on the format of the Chinese experience. The integrated practical activity will serve five goals for students: (1) Acquiring rich and positive personal experience through fieldwork; (2) Cultivating an all-round understanding of the inherent relationship between nature, society and oneself, and fostering a love for nature, and a sense of responsibility for the society and oneself; (3) Developing attitudes and abilities to discover problems in one's life and to address them independently; (4) Developing practical skills and abilities in comprehensive knowledge application and innovation of the mind; and (5) Cultivating useful personal qualities, such as collaboration, communication and positive ambition (Guo, 2001). Research-oriented studies, community service and hands-on work experience are the three forms of integrated practical activity which Indian educational planners and policy makers should

strongly advocate to be the reality in the classrooms.

Moreover, the curriculum development experts are no longer the chief designers of school based courses. Other people - teachers, skilled farmers and workers, cultural personalities and even students - are playing a greater role in this field equally. This diversity of participants means that big strides have been made in educational democratisation regarding the principles for the choice of formal education contents and the organizational approaches to it. It also enables people to transcend "subject-centredness" for a better understanding of formal education. The policy to facilitate the development of locally- and school-based courses has drawn a warm response from across the country. Localities have come up with vast numbers of courses that reflect local history, culture and economy. It is an approach which offers support for the fuller use by the school of the resources of the society, students, and China's cultural institutions; it is an approach which can support the needs of students through a curriculum developed mainly by teachers who know and understand their students well; and, finally, it is an approach to school development which can make it possible for students to become masters of their own learning.

#### **India in context of 2Rs :**

What should be the strategy to tackle the issue of additional 2Rs which most of our policy makers as well as the curriculum devising bodies and experts believe all is well as its not the priority and secondly, its being taken care in the form, of the latent curriculum? The message needs to be loud and clear that its most appropriate when the educational policy and planners should really come out with the waivers of decentralizing the curriculum control so that the teachers may adopt the best possible ways and the strategies to work upon these contextualized issues of 3 Rs. In this scenario, the ethics would be taught as right or wrong the imposition of do's and don'ts. Rather it calls for devising means and ways of helping children learn to make choices and decide what is right, what is kind, and what is best for the common good, keeping in view the broader implications for personal and social values. Indian society is going to be diverse kind in which the Disabilities as well HIVs may co exist and the values and the ethics are to be locally determined rather to be out of text book as a solution, what is not now in practice.

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