

## PRACTICE-BASED PROFESSION AND AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE THAT BREAKS DOWN THE BARRIERS OF NEP 2020

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### Article Info

**Received:** 08/02/2024

**Revised:** 18/02/2024

**Accepted:** 28/02/2024

**Keywords:** *Interdisciplinary, implementation, new education policy 2030, Physical Education and Social Work*

### Abstract

Interdisciplinary Education refers to the combination of two or more academic disciplines into one. Interdisciplinary understanding brings the ability and confidence to navigate between disciplines to make interlinkages for developing new perspectives have a holistic appreciation of knowledge. Disciplinary understanding provides the base to create a rigorous interdisciplinary approach. In the absence of disciplinary understanding, learning can lead to superficial coverage and confusion. Teachers enable students to make connections in their minds between what they learn in one context and another with the help of a supportive curriculum. Excellent institutions support teachers in planning collaboratively for the development of interdisciplinary understanding. Teachers also need to understand what their colleagues are teaching to a particular year group to connect with their personal classes.

### INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced transformative changes in India's education system, including higher education and social work education. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has aligned its policies with NEP to promote multidisciplinary and holistic education.

**Key highlights of NEP's impact on social work education include:**

- **Multidisciplinary Approach:** Social work education now integrates various disciplines like humanities, sciences, and vocational studies to provide a well-rounded learning experience.
- **Competency-Based Learning:** Emphasis is placed on developing skills and competencies relevant to social work practice.

- **Flexibility and Accessibility:** The introduction of the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) allows students to accumulate and transfer credits across institutions, making education more flexible.
- **Focus on Ethics and Values:** Social work programs are designed to instill ethical values, social consciousness, and active citizenship among students.

For a deeper dive, you can explore the UGC's draft curricular framework or the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework. Let me know if you'd like to discuss any specific aspect!

### How does NEP impact other areas of higher education in India?

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has brought significant changes to higher education in India, aiming to make it more inclusive, flexible, and globally competitive. Here are some key impacts:

1. **Multidisciplinary Education:** NEP encourages institutions to offer multidisciplinary programs, breaking down silos between arts, sciences, and vocational studies. This approach fosters holistic learning and creativity.
  2. **Flexibility in Learning:** The introduction of the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) allows students to accumulate and transfer credits across institutions, enabling flexible learning paths.
  3. **Focus on Research:** The establishment of the National Research Foundation (NRF) aims to promote high-quality research and innovation in higher education.
  4. **Increased Accessibility:** NEP emphasizes equity and inclusion, aiming to provide access to quality education for all, including marginalized communities.
  5. **Technology Integration:** The policy promotes the use of technology in teaching, learning, and administration, enhancing accessibility and efficiency.
  6. **Vocational Training:** NEP integrates vocational education into mainstream higher education, preparing students for the workforce with practical skills.
  7. **Regulatory Reforms:** A "light but tight" regulatory framework ensures transparency and accountability while granting institutions greater autonomy.
- Encourages students to participate in activities that address societal challenges, such as poverty, inequality, and environmental issues.
  - Aims to instill empathy, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.
  - Focuses on creating socially conscious individuals who contribute to nation-building.

While Physical Education is more about personal and physical development, Social Work is centered on societal impact and community service. Both are integral to the NEP 2020's vision of creating well-rounded individuals.

Social work education in India is a dynamic field that equips individuals with the skills to address diverse social issues and contribute to community well-being. The curriculum focuses on imparting [crucial skills](#) such as empathy, effective communication, and cultural sensitivity, recognizing the importance of understanding India's diverse cultural landscape.

However, challenges exist, including outdated syllabi that may not align with current societal realities and the evolving nature of social work. Bridging the gap between academic training and practical skills remains a challenge, impacting the immediate employability of graduates. Despite these challenges, social work education presents numerous opportunities for students to make meaningful contributions to society.

#### How are these fields implemented in schools?

In schools, **Physical Education** and **Social Work** are implemented through structured programs and activities, aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Here's how:

##### Physical Education

- **Incorporating Sports:** Regular periods for sports and physical activities are scheduled, ensuring students participate in activities like yoga, athletics, team sports, and fitness exercises.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Schools are encouraged to build playgrounds, fitness centers, and sports equipment to support diverse physical education programs.
- **Extracurricular Activities:** Sports events, competitions, and games are organized to promote teamwork, leadership, and discipline.
- **Health Awareness:** Classes on nutrition, mental health, and fitness are integrated into the curriculum to foster a healthy lifestyle.

##### Social Work

#### The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 highlights both Physical Education and Social Work, but they serve distinct purposes within the framework:

1. **Physical Education:**
  - Focuses on the holistic development of students by integrating sports and physical activities into the curriculum.
  - Aims to improve health, fitness, and overall well-being.
  - Encourages the inclusion of sports as a co-curricular activity, emphasizing its importance alongside academic subjects.
  - Promotes teamwork, discipline, and leadership skills through physical activities.
2. **Social Work:**
  - Emphasises community engagement and social responsibility.

