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CHAPTER 1: PERSPECTIVE



1.1 INTRODUCTION

India is a free nation with a rich variegated history, an extraordinarily complex cultural diversity and a commitment to democratic values and well-being for all. Ever since 1986 when the National Policy on Education was approved by Parliament, efforts to redesign the curriculum have been focused on the creation of a national system of education. Given the enormity and importance of the task of educating the country's children, it is necessary that, from time to time, we create occasions to collectively sit back and ask ourselves, "What is it that we are doing in our engagement with this task? Is it time for us to refresh what we provide to our children in the name of education?"

If we look at what the system of education has accomplished since Independence, perhaps we have much to be satisfied with. Today, our country engages nearly 55 lakh teachers spread over around 10 lakh schools to educate about 2,025 lakh children. While 82 per cent of habitations have a primary school within a radius of

one kilometre, there is an upper primary school within 3 kilometres for 75 per cent of habitations. At least 50 per cent of our children who appear at the school-leaving examinations pass out of the secondary school system. Despite these trends, 37 per cent people in India lack literacy skills, about 53 per cent children drop out at the elementary stage, and over 75 per cent of our rural schools are multigrade. Further, there is a deep disquiet about several aspects of our educational practice: (a) the school system is characterised by an inflexibility that makes it resistant to change; (b) learning has become an isolated activity, which does not encourage children to link knowledge with their lives in any organic or vital way; (c) schools promote a regime of thought that discourages creative thinking and insights; (d) what is presented and transmitted in the name of learning in schools bypasses vital dimensions of the human capacity to create new knowledge; (e) the “future” of the child has taken centre stage to the near exclusion of the child’s “present”, which is detrimental to the well-being of the child as well as the society and the nation.

The basic concerns of education—to enable children to make sense of life and develop their potential, to define and pursue a purpose and recognise the right of others to do the same—stand uncontested and valid even today. If anything, we need to reiterate the mutual interdependence of humans, and, as Tagore says, we achieve our greatest happiness when we realise ourselves through others. Equally, we need to reaffirm our commitment to the concept of equality, within the landscape of cultural and socio-economic diversity from which children enter into the portals of the school. Individual aspirations in a competitive economy tend to reduce education to being an instrument of material success. The perception, which places the individual in exclusively competitive relationships, puts

unreasonable stress on children, and thus distorts values. It also makes learning from each other a matter of little consequence. Education must be able to promote values that foster peace, humaneness and tolerance in a multicultural society.

This document seeks to provide a framework within which teachers and schools can choose and plan experiences that they think children should have. In order to realise educational objectives, the curriculum should be conceptualised as a structure that articulates required experiences. For this, it should address some basic questions:

- (a) What educational purposes should the schools seek to achieve?
- (b) What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to achieve these purposes?
- (c) How can these educational experiences be meaningfully organised?
- (d) How do we ensure that these educational purposes are indeed being accomplished?

The review of the National Curriculum Framework, 2000 was initiated specifically to address the problem of curriculum load on children. A committee appointed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in the early 1990s had analysed this problem, tracing its roots to the system’s tendency to treat information as knowledge. In its report, *Learning Without Burden*, the committee pointed out that learning at school cannot become a joyful experience unless we change our perception of the child as a receiver of knowledge and move beyond the convention of using textbooks as the basis for examination. The impulse to teach everything arises from lack of faith in children’s own creative instinct and their capacity to construct knowledge out of their experience. The size of textbooks has been growing over the years, even as the pressure to include new

topics mounts and the effort to synthesise knowledge and treat it holistically gets weaker. Flabby textbooks, and the syllabi they cover, symbolise a systemic failure to address children in a child-centred manner. Those who write such encyclopaedic textbooks are guided by the popular belief that there has been an explosion of knowledge. Therefore, vast amounts of knowledge should be pushed down the throats of little children in order to catch up with other countries. *Learning Without Burden* recommended a major change in the design of syllabi and textbooks, and also a change in the social ethos, which places stress on children to become aggressively competitive and exhibit precocity. To make teaching a means of harnessing the child's creative nature, the report recommended a fundamental change in the matter of organising the school curriculum, and also in the system of examination, which forces children to memorise information and to reproduce it. Learning for the sake of being examined in a mechanical manner takes away the joy of being young, and delinks school knowledge from everyday experience. To address this deep structural problem, the present document draws upon and elaborates on the insights of *Learning Without Burden*.

