



Schooling: A Gradual Initiation of Life: Dr. Zakir Hussains' Vision

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ABSTRACT

The role of education, particularly schooling is, in preparing individuals for life's challenges, emphasizing physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development. It highlights the importance of school education in guiding individuals towards purposeful lives and views schooling as an initiation into various aspects of life. Dr. Zakir Hussain, a prominent Indian educationist and the third President of India, is praised for his contributions to educational upliftment and his belief in holistic education and social development. The research paper aims to explore Dr. Hussains' vision of schooling as a gradual initiation into life and to develop a framework aligning his vision with the National Education Policy 2020, thus enhancing the Indian education system.

Keywords: Indian Education System, NEP, Schooling, Dr Zakir Hussain, Vision, Significance, Issues, Challenges, Suggestions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education in India is viewed as a powerful tool for societal transformation, as emphasized by Baligar. With a vast and complex system comprising millions of schools, teachers, and students, India has continually strived to improve access and quality since its independence. The nation's commitment to education, reflected in policies like the National Policy on Education, has led to significant progress, particularly towards achieving universal primary education. Beyond academics, education in India aims to foster holistic development by imparting life skills, social interactions, and personal growth, preparing individuals for success in various aspects of life.

Here are a few ways in which schooling can be considered a gradual initiation into life

Academic Knowledge	Social Interaction	Structured Routine	Personal Development	Extracurricular Activities
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	Responsibility and Independence	Cultural Exposure	Preparation for Career	Learning to Learn

Academic Knowledge: Schooling imparts essential academic knowledge and skills that form the foundation for a person's future education and career.

- 1. Social Interaction:** Schooling exposes students to a diverse group of peers, helping them develop social skills with **teamwork, communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration** through group projects, discussions, and extracurricular activities.
- 2. Structured Routine:** Schooling establishes a routine with which students adhere to a daily schedule, which prepares them for managing time and responsibilities later in life.
- 3. Personal Development:** In schools students learn about **empathy, respect, responsibility, and other virtues** that are crucial for their personal growth and success in adulthood.
- 4. Extracurricular Activities:** Participation in extracurricular activities like **sports, arts,**



clubs, and competitions allow students to explore their talents, and passions outside of academics, contributing to their holistic development.

5. **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Schools encourage critical thinking by presenting students with challenges and problems hence preparing them to tackle real-world issues in their future endeavors.
6. **Responsibility and Independence:** As students' progress, they are gradually given more responsibilities and independence. They manage their assignments, deadlines, and personal obligations, which are valuable skills in adulthood.
7. **Cultural Exposure:** Schools often expose students to various cultural perspectives and histories, fostering an understanding and appreciation for diversity.
8. **Preparation for Career:** High schools and colleges often offer career guidance and counseling, helping students explore potential career paths and guiding them toward higher education or vocational training.
9. **Learning to Learn:** Schooling teaches students how to learn effectively, encouraging them to seek out information, conduct research, and adapt to new challenges.

While schooling lays a foundation, real-world experiences and personal relationships also shape individuals. Dr. Zakir Hussain, a pioneering Indian educationist, advocated for holistic education and social development. This research paper aims to explore Dr. Hussain's vision that "Schooling is a gradual initiation into life" and align it with the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), contributing to the enhancement of the Indian education system.

2.PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The fundamental objective of this work is to compile all the evidence that has been gathered by the visionary **Dr Zakir Hussain** towards the philosophy of **Schooling as a gradual initiation of life** in various national and international studies and organizations with the aim of demonstrating, the verifiable benefits of school education in all areas of life, both individually and socially, with the aim of providing a personal and institutional argument and stimulus to promote quality educational actions for oneself, for one's children.

3.RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- a) To briefly study the revelation of Dr Zakir Hussain towards Education system in India.
- b) To illustrate the vision of Dr Zakir Hussain towards the fact that "Schooling is a gradual initiation of Life".
- c) To analyze that facet raised by Dr Zakir Hussain towards school education has been implemented in NEP 2020.

