

A Review of Non-Formal Education in the Context of Education for all in India

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Abstract - Education may be broken down into three categories: formal, non-formal, and informal. Schools, colleges, universities, and community colleges, as well as specialized institutions teaching subjects like technology, business, management, etc., are all part of the formal education system. General academic studies and a range of specialized programs and courses aim at full-time professional training and development, and formal education encompasses a hierarchically organized, chronologically graded educational system running from elementary school to the university. Non-formal education is another option; it differs from formal education in that it often takes place outside of the system and is focused on helping students acquire the practical skills they'll need in their everyday lives. The third category of education is known as "informal education," and it consists of the explanation of everyday experiences by teachers, mentors, guides, or bosses. This type of education is often referred to as "incidental learning," which emphasizes the fact that it is not a deliberate or premeditated process. There is formal education, which occurs in classrooms, non-formal education, which occurs in groups and clubs where people have fewer problems and more opportunities and choices, and informal education, which occurs when a child first begins to communicate with the people in his immediate environment. The purpose of this research study is to have a better grasp on the meaning and relevance of non-formal education by exploring its definition, development, significance, forms, and implementation. The primary goal of exploring the many facets of non-formal education is to acknowledge the ways in which it has contributed to the flourishing of both people and communities.

Keywords - non-formal, education, context, constitutional

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INTRODUCTION

The Indian Constitution recognizes that education may be a catalyst for social transformation. A research paper with a focus on social equity. In the Preamble, the people's commitment to upholding individual rights to free speech, press, assembly, religion, and worship, as well as to ensuring that all citizens have an equal chance at success in life, and to preserving the integrity of the nation as a whole, is reaffirmed. If we are serious about ensuring that everyone has a fair shot at success, then we must ensure that everyone is literate. The Preamble lays forth the Constitution's fundamental framework, which cannot be changed, and may be used to interpret the scope of the Bill of Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy. Many a dry Constitutional provision has been given new life by judicial interpretation. For example, the broad sense in which the terms "personal" and "free" are used has implications for the study of literacy. Justice Bhagwati wrote the following in Francis Coralie Mulin v. Administrator, Union Territory of Delhi (1981):

***"To give the most important human right, the right to life, and the arc of all other rights, meaning and energy that may survive for years to come and increase the dignity of the individual and the value of the human being, it must be understood in a wide and expansive spirit. We believe that the right to life encompasses the right to exist with human dignity and all that entails, including but not limited to the provision of food, clothes, a safe place to sleep, a means of communication in a variety of formats, the freedom to travel and interact with others, and so on.."* [1]**

The Supreme Court once again cited the preceding rulings in this area in its verdict in Bandhua Mukti Morcha, etc. vs. Union of India (J.T. 1997 (5) SC 285).

"In Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Education v. K.S. Gandhi JT 1991 (2) SC 296, the court ruled that all students had a constitutional right to an education through high

school. In J.P.Unnikrishnan V. State of Andhra Pradesh JT 1993 (1) SC 474, a constitutional bench ruled that all children had the right to receive education to the 14th grade. The state must provide the resources and opportunities outlined in Article 39 (e) and (f) of the Constitution to guarantee that children are not exploited because of their poverty or whims.”[2]

SPECIFIC CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

Constitutional provisions pertaining to Education and educational opportunity - the primary channel for literacy - are outlined in the table below.: [3]

Table 1: Constitutional Provisions

Part/ Article	Provision
Preamble.	To secure to all its citizens EQUALITY of status and opportunity.
Fundamental Rights	
Article 12 Definition of “the State”	State aid, control and regulation so impregnating a private activity as to give it the color of “State action” (M.C.Mehta v.UOI)
Article 14: Equality before law	Equality before law invoked to regulate rules of admission (G.Beena v. A.P.University of Health Sc. AIR 1990 AP 252)
Article 19: Certain rights, including those to freedom of expression, must be safeguarded.	Right to freedom of speech, which has been interpreted as a Right to Know (L.K.Koolwal v. State of Rajasthan AIR 1988 Raj. 2)
Article 21: Protection of life and personal liberty	Article 21 of the Declaration of Human Rights guarantees everyone the “lesser elegances of human civilisation, right to dignity, to health and healthy environ, to clean water, to free education upto 14 years” (See also Nalla Thampi, 1985; Francis Coralie, 1981; Mehta 1987; Wadhera 1996; Unnikrishnan 1993; Mahendra 1997; etc.). Inextricable from the right to life itself is the right to a decent living. The case is Narendra Kumar v. State of Haryana, JT (1994) 2 SC 94. “Articles 19 and 21 are not watertight compartments,” Professor