Rather than prescribe, this document seeks to enable teachers and administrators and other agencies involved in the design of syllabi and textbooks and examination reform make rational choices and decisions. It will also enable them to develop and implement innovative, locale-specific programmes. 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.

1.2 RETROSPECT

Mahatma Gandhi had visualised education as a means of awakening the nation's conscience to injustice, violence and inequality entrenched in the social order. *Nai Talim* emphasised the self-reliance and dignity of the individual, which would form the basis of social relations characterised by non-violence within and across society. Gandhiji recommended the use of the immediate environment, including the mother tongue and work, as a resource for socialising the child into a transformative vision of society. He 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.

After Independence, the concerns of education articulated during the freedom struggle were revisited by the National Commissions — the Secondary Education Commission (1952 - 53) and the Education Commission (1964 - 66). Both Commissions elaborated on the themes emerging out of Mahatma Gandhi's educational philosophy in the changed socio-political context with a focus on national development.

Education under the Indian Constitution until 1976 allowed the state governments to take decisions on all matters pertaining to school education, including curriculum, within their jurisdiction. The Centre could only provide guidance to the States on policy issues. It is under such circumstances that the initial attempts of the National Education Policy of 1968 and the Curriculum Framework designed by NCERT in 1975 were formulated. In 1976, the Constitution was amended to include education in the Concurrent List,

and for the first time in 1986 the country as a whole had a uniform National Policy on Education. The NPE (1986) recommended a common core component in the school curriculum throughout the country. The policy also entrusted NCERT with the responsibility of developing the National Curriculum Framework, and reviewing the framework at frequent intervals.

NCERT in continuation of its curriculum-related work carried out studies and consultations subsequent to 1975, and had drafted a curriculum framework as a part of its activity in 1984. This exercise aimed at making school education comparable across the country in qualitative terms and also at making it a means of ensuring national integration without compromising on the country's pluralistic character. Based on such experience, the Council's work culminated in the National Curriculum Framework for School Education, 1988. However, the articulation of this framework through courses of studies and textbooks in a rapidly changing developmental context resulted in an increase in 'curricular load' and made learning at school a source of stress for young minds and bodies during their formative years of childhood and stress for young minds and bodies during their formative years of childhood and adolescence. This aspect has been coherently brought out in *Learning Without Burden, 1993*, the report of the Committee under the chairmanship of Professor Yash Pal.

1.3 NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

In spite of the recommendations of the NPE, 1986 to identify competencies and values to be nurtured at different stages, school education came to be driven more and more by high-stake examinations based on information-loaded textbooks. Despite the review of the Curriculum Framework in 2000, the vexed issues of curriculum load and the tyranny of examinations

remained unresolved. The current review exercise takes into cognizance both positive and negative developments in the field, and attempts to address the future requirements of school education at the turn of the century. In this endeavour, several interrelated dimensions have been kept in mind, namely, the aims of education, the social milieu of children, the nature of knowledge in its broader sense, the nature of human development, and the process of human learning.

The term National Curriculum Framework is often wrongly construed to mean that an instrument of uniformity is being proposed. The intention as articulated in the NPE, 1986 and the Programme of Action (PoA) 1992 was quite the contrary. NPE proposed a national framework for curriculum as a means of evolving a national system of education capable of responding to India's diversity of geographical and cultural milieus while ensuring a common core of values along with academic components. "The NPE - PoA envisaged a child-centred approach to promote universal enrolment and universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and substantial improvement in the quality of education in the school" (PoA, P. 77). The PoA further elaborated on this vision of NPE by emphasising relevance, flexibility and quality as characteristics of the National Curriculum Framework. Thus, both these documents envisioned the National Curriculum Framework as a means of modernising the system of education.

1.4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We need to plan and pay attention to systemic matters that will enable us to implement many of the good ideas that have already been articulated in the past. Paramount among these are :

The National System of Education will be based on a national curricular framework, which contains a common core along with other components that are flexible. The common core will include the history of India's freedom movement, the constitutional obligations and other content essential to nurture national identity. These elements will cut across subject areas and will be designed to promote values such as India's common cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of sexes, protection of environment, removal of social barriers, observance of small family norm and inculcation of scientific temper. All educational programmes will be carried on in strict conformity with secular values. India has always worked for peace and understanding between nations, treating the whole world as one family. True to this hoary tradition, education has to strengthen this world-view and motivate the younger generations for international cooperation and peaceful co-existence. This aspect cannot be neglected. To promote equality, it will be necessary to provide for equal opportunity for all, not only in access but also in the conditions of success. Besides, awareness of the inherent equality of all will be created through the core curriculum. The purpose is to remove prejudices and complexes transmitted through the social environment and the accident of birth.

