

Secondary Economics Educational Kit (Seek) Interdisciplinary and Inclusive – A Step towards Implementation of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, Secondary Economics Educational Kit (SEEK) has been discussed in the context of experiential learning, rootedness and Indian monetary heritage etc. as envisaged in National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India. In the light of NEP 2020, NCERT has developed the Secondary Economics Educational Kit (SEEK) along with Manual at the Secondary Stage for classes IX to XII interdisciplinary and inclusive in nature during 2020-2023 involving Sanskrit scholars (President awardee), experts from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Reserve Bank of India, universities & field, NIEPVD, AYJNISH, School of Heritage Research & Management and practicing school teachers. Through this Kit, an initiative has been taken to revisit the Indian monetary heritage forming the context and starting point of the Bharat-Vidya (Indian Knowledge System), to find out the contributions of Indian thinkers to modern economic thinking to preserve, promote and disseminate Indian perspective (Bhartiya Vidya) on Economics (Social Sciences), the wisdom path shown by the visionary sages and great scholars, the ethical values which stands for social and national interests, and the ideas like Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम्) for international harmony resulting in peace and sustainable development by providing experiential learning opportunities to the learners through hands-on activities such as working models, indigenous games and activities etc.. An attempt has been made to go one step forward in the implementation of NEP-2020 through the Kit (SEEK).

KEY WORDS: National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), Secondary Economics Educational Kit (SEEK), Experiential Learning, Indian Knowledge System, Bharat Vidya, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Sustainable Development, Interdisciplinary and Inclusive.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This National Education Policy 2020 envisioned an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India, that is Bharat, sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high-quality education to all, and thereby making India a global knowledge superpower. The Policy envisages that the curriculum and pedagogy of our institutions must develop among the students a deep sense of respect towards the Fundamental Duties and Constitutional values, bonding with one's country, and a conscious awareness of one's roles and responsibilities in a changing world. The vision of the Policy is to instill among the learners a deep-rooted pride in being Indian, not only in thought, but also in spirit, intellect, and deeds, as well as to develop knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions that support responsible commitment to human rights, sustainable development and living, and global well-being, thereby reflecting a truly global citizen. The fundamental principles that guide education system are: **multidisciplinary** and a **holistic education** across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary world in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge; **a rootedness and pride in India**, and its rich, diverse, ancient and modern culture and knowledge systems and traditions.

II. THE VISION OF NEP 2020

As per the policy, the structure in school education modified with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18. The curricular and pedagogical structure and the curricular framework for school education is being guided by a 5+3+3+4 design, consisting of the Foundational Stage (in two parts, that is, 3 years of Anganwadi/pre-school + 2 years in primary school in Grades 1-2; both together covering ages 3-8), Preparatory Stage (Grades 3-5, covering ages 8-11), Middle Stage (Grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14), and Secondary Stage (Grades 9-12 in two phases, i.e., 9 and 10 in the first and 11 and 12 in the second, covering ages 14-18). Experiential learning within each subject, and explorations of relations among different subjects, will be encouraged and emphasized despite the introduction of more specialized subjects and subject teachers. The Secondary Stage comprises of four years of multidisciplinary study, building on the subject-oriented pedagogical and curricular style of the Middle Stage, but with greater depth, greater critical thinking, greater attention to life aspirations, and greater flexibility and student choice of subjects. In particular students would continue to have the option of exiting after Grade 10 and re-entering in the next phase to pursue vocational or any other courses available in Grades 11- 12, including at a more specialized school, if so desired.

