

# Concept Note

Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies  
JNU and  
ICSSR-Northern Regional Centre

## National Seminar

# Interdisciplinarity in NEP 2020 : Teaching and Research in Education

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24-25 Sept.2026

Venue: Committee Room, Convention Centre  
JNU, New Delhi

Convenors

Prof. Suresh Babu, Dr. Sayantan Mandal, Dr. Pradeep K. Choudhury

Advisor: Prof. Parimala V Rao, Chairperson ZHCE

ZHCE

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ZHCES-JNU and ICSSR-NRC National Seminar

## Interdisciplinarity in NEP 2020

### Teaching and Research in Education

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The proposed national seminar, **Interdisciplinarity in NEP 2020: Teaching and Research in Education**, aims to introduce masters and doctoral students of social sciences to key academic and policy debates shaping the interdisciplinary teaching and research trajectories in educational studies in India. The seminar intends to contextualise the wider contours of the current National Educational Policy to reimagine the future of education. The debate seeks to account and examine the current state of education and its emerging challenges in the transforming phase of India's polity, economy and society. How does the classroom discourse shape the education thinking among Indian youth? What are new research sites that connect to the education policy debates, both global and local? At a time when global transactions of ideas and knowledge rapidly redefine the nation's priorities, the living conditions of citizens, cultural norms, material relations, and educational ideas, practices, and theories are on trial. A critical evaluation of education policy in the current context is imperative for recovering the precarious sites of epistemology and for reorienting our own ontological position in relation to the problems that education encounters today. Hence, the seminar would navigate five broad intersecting themes: the Indian knowledge system, the history and historicity of education, the economic policy and determinants of education and development, the psychological underpinnings in education, and the sociological conditioning of education.

#### I. Defining Knowledge Systems for India and Beyond

It seeks to explore how knowledge systems can be fostered by revisiting our civilizational past and the uncharted historical past as a contested terrain of tradition and modernity. Embracing diverse cultural heritage to carve out a lineage of the Indian knowledge system, compiling traditional wisdom with the modern knowledge system, the current attempt in education appears to be seeking relevance and usage of the knowledge system. An inquiry into the civilizational journey to its principles and value systems has implications for education. It is critical to appropriately adapt methodology to generate a factually and theoretically informed knowledge system that shapes both the nation's prosperity and the future aspirations of its citizens. In education, such deliberations allow us to potentially seek alternative views and inclusive perspectives that are not only useful but also meaningful for the emancipation of all. The education policy descriptions on the relevance of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) open up the possibility of a critical evaluation of tradition and its diverse knowledge apparatuses in comparison with other traditions, for India.

## **II. Policies and Institutions in the History of Education**

The second pillar, History: Colonial and Post-colonial Policies, Institutions, and Pedagogic Practices examines the evolution of Indian educational policies, and institutions and in order to take into account the long histories of teaching, learning, transmission, and intellectual formation. This section particularly discusses the role of ZHCES in building the discipline and expanding the horizon of the history of education through archival research. The role of formal and informal, state and non-state institutions in mediating student identities, teacher formation, and curriculum content is given particular attention in this section. In addition to macro-analyses of commissions, committees, and laws that shaped national educational paths, the theme calls for micro-histories of schools, colleges, teacher training facilities, and alternative learning locations. This section also foregrounds the contributions of the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies (ZHCES) in building the discipline and expanding the horizon of the history of education in India.

## **III: Social conditioning, practices, and processes of education**

Structural impediments, unequal opportunities, and diverse learners' experiences are precarious sites of sociological inquiry. Policies on inclusive education, continuous training, and deliberations on pedagogy and educational knowledge across the curriculum seek to accommodate diversity and diverse voices. As a theory of change, education plays a critical role in transforming societies. Democratisation of the education system eventually cultivates the values of citizenship for a democratic polity. Given the structural inequalities in education amidst the rapid change in educational landscape, developing critical perspectives on the vocation of teaching and emerging assistive technological apparatuses tend to reproduce dominant ideology, new materiality, hierarchy and authority to closely examine the very meaning of education. Redefining the complex human relationships and interactions in the context of the rapid adaptation of digital artifacts is a challenging task for sociological studies and research in education. The theme situates itself at the intersection of these factors, which closely (re)examine the very meaning of education in contemporary time and space.

## **IV: Economics of Education: Theory, Policy and Practice**

This part of the conference will bring in a discussion on the changes in human capital production and measurement and its connection to the education policy discourse. How does the new evidence in education economics establishes new connections between education and development is a key question for the discussion in the seminar. The other important focus area will be to examine the changing relationship between education and expanding opportunities, particularly among youth, more clearly, to discuss the key pathways that converts skills and education to functionings and doings. Two important determinants of human capital production that are often discussed in the policy space are climate and technology, and this is the high time that we discuss this in the Indian educational settings. We also urge to generate a discussion on the dynamic relationship between learning and earning. It is dynamic as we see considerable changes in nature of work, dynamism in the labour market, and more importantly, the continuous changes in the skill sets in the work space.

Overall, this theme aims to generate a new discourse on education and human capital, connecting to the changing economic and education policy space.

### V. Psychological underpinnings in education

The fifth pillar, Psychology: Inclusive pedagogy and learner wellbeing in an unpredictable future, will focus on learner diversity, inclusion, mental health, and the pedagogical conditions necessary to support students in uncertain educational and social environments, especially in post-pandemic and post-digital contexts. It will also engage with questions of inclusion, student engagement, learning difficulties, stress, resilience, and the role of teachers in creating supportive classroom climates. In addition, the section will explore how psychological insights can inform curriculum design, assessment practices, and learner-centered approaches in ways that respond to the changing realities of education under NEP 2020.

By situating NEP 2020 within broader questions of knowledge, equity, technology, history, and global change, the seminar aims to cultivate a critical academic orientation among postgraduate students while also fostering dialogue among scholars, faculty members, and invited experts. It will serve as a space between the curriculum and contemporary debate, and as a platform for reflecting on the future of education in India through interdisciplinary, socially grounded inquiry. Through expert presentations and panel discussions, participants will engage with the complexities of traditional and modern perspectives and explore innovative approaches to integrating them, as recommended by the NEP 2020. The interdisciplinary seminar will also encourage collaboration and the exploration of new ideas, and the congruence of young minds, that can shape the nation in leading towards an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

### Sub Themes

- I. Defining Knowledge Systems for India and Beyond
- II. Policies and Institutions in the History of Education
- III. Social conditioning, practices, and processes of education
- IV. Economics of Education: Theory, Policy and Practice
- V. Psychological underpinnings in education

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#### Advisor

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*Chairperson ZHCES*

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Jointly organised by  
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Educational Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

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