

An overview of Nepalese Education and Development

Nabin Kumar Khadka

Technical Officer National Centre For Educational Development, Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

Abstract

Development paradigm is seen to have shifted from narrow focus on economic progress, infrastructure and agricultural innovations to an approach incorporating a greater emphasis on social and political issues. So development is taken as an intervention. It is a process involving major changes in the social structure, popular attitudes and natural institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, reduction of inequality, and eradication of poverty. Education is regarded as one of the most responsible factors for the change. How much education and development are tied to each other is therefore an issue of study. Planners of Nepal do claim that both development and education plans have been responding to each other. Ideally speaking, the contemporary documents reiterate this claim. This article tries to assess the education and development trends of Nepal together with comments over the claims by bringing the theories and philosophies together to bear the relevance. It also sheds light on how to make education and development responsive to each other.

Key Words

Education and development, Development theories, Responsive education and Development

Education and development

Development is generally taken as social, economic and political changes. It is a multidimensional process which can be interpreted as change from a less to a more desirable state. Accordingly the concerns with the development are essentially concerns with a program of social, political and economic transformation (Rizal & Yokota, 2006). But it has been viewed differently in different period of time through different viewpoints and lenses. In 1950s and 1960s development was highly taken as growth in GNP or per capita income. The development according to this paradigm was considered as a campaign associated with rapid economic growth so that the underdeveloped countries would catch up with the industrialized ones (Pandey, 2000). Later in 1970s, modernization perspective on development brought the concept of development as 'modernization of traditional societies' (ibid: 167). Sustainable paradigm link the development with the environmental aptness ensuring the growth not jeopardizing the growth possibilities of future development. Similarly Sen emphasizes that 'development has to be more concerned with enhancing the lives we lead and the freedom we enjoy' (Todaro & Smith: 2006).

The above discussion points out the multidimensional paradigm of development but it is the million dollar question on what the role of education is for their development and whether they are responsive to each other.

२४७

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So far as education is concerned, it is the most important factor for national development. A country is development socially, economically and technologically through the development of education. All most all the countries are developed as they have the good education system which might have contributed to keep them socioeconomically better. Good education provides basic foundations for national development. Khaniya (2007) claims that no countries can achieve economic and social advancement at a considerable level without achieving high functional literacy. According to Bista (2001:116), 'Education itself is also of critical importance in the study of development because it is through education that the nation's manpower resources are improved and various skills necessary for the development acquired'.

Education enhances the quality and productive capacity of the people to meet human resources. It improves individual lives, increases productivity and enriches wider society. It also produces quality human resources needed for modernizing society (Singh, n.d.).

The discussion above points out the importance of education in the national development and opens up the discourse of the idea that education and development should respond to each other. The education should incorporate the attributes that people's aspiration to development would be fulfilled and development should facilitate the ideology, infrastructure and technology necessary for the development. This discourse is now tried to analyze in terms of Nepalese context of development and education plans.

Nepalese Context: Reality and Relations

The development of education in Nepal can be traced back to the ancient time. The Buddhist and Hindu system of education were in use in those days. Education traditionally consisted of learning, rituals prayers and reading of religious texts (Bista, 2001). Late Sanskrit Pathasalas or schools were introduced. The schools taught mostly Sanskrit text, puranas and ritual documents. Rana period during (1846-1950) is generally taken as years of opposition to education though some schools were established in the period. In this era when western countries were expanding their system of learning Ranas were attempting to remove nearly all the vestiges of education in Nepal (Bhatta, 2007). In 1957 Nepal was able to shed the yoke of Rana rule that brought the two post-liberation realities: 'the revolution of rising expectation' and 'the steep ascent' of development. Development to then was not only a national goal but also a class imperative (Shrestha: 2009). This changes resulted from 1950-51 were of great importance for the educational development of Nepal. After this the importance was given to expand the education/ schooling in Nepal. Expanding schooling in this era was a symbol of modernity and development. Similarly as Nepalese education development, only limited development activities with limited scope and implications were made undertaken before 1951. Serious efforts however were made only after the establishment of a planning commission in 1955 (Pant, 1968).

The first five year plan in 1956 was the first planned measures to tap the economic resources of the country. It had based its intention on the economic and the social development of Nepal. But importance was given to the development of transport and communication. Similarly the first five year plan for education was based on the national educational planning commission report which played a vital role in the development of education in all sides (Bhatta, 2007)

२४८

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The second plan realized that economic development is assuredly an important pre-requisite for a nationwide educational drive. Similarly without education economic progress cannot be fully attained. So it has the first objective to increase the product of the agriculture and industrial sector so as to cope with the needs of the population expansion. (Sharma, 2065). Factory, industries etc. are necessary for the economic development and they need more technicians. So it is necessary to educate a large number of technicians according to the needs of different sectors of development and construction.

