

Strengthening National Identity and Preserving Cultural Heritage  
NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK  
FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION  
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**1.2.2 Strengthening National Identity and Preserving  
Cultural Heritage**

The school curriculum must inculcate and maintain a sense of pride in being an Indian through a conscious understanding of the growth of Indian civilisation and also contributions of India to the world civilisations in its thoughts, actions and deeds. Strengthening of national identity and unity is intimately associated with the study of cultural heritage of India. It is here that education has to play its dual role of being conservative and dynamic - bringing about a fine synthesis between change-oriented technologies and the country's continuity of cultural tradition. While on the one hand, education should help in promoting a global world order, on the other, it should be seen as developing a national consciousness, a national spirit and national unity which are considered essential for national identity. At no point of time can the school curriculum ignore including specific content which nurtures national identity, a profound sense of patriotism, non-sectarian attitudes, capacity for tolerating differences arising out of caste, religion, ideology, region, language, sex, etc. It is also important to incorporate India's contribution to world culture and technology in our school textbooks so as to promote awareness among Indian students about the rich cultural and scientific heritage of the country. It becomes desirable to do so since many children are not aware of the progress and achievement of the country in the field of science and technology.

It may be reiterated that the national spirit and national identity assumed great importance during long saga of our freedom struggle. As such, the study of India's freedom struggle by pupils at all stages of school education shall continue to be significant in this context. However, conscious care shall have to be taken to acquaint pupils with the events related to freedom struggle and with the sacrifices made by the people in different parts of the country — from North to South, West to East, as well as including regions such as the North-East.

**1.2.3 Integrating Indigenous Knowledge and India's Contribution to  
Mankind**

Education in general, and the process of curriculum development in particular, in many of those developing countries which not long ago were part of the colonial rule, even now continue to be strongly influenced by the vestiges of

the past. In practical terms it means copying enmass the ideas generated in the western countries and then their blind application in entirely different contexts. Education in order to be relevant and meaningful should relate to the socio-cultural context of the pupil. An indigenous curriculum would celebrate the ideas of native thinkers such as Aurobindo, Gandhi, Tagore and Krishnamurthy to name a few of them. It would also rest on innovative experiments and experiences which have emanated from its own context. Against this background it may also be pointed out that there is a need to bring to notice the contribution of India to the world wisdom. Paradoxical as it may sound, while our children know about Newton they do not know about our own Aryabhat, they do know about a computer but do not know about the concept of zero. Mention may also have to be made for instance of Yoga and Yogic practices as well as Indian systems of medicines like Ayurvedic and Unani forms which are being recognised and practised all over the world. The curriculum shall have to correct such imbalances.

Today there is world-wide recognition of the indigenous knowledge system. This is for an instance, especially so among the environmentally concerned people because it is difficult to ignore the fact that they have proved to be environment friendly in thousands of years of human existence. Indigenousness, however, is not opposed to being receptive to new ideas from different cultures and cultural contexts. Indigenousness, to make it clear, is as opposed to the narrow nationalism as to the false universalism.

#### **1.2.4 Responding to the impact of Globalisation**

At the dawn of the 21st Century many unprecedented challenges await us. One of these is the phenomenon of globalisation resulting in large part from the world-wide integration of the economic and financial sectors. Globalisation is an outcome of rapid and significant technological changes, geo-political evolution, and a dominant ideology of regulation by the market. As a result of globalisation, most of the problems do not stop at any one country's border posts, but call for world-wide solutions. In this sense we are now truly members of a global village or in the old Indian tradition recommitting ourselves truly to the idea of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the whole world is my family).

The main implications of the phenomenon of globalisation would be emergence of learning societies due to the multiplication of sources of information and communication, transformation of the nature of work requiring more flexibility, necessity of team work and use of new technologies. The challenges raised by globalisation for educational processes would mean rethinking about the delivery of educational content, integrating new sources of information, developing competence along with knowledge and also to adapt curricula to the needs of the different socio-cultural groups, and to maintain the national and social cohesion of the country. In the context of globalisation

as well the principle of 'learning to live together' and ways and means to develop it assume great significance.

Responding to the phenomenon of globalisation would lead us to rethink defining new scope for old disciplines such as history, geography, foreign languages etc., introducing new curricular concerns such as education towards active citizenship and human rights, environmental issues and promoting consensus on a common core of universal values.