4.FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

DR. Zakir Hussain, an eminent educationist and the third President of India, epitomized India's secular ideals and promoted harmony in society. Recognizing education as the cornerstone of national development, he dedicated his life to its continual improvement. Born in 1897, he was not only a statesman but also a co-founder of Jamia Milia University and a recipient of the Bharat Ratna. Hussain emphasized a balanced approach to education, focusing on self-actualization and the holistic development of individuals. He envisioned a society free from divisions of caste and religion, where cooperation and trustworthiness prevailed.

4.1 DR. ZAKIR HUSSAINS' EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

DR. Zakir Hussain, embodied idealism, and secular beliefs, advocating for progressive reforms in education. He integrated Islamic principles with nationalism to promote humanistic education, emphasizing the unlocking of individual potential. Hussain identified several issues hindering education, including passive classroom sessions, a shortage of proficient educators, and a burdensome curriculum. He believed in nurturing individuality and fostering intelligent participation in society, aligning education with democratic

principles. He viewed education as a lifelong journey and criticized the tendency to equate schooling with learning. Hussain championed the value of work as an educational tool and emphasized universities' role in community leadership. He addressed the science-humanities debate, stressing the importance of applying scientific knowledge ethically for societal progress. In his presidency, he highlighted education as crucial for national development.

Dr. Hussain laid stress on the following aims of education:



He laments that **Indian education** is lacking in the following major drawbacks.

- Indian education has been like stagnant water for quite some time.
- Indian education ignores new ideas and fresh thinking in educational matters.

4.2 DR HUSSAINS' VISION ON SCHOOLING AS A GRADUAL INITIATION OF LIFE

- Knowledge of Individuality of Each Child:** Acknowledging and respecting the unique qualities of each student is essential for effective education. Teachers and schools should strive to understand students' backgrounds, capabilities, preferences, and personalities to create inclusive learning environments. Tailoring teaching methods to individual needs fosters engagement and supports holistic development. Embracing diversity promotes empathy and prepares students for success in a multicultural world.
- Understanding the Stages of Development:** The second concern of the school should be directing the school programs in consonance with the stages of development of the pupils.
- All Round Development:** Another characteristic feature of a good school is that it devotes its efforts to the growth and development of the three Hs of the pupil.
- Purposeful activities:** Education is a purposeful activity and the programs of the school should be leading to educationally productive work.
- Social and Individual Development:** The school should aim at individual development as well as generating a sense of social responsibility.
- Self-education:** The school should take initiative in enhancing the process of self-learning in the pupils. In fact, the best way to teach is to help the learner how to learn

DR. Zakir Hussain supported education with the primary objective of overall development. He emphasized self-actualization, character building, mental growth, and dedication to national progress. Hussain believed that a nation's character is reflected in its people's values and intellect. He stressed the importance of education in nurturing both mental and spiritual faculties, guiding individuals in distinguishing between right and wrong. Additionally, he



emphasized the promotion of social and cultural values, discouraging materialistic pursuits in education. Throughout his life, Hussain played a vital role in shaping educational policies in India, driven by his commitment to holistic education and moral values.

Here are some key aspects of schooling from Dr. Zakir Hussain's viewpoint:

Holistic Education	Character Building	Cultural Understanding	Social Responsibility	Quality Education for All
Teacher's Role	Student-Centered Approach	Critical Thinking	Lifelong Learning	National Integration

- a) **Holistic Education:** Dr. Zakir Hussain emphasized the importance of holistic education that goes beyond academic learning. He believed that education should cater to the physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of a student's development.
- b) **Character Building:** For Dr. Hussain, education wasn't just about acquiring knowledge; it was also about building strong character and values. He believed that schools should instill moral and ethical values in students, who contribute positively to society.
- c) **Cultural Understanding:** Dr. Zakir Hussain encouraged that education should foster an understanding and appreciation of different cultures and religions. He emphasized that schools should promote tolerance, harmony, and respect for diversity.
- d) **Social Responsibility:** According to Dr. Hussain, education should empower individuals to address social issues and contribute to the betterment of their communities, encouraging students to develop a sense of social responsibility and actively engage in social service.
- e) **Quality Education for All:** Dr. Zakir Hussain was an advocate for providing quality education to all segments of society, regardless of socio-economic backgrounds.
- f) **Teacher's Role:** Dr. Hussain recognized the pivotal role of teachers in shaping students' lives. He believed that teachers should not only impart knowledge but also serve as role models and guides in students' personal and intellectual development.
- g) **Student-Centered Approach:** He supported a student-centered approach to education; where the curriculum and teaching methods consider the needs, interests, and individual differences of students.
- h) **Critical Thinking:** Dr. Hussain emphasized the development of critical thinking and analytical skills in students. He believed that education should empower students to question, analyze, and evaluate information independently.
- i) **Lifelong Learning:** He recognized that learning is a lifelong process and encouraged love for learning that extends beyond formal schooling. He believed that education should inspire individuals to continue seeking knowledge throughout their lives.
- j) **National Integration:** Dr. Zakir Hussain believed that education plays a crucial role in promoting national integration. He stressed the importance of education in fostering a sense of unity and patriotism among diverse groups of people.