National Policy on Education, 1986

- connecting knowledge to life outside the school,
- ensuring that learning is shifted away from rote methods,
- enriching the curriculum to provide for overall development of children rather than remain textbook centric,
- making examinations more flexible and integrated into classroom life and,
- nurturing an over-riding identity informed by caring concerns within the democratic polity of the country.

In the present context, there are new developments and concerns to which our curriculum must respond. The foremost among these is the importance of including and retaining all children in school through a programme that reaffirms the value of each child and enables all children to experience dignity and the confidence to learn. Curriculum design must reflect the commitment to Universal Elementary Education (UEE), not only in representing cultural diversity, but also by ensuring that children from different social and economic backgrounds with variations in physical, psychological and intellectual

characteristics are able to learn and achieve success in school. In this context, disadvantages in education arising from inequalities of gender, caste, language, culture, religion or disabilities need to be addressed directly, not only through policies and schemes but also through the design and selection of learning tasks and pedagogic practices, right from the period of early childhood.

UEE makes us aware of the need to broaden the scope of the curriculum to include the rich inheritance of different traditions of knowledge, work and crafts. 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.

Decentralisation and emphasis on the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are to be viewed as major steps towards systemic reforms. PRIs offer an opportunity to make the system less bureaucratic,

The formal approach, of *equality of treatment*, in terms of equal access or equal representation for girls, is inadequate. Today, there is a need to adopt a substantive approach, towards *equality of outcome*, where diversity, difference and disadvantage are taken into account.

A critical function of education for equality is to enable all learners to claim their rights as well as to contribute to society and the polity. We need to recognise that *rights and choices in themselves cannot be exercised until central human capabilities are fulfilled*. Thus, in order to make it possible for marginalised learners, and especially girls, to claim their rights as well as play an active role in shaping collective life, education must empower them to overcome the disadvantages of unequal socialisation and enable them to develop their capabilities of becoming autonomous and equal citizens.

teachers more accountable, and the schools more autonomous and responsive to the needs of children. These steps should also stimulate questions and entanglements with local physical conditions, life and environment. Children acquire varied skills naturally while growing up in their environment. They also observe life and the world around them. When imported into classrooms, their questions and queries can enrich the curriculum and make it more creative. Such reforms will also facilitate the practice of the widely acknowledged curricular principles of moving from "known to the unknown", from "concrete to abstract", and from "local to global". For this purpose, the concept of critical pedagogy has to be practised in all dimensions of school education, including teacher education. It is here that, for instance, productive work can become an effective pedagogic medium for (a) connecting classroom knowledge to the life experiences of children; (b) allowing children from marginalised sections of society, having knowledge and skills related

to work, to gain a definite edge and respect among their peers from privileged sections; and (c) facilitating a growing appreciation of cumulative human experience, knowledge and theories by building rationally upon the contextual experiences.

Making children sensitive to the environment and the need for its protection is another important curricular concern. The emergence of new technological choices and living styles witnessed during the last century has led to environmental degradation and vast imbalances between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. It has become imperative now more than ever before to nurture and preserve the environment. Education can provide the necessary perspective on how human life can be reconciled with the crisis of the environment so that survival, growth and development remain possible. The National Policy on Education, 1986 emphasised the need to create awareness of environmental concerns by integrating it in the educational process at all stages of education and for all sections of society.

Living in harmony within oneself and with one's natural and social environment is a basic human need. Sound development of an individual's personality can take place only in an ethos marked by peace. A disturbed natural and psycho-social environment often leads to stress in human relations, triggering intolerance and conflict. We live in an age of unprecedented violence—local, national, regional and global. Education often plays a passive, or even insidious role, allowing young minds to be indoctrinated into a culture of intolerance, which denies the fundamental importance of human sentiments and the noble truths discovered by different civilisations. Building a culture of peace is an incontestable goal of education. Education to be meaningful should empower individuals to choose peace as a way of life and enable them to become

managers rather than passive spectators of conflict. Peace as an integrative perspective of the school curriculum has the potential of becoming an enterprise for healing and revitalising the nation.