NEP 2020, page no. 11 The National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, including SDG4, while building upon India's traditions and value systems. The National Education Policy lays particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities -both the 'foundational capacities' of literacy and numeracy and 'higher-order' cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving – but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions. National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) envisaged "The rich heritage of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge and thought has been a guiding light for National Education Policy 2020... World-class institutions of ancient India such as Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Vallabhi, set the highest standards of multidisciplinary teaching and research and hosted scholars and students from across backgrounds and countries. The Indian education system produced great scholars such as Charaka, Susruta, Aryabhata, Bhaskaracharya, Chanakya, Panini, Patanjali, Pingala, Maitreyi, Gargi and Thiruvalluvar etc., who made seminal contributions to world knowledge in diverse fields such as mathematics, medical science and surgery, civil engineering, architecture, shipbuilding and navigation, yoga, fine arts, chess, and more. **These rich legacies to world heritage must not only be nurtured and preserved for posterity but also researched, enhanced, and put to new uses through our education system**" NEP 2020, page no. 4 "The vision of the policy is to instill among the learners a deep-rooted pride in being Indian... as well as to develop knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions that support responsible commitment to human rights, sustainable development and living, and global well-being, thereby reflecting a truly global citizen" NEP 2020, page no. 7 "The key overall thrust of curriculum and pedagogy reform across all stages will be to move the education system towards real understanding and towards learning how to learn - and away from the culture of rote learning as is largely present today. The aim of education will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21st century skills. Teaching and learning will be conducted in a more interactive manner; questions will be encouraged, and classroom sessions will regularly contain more fun, creative, collaborative, and exploratory activities for students for deeper and more experiential learning. In all stages, experiential learning will be adopted, including hands-on learning, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy within each subject, and with explorations of relations among different subjects. To close the gap in achievement of learning outcomes, classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education. 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 classrooms, but also for imbuing the Indian ethos through integration of Indian art and culture in the teaching and learning process at every level. This art-integrated approach will strengthen the linkages between education and culture. Sports-integration is another cross-curricular pedagogical approach that utilizes physical activities including indigenous sports, in pedagogical practices to help in developing skills such as collaboration, self-initiative, self-direction, self-discipline, teamwork, responsibility, citizenship, etc. Sports-integrated learning will be undertaken in classroom transactions to help students adopt fitness as a lifelong attitude and to achieve the related life skills along with the levels of fitness as envisaged in the Fit India Movement. The need to integrate sports in education is well recognized as it serves to foster holistic development by promoting physical and psychological well-being while also enhancing cognitive abilities." NEP 2020, page no. 12-13 "The importance, relevance, and beauty of the classical languages and literature of India also cannot be overlooked. Sanskrit, while also an important modern language mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, possesses a

classical literature that is greater in volume than that of Latin and Greek put together, containing vast treasures of mathematics, philosophy, grammar, music, politics, medicine, architecture, metallurgy, drama, poetry, storytelling, and more (known as 'Sanskrit Knowledge Systems'), written by people of various religions as well as non-religious people, and by people from all walks of life and a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds over thousands of years. India also has an extremely rich literature in other classical languages, including classical Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia. In addition to these classical languages Pali, Persian, and Prakrit; and their works of literature too must be preserved for their richness and for the pleasure and enrichment of posterity." NEP 2020, page no. 14 For the enrichment of the children, and for the preservation of these rich languages and their artistic treasures, all students in all schools, public or private, will have the option of learning at least two years of a classical language of India and its associated literature, through experiential and innovative approaches, including the integration of technology, in Grades 6-12, with the option to continue from the middle stage through the secondary stage and beyond. NEP 2020, page no. 15 "Knowledge of India" will include knowledge from ancient India and its contributions to modern India and its successes and challenges, and a clear sense of India's future aspirations with regard to education, health, environment, etc. These elements will be incorporated in an accurate and scientific manner throughout the school curriculum wherever relevant; in particular, Indian Knowledge Systems, including tribal knowledge and indigenous and traditional ways of learning, will be covered and included in mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, engineering, linguistics, literature, sports, games, as well as in governance, polity, conservation. Specific courses in tribal ethno-medicinal practices, forest management, traditional (organic) crop cultivation, natural farming, etc. will also be made available. An engaging course on Indian Knowledge Systems will also be available to students in secondary school as an elective. Competitions may be held in schools for learning various topics and subjects through fun and indigenous games. Video documentaries on inspirational luminaries of India, ancient and modern, in science and beyond, will be shown at appropriate points throughout the school curriculum. Students will be encouraged to visit different States as part of cultural exchange programmes." All curriculum and pedagogy, from the foundational stage onwards, will be redesigned to be strongly rooted in the Indian and local context and ethos in terms of culture, traditions, heritage, customs, language, philosophy, geography, ancient and contemporary knowledge, societal and scientific needs, indigenous and traditional ways of learning etc. – in order to ensure that education is maximally relatable, relevant, interesting, and effective for our students. Stories, arts, games, sports, examples, problems, etc. will be chosen as much as possible to be rooted in the Indian and local geographic context. Ideas, abstractions, and creativity will indeed best flourish when learning is thus rooted." NEP 2020, page no. 16

III. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (EL): A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Experiential learning (EL)'s review makes an effort to consider the role of EL on students' classroom engagement and motivation by inspecting its backgrounds and values. (Yangtao Kong, 2021). Students' dissatisfaction, boredom, negative experiences, and dropping out of school are due to the low engagement in academic activities (Derakhshan et al., 2021). It is demonstrated that engagement is related to intelligence, interest, motivation, and pleasure with learning outcomes within many academic fields (Yin, 2018). EL is a teaching method which facilitates active learning through providing real-world experiences in which learners interact and evaluate the issues (Boggu and Sundarsingh, 2019). Based on the theory of Socrates, it is based on the strategies which allow learners to apply knowledge to real-life situations, which makes learning long lasting (Bradberry and De Maio, 2019). The learners acquire knowledge and apply in real-life situations to solve problems (Huang and Jiang, 2020). Therefore, it is expected that they would require hands-on materials but in reality, they just receive theoretical education (Green et al., 2017). EL, developed by Kolb in 1984, is focused on learning through experience (Sternberg and Zhang, 2014). EL is a method of teaching that allows learners to learn while "Do, Reflect, and Think and Apply" (Butler et al., 2019, p. 12). It encourages learners to be flexible learners, incorporate all possible ways of learning into full-cycle learning, and bring about effective skills and meta-learning abilities (Kolb and Kolb, 2017). Based on the literature available, the conventional role of the teacher shifts from knowledge provider to a facilitator and a reflective teacher. Likewise, teachers should motivate learners by providing information and relevant opportunities for learning where they can be engaged in positive but challenging learning activities that facilitate learners' interaction with learning materials (Anwar and Qadir, 2017) and enhances their interest being a member of the learning progression. By learners' active engagement in experiential games, the teacher can enhance their knowledge (Zelechowski et al., 2017). Indeed, this method helps learners think further than memorization to evaluate and use knowledge, reflecting on how learning can be applied to real-life situations (Zelechowski et al., 2017). In the context of EL, students often find activities challenging and time-taking which necessitates working in a group, performing work outside of the classroom, learning and integrating subject content to real life to make decisions, compare and contrast various information to identify the problem and its solution. Engagement, discussion,

and application are basic characteristics of EL. Learners participate in mental, emotional, and social interactions/discussions/deliberations during the learning process within EL (Voukelatou, 2019).

IV. RATIONALE OF THE KIT

The world today is in search of alternate socio-economic and cultural life patterns as well as value systems to face the 21st century challenges such as poverty (increased ratio between have's and have not's), unemployment, good health and wellbeing, quality education, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, pollution, global warming, pandemic, cyber-crimes and migration. So far, we have largely depended upon western ideas and philosophies whereas a large number of good and relevant ideas are available in ancient Indian thoughts and writings. We need to find out the feasible solutions to face these challenges, considering the five elements (earth, water, fire, air & sky) from Indian Knowledge Systems as Indian Society is unique in structure, function and dynamics and cannot be linked with the European Society. Indology can make an effective contribution in this on-going search and demands interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach. Through this Kit, an initiative has been taken to revisit the Indian economic heritage forming the context and starting point of the Bharat-Vidya (Indian Knowledge System), to find out the contributions of Indian thinkers to modern economic thinking to preserve, promote and disseminate Indian perspective (Bhartiya Vidya) on Economics (Social Sciences), the wisdom path shown by the visionary sages and great scholars, the ethical values which stands for social and national interests, and the ideas like Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम्) for international harmony resulting in peace and sustainable development.

V. WHAT IS UNIQUE IN THE KIT FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The Kit has been developed to inculcate important life skills-economic and financial skills for holistic development of the learners, create awareness among students about India's monetary heritage and contribution of Indian thinkers to modern economic thinking etc., develop competencies of economics among students and empower them to make informed decisions and facilitate them in understanding of the themes/concepts/topics by using hands on activities such as working models, indigenous games and activities etc. providing them opportunities of experiential learning, **emphasis on conceptual understanding** rather than rote learning and learning-for-exams and build capacity and enhance competencies of teachers for effective transaction in Economics. In addition, learners are encouraged to think logically, find solutions, and take appropriate action in relevant situations. The kit not only provides opportunities for discussion and clarification of concepts and knowledge, but also provides scope for construction of new knowledge.