Part/ Article	Provision
	D.D. Basu has marked. On the other hand, Article 21’s statement of “personal liberty” is the broadest in scope, including a wide range of protections, some of which are already guaranteed by Art.19. The legal expedition “from North Pole to South Pole,” from A.Gopalan to Maneka, is now accomplished. The Supreme Court has been following its judgement in Maneka’s case in future instances.
Article 29: Protection of interests of minorities	Minority protection via the guarantee of their cultural and educational rights. While Article 29(1) is often discussed in relation to India’s minorities, it really applies to “any segment of citizens living in the territory of India.” As Ray, C.J., noted in Ahmedabad St. Xavier College Society v. State of Gujarat, AIR 1974 SC 1389, this might cover the vast majority of people.
Article 30(1): Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions	The right of underrepresented groups to form and run educational institutions. The right guaranteed in this article is governed by local law. Case of Virendra Nath v. Delhi, 1990, 2 S.C.C. 307, and the information included below should not be construed as supporting illegal or improper conduct. This thorough explanation of the law is supported by several precedent cases, including Kerala Education Bill, In re. AIR 1958 SC 956 and St. Stephen’s College v. University of Delhi. Article does not contradict with laws designed to ensure and maintain a high standard of

Part/ Article	Provision
	education. ^α [4]
Directive Principles of State Policy	
Article 39(f): Certain principles to be followed by the State	There are some guiding policies that the government should implement. It has been suggested that this Article may be used to interpret clauses related to the Fundamental Rights with the goal of guaranteeing a Welfare State.
Article 41: Right to work, to education and to public assistance in certain cases	The right to participate in the labor force, get an adequate education, and in certain situations receive necessary social services. According to Jacob v. Kerala Water Authority (1991) 1 SCC 28, the court must interpret a statute in a way that promotes Art.41.
Art. 45: Provision of obligatory and free education for all children	Within a decade following the Constitution's enactment, the state must ensure that all children up to the age of fourteen are enrolled in a public school system that provides a free and compulsory education. [5]
Art. 46: The advancement of the social and economic status of SC/ST and other disadvantaged groups.	The government has a responsibility to protect vulnerable segments of the population from discrimination and exploitation of all kinds, and to prioritize the economic and educational advancement of the country's Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
Art.51A(h): Fundamental Duties	It is of the utmost importance to foster an attitude of inquiry, humanism, and change from a young age. A court may resort to this Article to sustain a law when it is challenged on constitutional grounds. The case was Mohan v. Union of
Part/ Article	Provision
	India (1992) Supp 1 SCC 594. It may be used to clarify vague legal provisions. ^α Head Masters v.U.O.I AIR 1983 Cal. 448

Articles 246 & 254: Subject-matter of laws made by Parliament & by the Legislatures of the States & inconsistency of laws	Coextensive listing, with schooling included under the latter heading. As with any federal political organization, the Indian Constitution's scheme for dividing up the ability to make laws creates fascinating legal questions where federal and state laws overlap. The test of repugnancy is only applicable when the legislation in question is a topic on the concurrent list. [6]
Article 280: Finance Commission	The State's Panchayat and Municipalities may both benefit from increased resources from The Consolidated Fund, which the Finance Commission can help propose ways to increase.
Article 337: Grants for the benefit of the Anglo-Indian community's education are set aside as a special provision.	Education funding for the Anglo-Indian community will remain at the same level as it was in the fiscal year ending on March 31, 1948, for at least the first three fiscal years after the implementation of this Constitution. Subsequent three-year periods may have awards that are ten percent lower than the prior one. As a specific concession to the Anglo-Indian community, such grants will stop 10 years after this Constitution takes effect. [7] Further, no school will be eligible for funding under this
Part/ Article	Provision
	article until they open up at least 40% of their yearly enrollment to people from backgrounds other than the Anglo-Indian majority.
Part XVII: Official language	Language is fundamental to Literacy and receives special attention in Article 350A, which calls for mother-tongue primary school education.