As a nation we have been able to sustain a robust democratic polity. The vision of democracy articulated by the Secondary Education Commission (1952) is worth recalling:

Citizenship in a democracy involves many intellectual, social and moral qualities...a democratic citizen should have the understanding and the intellectual integrity to sift truth from falsehood, facts from propaganda and to reject the dangerous appeal of fanaticism and prejudice ... should neither reject the old because it is old nor accept the new because it is new, but dispassionately examine both and courageously reject what arrests the forces of justice and progress.....

For us to foster democracy as a way of life rather than only a system of governance, the values enshrined in the Constitution assume paramount significance.

- The Constitution of India guarantees equality of status and opportunity to all citizens. Continued exclusion of vast numbers of children from education and the disparities caused through private and public school systems challenge the efforts towards achieving equality. Education should function as an instrument of social transformation and an egalitarian social order.
- Justice—social, economic and political—to all citizens is integral to strengthening democracy.
- Liberty of thought and action is a fundamental value embedded in our Constitution. Democracy requires as well as creates a kind of citizen who pursues her own autonomously chosen ends and respects others' right to do so as well.

- A citizen needs to internalise the principles of equality, justice and liberty to promote fraternity among all.
- India is a secular democratic state, which means that all faiths are respected, but at the same time the Indian state has no preference for any particular faith. The felt need, today, is to inculcate among children a respect for all people regardless of their religious beliefs.

India is a multicultural society made up of numerous regional and local cultures. People's religious beliefs, ways of life and their understanding of social relationships are quite distinct from one another. All the groups have equal rights to co-exist and flourish, and the education system needs to respond to the cultural pluralism inherent in our society. To strengthen our cultural heritage and national identity, the curriculum should enable the younger generation to reinterpret and re-evaluate the past with reference to new priorities and emerging outlooks of a changing societal context. Understanding human evolution should make it clear that the existence of distinctness in our country is a tribute to the special spirit of our country, which allowed it to flourish. The cultural diversity of this land should continue to be treasured as our special attribute. This should not be considered a result of mere tolerance. Creation of a citizenry conscious of their rights and duties, and commitment to the principles embodied in our Constitution is a prerequisite in this context.

1.5 THE QUALITY DIMENSION

Even as the system attempts to reach every child, the issue of quality presents a new range of challenges. The belief that quality goes with privilege is clearly irreconcilable with the vision of participatory democracy that India upholds and practises in the political sphere. Its practise in the sphere of education

Democracy is based on faith in the dignity and worth of every single individual as a human being. ... The object of a democratic education is, therefore, the full, all-round development of every individual's personality. ... i.e. an education to initiate the students into the many-sided art of living in a community. It is obvious, however, that an individual cannot live and develop alone. No education is worth the name which does not inculcate the qualities necessary for living graciously, harmoniously and efficiently with one's fellow men. (Secondary Education Commission, 1952 - 53, p. 20)

demands that the education available to all children in different regions and sections of society has a comparable quality. J.P. Naik had described equality, quality and quantity as the 'elusive triangle' of Indian education. Dealing with this metaphorical triangle requires a deeper theoretical understanding of quality than has been available. UNESCO's recently published global monitoring report discusses systemic standards as the appropriate context of the quality debate. From this point of view, the child's performance needs to be treated as an indicator of systemic quality. In a system of education that is divided between a fast-growing private sector and a larger state sector marked by shortages and the uneven spread of resources, the issue of quality poses complex conceptual and practical questions. The belief that private schools have higher quality treats examination results as the sole criterion for judging quality. This kind of perception ignores the ethos-related limitations of the privileged private schools. The fact that they often neglect the child's mother tongue warrants us to wonder about the opportunities that they are able to provide to the child

for constructing knowledge in meaningful ways. Moreover, the exclusion of the poor from their admission process implies the loss of learning opportunities that occur in a classroom with children from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

Physical resources by themselves cannot be regarded as an indicator of quality; yet, the extreme and chronic shortage of physical resources, including basic infrastructural amenities, in schools run by the state or local bodies does present a serious quality constraint. The availability of qualified and motivated teachers who perceive teaching as a career option applies to all sectors of schools as a necessary precondition for quality. Recent suggestions for the dilution of standards in teacher recruitment, training and service conditions articulated in the NPE, and, before it, by the Chattopadhyaya Commission (1984), arouse anxiety. No system of education can rise above the quality of its teachers, and the quality of teachers greatly depends on the means deployed for selection, procedures used for training, and the strategies adopted for ensuring accountability.

