



Srimanta Sankardev's Vision Of Value –Oriented Education In The Context Of The National Education Policy 2020

Momi Bharali

Assistant Professor

Department of Education

Silapathar Town College

Silapathar, Dhemaji, Assam, India

Abstract: In modern education, the emphasis on skill acquisition and academic achievement often overshadows ethical and moral development. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognizes this challenge and promotes value-based, holistic education aimed at nurturing responsible, ethical, and socially aware citizens. In this framework, the teachings of Srimanta Shankardev, a 15th–16th century saint, philosopher, and social reformer from Assam, hold special significance. Shankardev's philosophy, particularly through the Eka Sharana Nama Dharma, emphasized moral conduct, social equality, compassion, and community cohesion. By employing literature, music, drama, and community institutions, he effectively promoted value-based education in a culturally rooted and inclusive manner. This paper explores Shankardev's educational philosophy and its relevance to NEP 2020. Using a descriptive and analytical approach with secondary sources, the study demonstrates that Shankardev's principles provide practical insights for implementing holistic and value-oriented education in contemporary India.

Keywords: Shankardev, Value-Based Education, NEP 2020, Indian Knowledge System, Holistic Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a critical tool for shaping both knowledge and character. While contemporary education emphasizes cognitive skills and employability, moral and ethical learning often receives inadequate attention. This gap has significant societal implications, including declining civic responsibility, ethical dilemmas, and social disharmony. Recognizing the importance of holistic education, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the integration of ethical, cultural, and moral values alongside academic learning. India possesses a rich tradition of philosophical and educational thought, providing a fertile ground for value-based education. Srimanta Shankardev (1449–1568), a social and religious reformer from Assam, developed an inclusive, ethically driven educational vision through his philosophical and cultural movement. His teachings emphasized equality, compassion, and moral development while engaging communities through literature, music, and drama. This paper examines Shankardev's approach to value-based education and its relevance in implementing NEP 2020's vision of holistic learning.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on Shankardev primarily addresses his contributions to religion, literature, and social reform. Scholars such as Maheswar Neog (2004) and B. K. Barua (2015) highlight his efforts in promoting equality, social cohesion, and spiritual development through the Bhakti movement. Studies on value-based education emphasize moral, social, and emotional development as integral to learning, while NEP 2020 stresses holistic, culturally rooted, and ethically driven pedagogy. Despite this, limited research exists linking Shankardeva's educational philosophy directly to contemporary educational policy, indicating a need for exploration in this area.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study seeks to:

1. Explore Shankardev's conception of value-based education.
2. Analyze the NEP 2020 framework regarding ethical and moral education.
3. Examine the alignment of Shankardev's educational philosophy with NEP 2020 objectives.
4. Identify practical implications for integrating traditional value systems into modern education.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive-analytical research design. Secondary sources, including books, journal articles, and official policy documents (NEP 2020), form the primary material. Content analysis is used to interpret Shankardev's philosophy, examining its pedagogical relevance and alignment with contemporary value-based education frameworks.

5. SHANKARDEV'S CONCEPT OF VALUE-BASED EDUCATION

Shankardev's philosophy centered on the cultivation of ethical conduct, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness. He believed that education should foster personal transformation, promoting values such as truthfulness, humility, compassion, self-discipline, and respect for all. Education, according to Shankardeva, is incomplete without moral grounding, as intellectual development alone cannot ensure ethical behavior or social harmony. He opposed caste discrimination and social inequality, advocating universal access to spiritual and moral education. By promoting equality, social justice, and collective well-being, Shankardeva laid the foundation for a value-based educational framework that integrates personal, social, and ethical dimensions.

6. EDUCATIONAL METHODS OF SHANKARDEVA

Shankardeva employed innovative and culturally resonant methods to impart values. Key strategies included:

1. Cultural Arts: Use of Borgeet (devotional songs) and Ankia Naat (one-act plays) to communicate ethical principles and moral lessons.
2. Literature: Works such as Naam Ghosa and Bhakti Ratnavali conveyed universal values in simple, relatable language.
3. Community Institutions: Namghars (prayer halls) acted as centers for informal learning, moral dialogue, and collective reflection, promoting participation, cooperation, and social cohesion.
4. Experiential Learning: Education was grounded in everyday life, emphasizing practice over theoretical instruction, fostering character development, and socially responsible behavior.

These methods ensured that learning was inclusive, engaging, and value-oriented, making moral education accessible to all, irrespective of social background.

7. VALUE-BASED EDUCATION IN NEP 2020

NEP 2020 promotes holistic education that develops ethical, emotional, cognitive, and social capacities. Key elements include:

- Integration of human and constitutional values into curriculum.
- Emphasis on empathy, respect for diversity, and environmental stewardship.
- Promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems and local cultural practices.
- Encouragement of experiential, multidisciplinary learning using arts, literature, and community engagement.
- The policy stresses embedding moral and ethical education across all levels rather than teaching it as a separate subject, ensuring continuous reinforcement of values through educational experiences.

8. CONVERGENCE BETWEEN SHANKARDEV AND NEP 2020

Shankardev's philosophy aligns closely with NEP 2020 in several areas: Aspect Shankardev's Approach
NEP 2020 Vision

- Moral Development, Emphasis on truthfulness, humility, compassion.
- Ethical and value-based learning embedded in curriculum.
- Social Equity, rejection of caste discrimination, universal access.
- Inclusive and equitable education for all.
- Pedagogy, use of arts, storytelling, community institutions.
- Experiential, multidisciplinary, and culturally rooted learning.
- Focus on social responsibility, community service, development of responsible, empathetic, and socially engaged citizens.

This alignment suggests that Shankardev's educational model provides practical insights for implementing NEP 2020, particularly in promoting value-based and holistic education.

9. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR MODERN EDUCATION

Integrating Shankardev's principles into contemporary education can be achieved through:

1. Curricular Design: Incorporating value education using cultural texts, stories, and historical examples.
2. Co-curricular Activities: Organizing dramatizations, music, and community projects to reinforce ethical lessons.
3. Teacher Training: Equipping teachers with methods to teach values through dialogue, storytelling, and experiential practices.
4. Community Engagement: Encouraging students to participate in social service and community-building activities, echoing Shankardev's Namghar model. Such integration ensures that students develop moral reasoning, social responsibility, and cultural awareness alongside academic competencies.

10. CONCLUSION

Shankardev's educational philosophy offers a timeless, culturally grounded framework for value-based education that complements NEP 2020. His emphasis on equality, moral integrity, and community engagement aligns with the policy's vision of holistic, inclusive, and ethically informed education. By adopting Shankardev-inspired pedagogical practices, educators can nurture responsible, compassionate, and socially conscious citizens. Integrating traditional value systems into modern curricula can strengthen moral education and advance the holistic goals of NEP 2020.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author of the paper declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

REFERENCES:

- [1] Government of India. 2020. National Education Policy 2020. Ministry of Education.
- [2] Barua, B. K. 2015. Srimanta Shankardev: His Life and Philosophy. Guwahati: Publication Board Assam.
- [3] Neog, M. 2004. Sankardeva and His Times. Guwahati: Lawyer's Book Stall.
- [4] NCERT 2021. Indian Knowledge Systems and Education. New Delhi: NCERT.