The third five year plan had launched the broad objectives to create rapid economic growth, balanced development, improve necessary condition for a welfare state, and provide economic equality and social justice to the public. It had included education as a part of social justice (Bhata, 2007).

The fourth plan had also focused development of transportation and communication. One of the great innovations in 1970s was the new education system plan that brought most schools and colleges into an integrated national structure under government control (Whelpton, 2005)

The fifth five year plan aimed to increase productive human resources, mobilize human resources to the maximum and maintain regional balance in development. So far as educational emphasis is concerned it had focused the primary education.

The sixth five year plan brought the concept of basic need approach and integrated rural development policy. It stated objectives with regard to the industrial development to create a viable industrial sector for absorbing the manpower and also to attempt to be self-reliant in daily necessities as well as in the supply of some building materials (Khadka, 1994). So far as education sector objective is concerned, it had an objective to make adult education vocational and functional. To increase people's participation and effectiveness in school education was another objective.

The seventh five year plan had priority projects on education as expansion of primary education and vocational educational along with providing additional technical subjects and raising qualitative standard of education. So far as overall objective is concerned it had aimed to increase production rate, to create the employment opportunity and to provide the minimal needs of the people. The eighth plan had h objective of sustainable economic growth rate, poverty reduction and reduction of regional imbalances having priority on agricultural intensiveness and diversification, energy development, rural infrastructure development, employment creation and manpower development etc. On the other hand the priority of education in his plan has remained as to develop and extend basic and primary education, increase opportunities of technical education and vocational training, to raise the quality of education by instructional system and to extend facilities for study in technical subjects (Sharma, 2065; Bhatta, 2007).

Ninth plan had the objective of poverty alleviation. In such cases education in this plan had remained a main policy for utilizing education as an effective means to poverty alleviation and all round development. In this plan special emphasis on education was given towards availability of equal opportunity in education, improvement in qualitative standard, enhancement in internal and external capacity and making education development oriented. The tenth plan had the long term concept of education sector. It had been oriented in assigning school management to the

२४९

Teacher Education 2072

local level as it has been necessary to make education more comprehensive, make the role of the private sector effective, relevant and ensure public participation in the formulation of appropriate policies and plans, management, implementation and monitoring to maintain the quality (NPC tenth plan, 2002).

The three year interim plan has the strategies to give special emphasis on relief, reconstruction, employment oriented pro-poor and broad based economic growth, promote social development. The education of modern time is to make social uplifting through the expansion of latent talents and potentials of the individual and to prepare the citizen to be able to perform in a scientific way by owning human values and beliefs. It had focused literacy, post literacy and income generating programs, alternative schooling, pre-primary/ ECD, Basic education and secondary education respectively (NPC: 2007, pp 261-273).

The three year plan 067/68-69/70 has focused the balanced economic growth with view of would be federal state of Nepal. It also aimed to have balanced physical and social infrastructure development, development of tourism, industries and export trade with the priority in agriculture. It also aims for inclusiveness and good governance. So far as education in this plan is concerned it focused on the equitable access to education, implement MGD and other determination, making education useful, relevant and employment oriented. It had the major programs on restructuring school education, compulsory basic education, quality improvement schemes, secondary, non-formal, ECD and TEVT programs (NPC, 068).

The thirteenth Plan 070/71-072/73 aims to make common people realise the relative change by decreasing the economic and human poverty. It is to be done with the sustained economic growth by utilizing of private, public and co-operative sector contribution to the development process. Moreover, it focuses physical infrastructure development, good governance, empowerment of targeted groups and regions; and increasing of the access, utility and quality on social service sectors. So far as education on the plan is concerned, it aims to develop capable, dutiful and productive human resources with the development of inclusive, equitable and quality education system that are compatible to overcome the 21st century obstacles. It also tries to expand equal access to all levels and subjects making education qualitative, creative, practical, relevant and inclusive. It gives priority to effectively implement the free and compulsory education in the basic level and integrative 9 -12 secondary education system. Focus is also given to eradicate illiteracy from Nepal through 'Literate Nepal Campaign'(GoN,2071).