The quality dimension also needs to be examined from the point of view of the experiences designed for the child in terms of knowledge and skills. Assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the child's own nature shape the school ethos and the approaches used by those who prepare the syllabi and textbooks, and by teachers as well. The representation of knowledge in textbooks and other materials needs to be viewed from the larger perspective of the challenges facing humanity and the nation today. No subject in the school curriculum can stay aloof from these larger concerns, and therefore the selection of knowledge proposed to be included in each subject area requires careful examination in terms of socio-economic and cultural conditions and goals. The

greatest national challenge for education is to strengthen our participatory democracy and the values enshrined in the Constitution. Meeting this challenge implies that we make quality and social justice the central theme of curricular reform. Citizenship training has been an important aspect of formal education. Today, it needs to be boldly reconceptualised in terms of the discourse of universal human rights and the approaches associated with critical pedagogy. A clear orientation towards values associated with peace and harmonious coexistence is called for. Quality in education includes a concern for quality of life in all its dimensions. This is why a concern for peace, protection of the environment and a predisposition towards social change must be viewed as core components of quality, not merely as value premises.

1.6 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF EDUCATION

The education system does not function in isolation from the society of which it is a part. Hierarchies of caste, economic status and gender relations, cultural diversity as well as the uneven economic development that characterise Indian society also deeply influence access to education and participation of children in school. This is reflected in the sharp disparities between different social and economic groups, which are seen in school enrolment and completion rates. Thus, girls belonging to *SC* and *ST* communities among the rural and urban poor and the disadvantaged sections of religious and other ethnic minorities are educationally most vulnerable. In urban locations and many villages, the school system itself is stratified and provides children with strikingly different educational experiences. Unequal gender relations not only perpetuate domination but also create anxieties and stunt the freedom of both boys and girls to develop their human capacities to their fullest. It is in

the interest of *all* to liberate human beings from the existing inequalities of gender.

Schools range from the high-cost 'public' (private) schools, to which the urban elite send their children, to the ostensibly 'free', poorly functioning local-body-run primary schools where children from hitherto educationally deprived communities predominate. A striking recent feature is the growth of multigrade schools in rural areas, based on the mechanical application of 'teacher - pupil ratios' to the need to provide a school within 1 km. of each habitation, yet unsupported by the necessary curricular concepts or clarity on materials or pedagogy. Such developments unintentionally reinforce privilege and exclusion in education and undermine the constitutional values of equality of opportunity and social justice. If 'free' education is understood as the 'removal of constraints' to education, then we must realise the importance of other sectors of the state's social policy for supporting and facilitating the achievement of UEE.

Globalisation and the spread of market relations to every sphere of society have important implications for education. On the one hand, we are witnessing the increasing commercialisation of education, and, on the other hand, inadequate public funding for education and the official thrust towards 'alternative' schools. These factors indicate a shifting of responsibility for education from the state to the family and the community. We need to be vigilant about the pressures to commodify schools and the application of market-related concepts to schools and school quality. The increasingly competitive environment into which schools are being drawn and the aspirations of parents place a tremendous burden of stress and anxiety on all children, including the very young, to the detriment of their personal growth

and development, and thus hampering the inculcation of the joy of learning.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments, and the institutionalised statutory space they provide for local communities to participate in decision making in education for their children, are important developments. However, parental aspirations for education are belied by endemic poverty and unequal social relations, and by lack of adequate provision of schooling of equitable quality. The concerns of the burgeoning population of the urban poor are still not reflected in planning. The expectations and aspirations of the poor for education cannot be set aside as being outside the frame of curricular concerns.

The social context of education in India thus presents a number of challenges, which must be addressed by the curriculum framework, both in its design as well as its implementation. The discussion on guiding principles has drawn attention to these challenges as well as some of the ways in which they can be addressed. Opening the concept of knowledge to include new areas of knowledge and experience, inclusivity in selecting learning tasks, pedagogic practices that are alert to promoting participation, building self-confidence and critical awareness, and an openness to engaging with the community to explain and share curricular decisions are among the new ideas discussed in different sections of this document.

1.7 AIMS OF EDUCATION

The aims of education serve as broad guidelines to align educational processes to chosen ideals and accepted principles. The aims of education simultaneously reflect the current needs and aspirations of a society as well as its lasting values, and the immediate concerns of a community as well as broad

human ideals. At any given time and place they can be called the contemporary and contextual articulations of broad and lasting human aspirations and values.