In today's education scenario where mostly, students are prepared to just write exam. We all observe that students are losing their interest in learning most of the subjects. It's high time for all of us to realise how children of 21st century learn in joyful and meaningful way. In this dynamic world, everything around us is changing so fast may it be smartphones, internet, cars etc. But what about teaching-learning? It still looks the same. And this is the reason children do not find it interesting, they are actually rejecting the present way of teaching-learning. Most of the parents complains about the high stress level of their children, pressure of exams, anxiety about results, worrisome cut throat competition of getting higher marks. But there is a solution. We all know that children enjoy playing games. Children are happiest if they get the opportunity to play games in between studies. The most exciting period for them is not Mathematics, Economics or English but games period. Sports and education are always integrated to each other. A sportsman needs wisdom to stay focussed and calm, similarly to achieve academic excellence a person needs leading capabilities, calmness, determination and great concentration, which could be provided by the sports and games only.

So, to make the learning of Economics meaningful, joyful and interesting, through this kit sports have been integrated along with interdisciplinary approach of learning Economics. It is comprised of two parts-Part I and Part II, few activities are inclusive to address the needs of children with disabilities. Teachers may use the kit as per the concept/topic and needs of learners. Starting with the monetary heritage, history of Indian Coinage has been introduced, then money and banking, financial awareness, contribution of Indian thinkers with the help of text available in Sanskrit. Several activities have been prepared for students so that they may well acquaint with Indian perspective on Economics and many of these activities are in the form of games such as Card Sorting Games, Word Search Puzzle, Cross Word Puzzle, Matching Flash cards, Quiz, indigenous games-Chess, Ludo, Snakes and Ladders, Cube solving, playing cards, electronic board games, working models, booklet, manual, tactile and Braille materials etc.

VI. ADVANTAGES OF THE KIT

The use of the kits has been highly recommended in NEP 2020 for effective learning through hands-on, minds-on learning approaches and experiential learning. The educational kits are essential alternatives to the lack of

any equipment in most of the schools in India and are supplement to textbooks. The kits have the following advantages:

- Availability of necessary pieces of items at one place
- Multipurpose use of items
- Portability from one place to another
- Provision for teacher's innovation
- Low cost and use of indigenous resources

To make a learner a scientifically literate citizen as envisaged in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, there is an imperative need for the learner to:

- Understand and apply the basic concepts
- Learn evidence-based information
- Develop desirable attitudes and value appreciation
- Learn scientific method to apply in solving problems and making decisions to improve everyday living and environmental conditions

For achieving these objectives, it is necessary to shift emphasis from rote, memory-based, content-oriented and teacher-centred method of teaching to hands-on, minds-on learning approaches like: activity oriented, problem solving and performance-based, learner-centred approaches. These approaches would require learner to investigate, develop observation skills and record observations, structure, organise, communicate information and hypothesise, collect and analyse data, draw relevant inferences, design solutions and act accordingly. Thus, these approaches provide plenty of opportunity for thinking, reasoning and looking at social sciences in interdisciplinary as a highly rational, intellectual problem-solving human activity.

However, to make the best use of the learning situations, it is essential that the teacher is provided with effective learning materials in addition to the textbooks. Textbooks alone cannot provide the right learning material. Unfortunately, teaching of social sciences in India has been textbook-centred. NCERT attempted to improve this scenario by developing Secondary Economics Educational Kit (SEEK) along with detailed manual to facilitate the learners about the use of materials and to explore the concepts through activities interdisciplinary and inclusive in nature. Hands on activities such as *working models, indigenous games and activities* have been developed to

- Create awareness among learners about India's monetary heritage and the contribution of Indian ancient thinkers to modern economic thinking
- Develop competencies of economics among students
- Build capacity of teachers for effective transaction in Economics

VII. CONCLUSION

The hands-on activities are expected not only to engage learners in the mental processes required for obtaining knowledge but also to be more motivated and eager to learn. Although all these games are indoor activities in nature but enhance students' abilities in various areas such as hand eye coordination, mental exercise, keeping patience, controlling the nerves, logical & decision-making skills etc. It is not a matter of only mental benefits; many physical benefits also can be observed through these games. These help in maintaining blood pressure and keeping us free from stress & anxiety. These games will help students to learn not only Economics but other subjects such as History, Geography, Political Science, Mathematics, Computer Science, Sanskrit, English and Hindi, more importantly it will make children happy. Through these games, skills like problem solving, analytical thinking and team building etc. can be encouraged. Through this Educational Kit, an attempt has been made to go one step forward in the successful implementation of NEP-2020.

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