The 42nd, 73rd, 74th, and 83rd Amendment Acts are all examples of Constitutional changes with direct implications for the field of education. These changes concern the enabling of education's inclusion on the Concurrent List, the devolution of authority to local organizations, and the formalization of primary education as a Fundamental Right (from its present status of Directive Principles though this has been ruled as such through judicial interpretation even otherwise).

EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Since '*Equality of Opportunity*' is a basic feature of the Constitution, being a part of the Preamble itself, judicial interpretation has been sought on the different facets of this principle of equality of educational opportunity. For many, egalitarianism in education is seen as a powerful force for the achievement of a just, more equitable society through its contribution to greater social mobility, the 'breaking of any connection between the distribution of education and distribution of personal income' (Blaug). Yet the "*equality of education*" concept can be given a variety of interpretations, each leading to different policy outcomes. In particular, "*equality of education*" may concern equality of access to education, equality of educational treatment or equality of ultimate educational performance.[8] Our Courts have wrestled with this problem in the face of affirmative action or what is known as 'positive discrimination' in favour of the deprived sections while at the same time preserving the needs of quality of education and fair play. The argument in this regard is somewhat on the following lines: "The liberal goal of providing education according to each individual's capacity or aptitude (rather than his socio-economic background) is unhelpful because the criteria used for identifying aptitudes, or 'intelligence' are themselves correlated with the social background. Hence society must adopt special methods to compensate for the deficiencies of the environment in which children grow and which account largely for their unequal educational performance; this would take the form of a national policy of 'positive discrimination' in favour of the underprivileged. The Constitutional provisions have come in very useful to resolve what are essentially political and ideological objectives and the policy conflict of parental free-choice versus educational equality (should education be available in accordance with parental willingness to pay or in relation to capacity to learn?), to avoid bringing about a marked decline in educational standards.[9]

LITIGATION AND EDUCATION

The huge volume of litigation and the mass of decided cases interpreting constitutional provisions are thus a sufficient testimony to the usefulness of constitutional provision in this vital field. The pronouncements of the Courts have been on varied subjects, affecting the quality and quantity of educational services not only encompassing service and management equities, but also such academic questions as medium of instruction access and autonomy of institutions. That the Government has sought to bring forward amendments also shows its imperative to continue to use this document to pursue this welfare objective. In fact, the sheer load of litigation may be proving a bane in one sense, negating the very purpose for which such Constitutional provisions are sought. It has also been lamented that follow-up action on Constitutional Amendments had either not taken place, or slow in implementation.[10]

EDUCATION AND JUDICIARY

Legislators and presidents do have primary responsibility for promoting economic transformation. However, the Constitution, the source of all power, mandates that judges catalyze and control, monitor and mandate by writs, orders and direction - vide Arts. 32 and 226 - so that they may have genuine faith and obedience to the Constitution and declare, "thy will be done." In the past, judicial interventions enforcing State commitments in education have been useful, and they will likely remain so in the future. [11]

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

In the Indian setting, "Non-Formal Education" has come to signify just an alternate delivery method for primary school students who are unable to attend regular classes. For this reason, the scope of non-formal education has been narrowed to re-enrolling formerly school-dropout youth. Such youth are typically referred to as "drop-outs" in the broadest sense. However, many of these kids end up dropping out of school for financial or cultural reasons. [12] Due to the primary school system's limited reach in India, many children may be labeled "stay-outs." Many kids are also what we may call "push-outs," in addition to "pull-outs" and "stay-outs." These kids don't see the value or appeal in elementary education. To achieve the constitutional mandate that all children up to the age of 14 get a free and obligatory education, we must ensure that all students receive an engaging and useful education. Millions of low-income youngsters in rural and urban areas cannot afford to attend school during the day for a number of reasons. Therefore, it is imperative to create an effective alternative educational system that guarantees all children access to a solid foundational education. One such option that has developed is non-traditional education. [13]