Educational aims turn the different activities undertaken in schools and other educational institutions into a creative pattern and give them the distinctive character of being 'educational'. An educational aim helps the teacher connect her present classroom activity to a cherished future outcome without making it instrumental, and therefore give it direction without divorcing it from current concerns. Thus, an aim is a foreseen end: it is not an idle view of a mere spectator; rather, it influences the steps taken to reach the end. An aim must provide foresight. It can do this in three ways: First, it involves careful observation of the given conditions to see what means are available for reaching the end, and to discover the hindrances in the way. This may require a careful study of children, and an understanding of what they are capable of learning at different ages. Second, this foresight suggests the proper order or sequence that would be effective. Third, it makes the choice of alternatives possible. Therefore, acting with an aim allows us to act intelligently. The school, the classroom, and related learning sites are spaces where the core of educational activity takes place. These must become spaces where learners have experiences that help them achieve the desired curricular objectives. An understanding of learners, educational aims, the nature of knowledge, and the nature of the school as a social space can help us arrive at principles to guide classroom practices.

The guiding principles discussed earlier provide the landscape of social values within which we locate our educational aims. The first is a commitment to democracy and the values of equality, justice, freedom, concern for others' well-being, secularism, respect for human dignity and rights. Education should aim to build

a commitment to these values, which are based on reason and understanding. The curriculum, therefore, should provide adequate experience and space for dialogue and discourse in the school to build such a commitment in children.

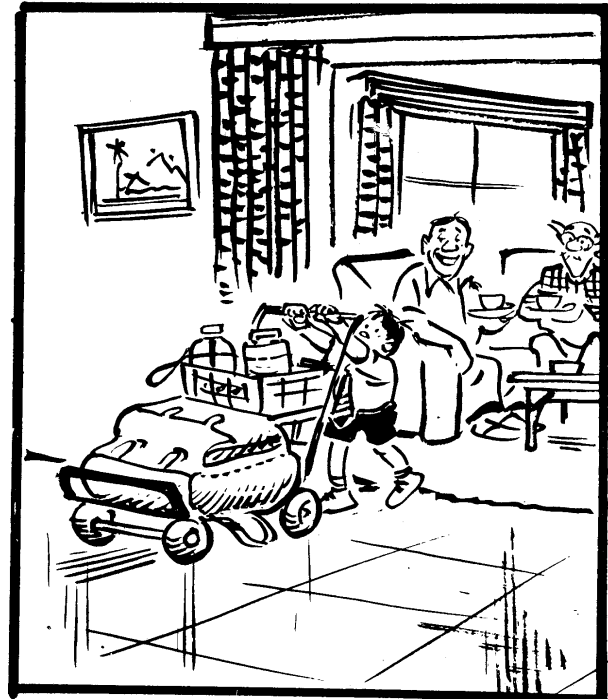
Independence of thought and action points to a capacity of carefully considered, value-based decision making, both independently and collectively.

A sensitivity to others' well-being and feelings, together with knowledge and understanding of the world, should form the basis of a rational commitment to values.

Learning to learn and the willingness to unlearn and relearn are important as means of responding to new situations in a flexible and creative manner. The curriculum needs to emphasise the processes of constructing knowledge.

Choices in life and the ability to participate in democratic processes depend on the ability to contribute to society in various ways. This is why education must develop the ability to work and participate in economic processes and social change. This necessitates the integration of work with education. We must ensure that work-related experiences are sufficient and broadbased in terms of skills and attitudes, that they foster an understanding of socio-economic processes, and help inculcate a mental frame that encourages working with others in a spirit of cooperation. Work alone can create a social temper.

Appreciation of beauty and art forms is an integral part of human life. Creativity in arts, literature and other domains of knowledge is closely linked.



*Ah, my son is off to school!..... Luckily I managed to get one of these from the airport!
(Courtesy: R. K. Laxman in the Times of India)*

Education must provide the means and opportunities to enhance the child's creative expression and the capacity for aesthetic appreciation. Education for aesthetic appreciation and creativity is even more important today when aesthetic gullibility allows for opinion and taste to be manufactured and manipulated by market forces. The effort should be to enable the learner to appreciate beauty in its several forms. However, we must ensure that we do not promote stereotypes of beauty and forms of entertainment, that might constitute an affront to women and persons with disabilities.