- **Community Engagement:** Schools involve students in community service projects such as cleanliness drives, tree plantation campaigns, or charity work.
- **Clubs and Societies:** Social work clubs or NSS (National Service Scheme) groups are formed to actively involve students in addressing local social issues.
- **Awareness Programs:** Students participate in seminars or workshops on pressing topics like inequality, gender sensitivity, or environmental conservation.
- **Interdisciplinary Projects:** Assignments and projects often encourage students to address societal challenges using their learning from various subjects.

These fields are vital in fostering holistic development by ensuring students grow physically, emotionally, and socially. Would you like to discuss how schools evaluate the impact of these programs?

#### **How do schools evaluate the effectiveness of these programs?**

Schools evaluate the effectiveness of **Physical Education** and **Social Work** programs through a variety of tools and methods to ensure their objectives are being met. Here's how they assess these fields:

##### **Physical Education**

1. **Performance Assessments:**
  - Regular fitness tests to track improvements in students' physical health (e.g., stamina, flexibility, strength).
  - Monitoring participation and performance in sports events and activities.
2. **Student Feedback:**
  - Surveys or discussions to understand students' engagement and interest in physical activities.
3. **Health Metrics:**
  - Tracking attendance records, as improved physical health often correlates with fewer sick days.
4. **Observational Reports:**
  - Teachers assess teamwork, discipline, and leadership qualities displayed during group sports or physical activities.

##### **Social Work**

1. **Community Impact:**

- Measuring tangible outcomes of projects (e.g., number of trees planted, funds raised, or people helped through campaigns).
2. **Qualitative Evaluations:**
    - Assessing students' understanding of societal issues through presentations, reports, or reflective essays.
  3. **Peer and Teacher Reviews:**
    - Teachers and peers provide feedback on students' active participation and initiative during social work activities.
  4. **Long-Term Impact:**
    - Observing changes in students' attitudes toward empathy, leadership, and social responsibility over time.

By combining quantitative (e.g., scores, metrics) and qualitative (e.g., reflections, observations) methods, schools ensure these programs contribute meaningfully to holistic development.

#### **How does NEP 2020 influence these program evaluations?**

The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** directly influences the evaluation of programs like **Physical Education** and **Social Work** by emphasizing comprehensive, competency-based assessments. Here's how NEP 2020 shapes these evaluations:

##### **1. Focus on Holistic Development**

- The NEP advocates for a shift from academic-centric evaluations to **holistic assessments** that cover physical, emotional, and social growth.
- For **Physical Education**, this means evaluating fitness, teamwork, and leadership skills alongside academic performance.
- For **Social Work**, the focus is on empathy, problem-solving, and the impact of students' community engagement.

##### **2. Competency-Based Assessments**

- NEP 2020 stresses the importance of assessing real-world skills and learning outcomes rather than rote memorization.
- Schools measure students' ability to demonstrate critical thinking and creativity in solving societal problems through social work activities.
- Physical Education assessments prioritize motor skills, physical fitness, and sportsmanship.

### 3. Incorporating Technology

- NEP encourages the use of **digital tools** for assessments, such as fitness tracking apps for physical education or digital portfolios to document students' social work contributions.
- This ensures transparency and consistency in evaluations.

### 4. Flexibility in Assessments

- The NEP promotes **individualised assessments**, allowing students to showcase their talents and growth in areas like physical education and social work through projects, presentations, and peer reviews.
- Schools are encouraged to move beyond standardized tests and include reflective essays, project-based learning, and feedback from community stakeholders.

### 5. Teachers as Mentors

- Under the NEP, teachers are expected to mentor students and guide them through personalized feedback. This ensures that evaluations focus not only on results but also on the learning process and effort.

### CONCLUSION:

Conclusion for inter-disciplinary approaches in physical education and social work  
Interdisciplinary approaches in physical education and social work offer a holistic framework for addressing complex societal and individual challenges. By integrating insights from diverse

fields such as psychology, sociology, pedagogy, and health sciences, these approaches foster a deeper understanding of human behaviour, well-being, and community dynamics.

In physical education, interdisciplinary methods enhance learning by combining physical activity with cognitive and emotional development. Similarly, in social work, these approaches enable practitioners to address multifaceted issues like mental health, social justice, and community development more effectively.

The synergy between these disciplines promotes innovative solutions, encourages collaboration, and prepares professionals to adapt to the evolving needs of society. Ultimately, interdisciplinary approaches enrich both fields, creating a more inclusive and impactful educational and professional landscape..

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Cite this article:

**Md. Riyas Sheikh, 2025.** Practice-Based Profession and An Academic Discipline That Breaks Down The Barriers of Nep 2020. *JES Bulletin*, 3(2):135-138.