As early as 1976, nine educationally behind states throughout the nation were convinced to launch NFE centers as an alternative to traditional Elementary Education. In 1988, when the National Policy on Education (1986) was implemented, the Central Government backed a nationwide program of Non-Formal Education in places such as urban slums, rural areas, deserts, and hills. State governments and nonprofits with an educational focus, especially in remote or underserved communities, were expected to actively participate in the Non-Formal Education plan. [14]

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

Basic Education for All has been an increasing national priority since 1986. In order to do this, the government has launched a number of elementary and primary school assistance programs. Based on what has been learned about the effectiveness of non-formal education since 1976, and especially

since 1988, it is now obvious that UE can only be realized if non-formal education is offered as an option to formal schooling. Although it has only met with moderate success, Non-Formal Education has won over many low-income parents in rural areas who want to educate their children but for whom the traditional, all-day school model is unaffordable. Non-Formal Education's viability has improved during the last eight years. The legitimacy and attractiveness of the Non-Formal Education project has been bolstered by the participation of approximately 650 volunteer Agencies. [15]

DEPARTMENT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN THE NCERT

In 1988, when the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) developed the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Non-Formal Education, the NCERT established a full-fledged Department of Non-Formal Education. Non-Formal Education was a subset of other categories until 1988. A formal Department was established to recognize Non-Formal Education's value as an alternative to traditional primary schooling. Since Non-Formal Education prioritized re-enrolling students from populations with high rates of illiteracy, this department was also tasked with managing the Education to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes program between the years of 1988 and 1995. Non-Formal and Alternative Education Department was established in 1995 after a reorganization and name change. This restructuring has confirmed the value of informal education as a complement to conventional primary schooling. The department is currently well-positioned to contribute significantly to the realization of the national aim of Universal Elementary Education..[16]

MAJOR ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT

The division was designated as a National Resource Centre for Non-Formal Education in light of the Central Scheme of Non-Formal Education that was put into place in 1988. The following are some of the duties and responsibilities of the division:

- Non-Formal Education Scheme Implementation Help for State and Voluntary Agencies Providing academic and technical support for state and voluntary agencies.
- Non-Formal Education personnel training and model evolution
- Creating resources and methods to put Non-Formal Education into practice
- Conducting basic and action research in all elements of Non-Formal Education

- Non-Formal Education Extension Services for State and Non-Profit Organizations
- Implementing a method for assessing students in informal settings
- Building and sustaining state-level infrastructure to support Non-Formal Education program implementation.

PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT FROM 1988-1996

In its eight years of operation, the department has worked to accomplish all of the aforementioned goals and objectives. In an effort to build academic and technical capacity in the States and among the Voluntary Agencies implementing Non-Formal Education, the Department has engaged in a wide range of initiatives. This document describes the division's many endeavors between the years 1988 and 1996. [17]

CONCLUSION

When we talk about "non-formal education," we're referring to any program outside of a school's official curriculum and institution that aims to broaden young people's knowledge, talents, aptitudes, and competences in areas like personal development, social skills, and civic engagement. Voluntary, ideally accessible to all, an organized process with educational goals, participatory and learner centered, with a focus on life skills and active citizenship, based on the involvement of both individual and group learning with a collective approach, and focused on the development of the whole person: these are the main characteristics of non-formal education. Because learning is seen as a continuous process throughout a person's life, learning involves understanding and enhancing skills, and if an individual does not make an effort to enhance his skills and aptitudes, then learning will not take place in an effective manner, it is understood that non-formal education contributes to the development of the abilities and skills of the individuals and the community at large.

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