4.3 SCHOOLING AS A VISION OF DR. HUSSAIN AS IMPLEMENTED IN NEP

Findings representing the vision of Dr Zakir Hussain towards Schooling and the in-line vision of NEP 2020:

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) and the educational philosophy of Dr. Zakir Hussain share several common principles that revolve around holistic education, inclusivity, values, and the broader development of individuals. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Both NEP 2020 and Dr.



Zakir Hussains' philosophy emphasize the importance of nurturing well-rounded individuals who can contribute positively to society. Here's an exploration of how **NEP 2020** aligns with **Dr. Zakir Hussains'** educational vision:

1. Holistic Education

NEP 2020: The policy emphasizes holistic education, aiming to develop cognitive, emotional, social, and ethical dimensions of students.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He advocated for holistic education that encompasses physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth.

2. Inclusivity and Diversity

NEP 2020: The policy underscores the importance of providing equitable education to all, regardless of background or ability.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He promoted values of pluralism, diversity, and cultural understanding, fostering an inclusive educational environment.

3. Values and Character Education

NEP 2020: The policy emphasizes the integration of value education across the curriculum to instill ethical values.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He believed in character building and moral values as integral components of education.

4. Life Skills and Experiential Learning

NEP 2020: The policy promotes experiential learning, life skills, and critical thinking to prepare students for real-world challenges.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He emphasized the importance of practical learning and developing skills beyond textbook knowledge.

5. Community Engagement

NEP 2020: The policy encourages community participation in education for a more holistic learning experience.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He advocated for students to actively engage in social service and contribute to their communities.

6. Teacher Empowerment

NEP 2020: The policy emphasizes the importance of teacher training and professional development.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He recognized teachers' pivotal role in shaping students' lives and believed in their continuous development.

7. Cultural Integration

NEP 2020: The policy promotes multilingualism, preserving local languages, and understanding India's rich cultural heritage.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He championed cultural pluralism and the importance of understanding diverse cultures.

8. Flexible and Student-Centric Learning

NEP 2020: The policy encourages flexibility in curriculum and assessment, promoting personalized learning paths.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He believed in adapting education to students' needs and interests.

9. Global Perspective

NEP 2020: The policy aims to create globally competent individuals through exposure to international perspectives.

Dr. Zakir Hussain: He believed education should broaden students' horizons and prepare them for a globalized world.

In essence, both **NEP 2020** and **Dr. Zakir Hussain's** philosophy prioritize education that goes beyond academic excellence, focusing on character, values, and the holistic



development of individuals. Their shared emphasis on inclusivity, practical learning, community engagement, and cultural understanding reflects a comprehensive approach to education that aims to shape responsible, ethical, and well-rounded citizens. ⁽²⁰⁾

5. Conclusion

Dr. Zakir Hussain's views underscored the multifaceted role of education in shaping individuals and societies. His legacy continues to influence educational ideologies, emphasizing not only academic prowess but also moral and social development. While the National Education Policy 2020 aligns with many of his principles, it's essential to recognize that schooling alone cannot fully prepare individuals for life's complexities. Real-world experiences and personal relationships complement formal education. Nonetheless, honoring Zakir Hussain's vision through the NEP 2020 reforms represents a meaningful tribute to his contributions as an educator and humanist.

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