२६०

Major Focus of Five-year Plans on Development and Education in Nepal

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Development plans	Development focus	Education focus
First five year plan	-Emphasis on economic and social development -Particular focus on transport and communication	-university planning commission appointment -establishment of college of agriculture, medical and engineering - emphasis on education for economic development
Second three year plan	-economic progress is pre-requisite for a national educational drive. - increase in the production of agriculture and industry	-technical manpower development for economic development

Third five year plan	-focus on the development of transportation and communication -balanced development and welfare state	- focus on expansion of primary school - aim to provide primary education to 40% of the school age children
Forth five year plan	-focus on development of transportation and infrastructure, agriculture, land reform and development of industries.	-a great innovation of the new education system plan - focus on primary education, building construction, teaching material and curriculum improvement.
Fifth five year plan	-increase productive human resources, regional balance in the development	- focus on primary and adult education -vocational model school in each development region -extracurricular and scholarship provision
Sixth five year plan	-Basic need approach, integrated rural development, -industrial development to create a viable industrial sector.	-aimed to make adult education vocational and functional -also emphasis on primary, lower secondary and secondary education
Seventh five year plan	-aimed to increase production rate, employment opportunity and provide minimal needs of the people	-expansion of primary and vocational education -higher education on additional technical subjects -teacher training and educational material production
Eighth five year plan	-Poverty reduction, sustained economic growth, reduction of regional imbalances with agricultural diversification, energy development, rural infrastructure development and man power development.	-priority to develop and extend basic and primary education, increase opportunity of technical and vocational training -enhancing the effectiveness of instructional system - Sanskrit University established
Ninth five year plan	All the efforts and objective related to poverty alleviation	-education as an effective means of poverty alleviation -expanding secondary and higher secondary education for the development of the country -develop the human resource for the development
Tenth five year plan	- Strategies for high sustained economic growth, social sector and infrastructure development -targeted programs	-expand the quality of education according to the needs of country development -EFA and making education accessible to all
Three year interim plan 2007/8-2009/10	Special emphasis on relief, reconstruction and social development	Focus literacy, post literacy and income generating programs -make all the citizen literate ensuring access to all -develop higher education in line with research oriented
Three year plan 067/68-69/70	-Sustained economic growth, balanced physical and social infrastructure development -development of tourism, industry with priority to agriculture -inclusiveness and good governance	-focus on equitable access to education, implementing MDG and other commitment, focus on making education useful to life, relevant and employment oriented

Thirteenth Plan 070/71-072/73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Realised change in the common people with relative decrease in the economic and human poverty. - sustained economic growth through the private, public and co-operative sector in the development process. - Focuses physical infrastructure development, good governance, empowerment of targeted groups and regions; and increasing of the access, utility and quality on social service sectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -develop capable, dutiful and productive human resources with the development of inclusive, equitable and quality education system - Expand equal access to all levels and subjects making education qualitative, creative, practical, relevant and inclusive. -Priority to effectively implement the free and compulsory education in the basic level and integrative 9 -12 secondary education system. -Focus to eradicate illiteracy from Nepal through 'Literate Nepal Campaign'.
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Source: Bhatta: 2007, Sharma: 2065, Five year plans of NPC

The above table shows that education is influenced by the development paradigm/ trends adopted over the period. To take as an example, the first three five year plans had been influenced by the growth paradigm according to which the development of infrastructure and communication was focused. As a result educational objectives were also directed to technical manpower development. While basic needs approach and integrated development approach was emphasized, the educational focus was for the vocational and functional adult education along with school education. So far as having poverty reduction strategies in development, educational objectives are also tuned to that way. Now the development goals have to have sustained economic growth, balanced physical and social infrastructure development, inclusiveness and good governance along with the development of tourism and industry, the education objectives are also directed towards equitable access and inclusiveness in education making education relevant to life and employment oriented. In this way educational objectives are seen directly tuned to fulfill the objectives of the development. So in my view, education and development have been going together.

Development and Education through Theoretical and Philosophical Lens

Education and development are always guided through certain theories and philosophies relative to those periods. Development paradigms have broad coverage whose objectives are reflected in education so as to fulfill them through the means of education. So far as talking about theories and philosophies, reconstruction and growth theory in 1950s focused on technological development and transfer along with growth of GNP. Later it is realized that growth theory could not contribute to the overall equitable development. Integrated development was focused along with basic needs and participatory development approach in education and development (Khadka, 1994).. Later poverty reduction strategies influenced the development and education. Most of the above development models were state-led development model. After 1980s market-led/neo-liberalization model was adopted and now public-private partnership model is in the center of education and economic development as it is realized that both state-led and market-led model alone can't contribute for the overall economic and educational development. On these theoretical backstops, Nepal's economic and educational developments are analyzed below.

There were some efforts to develop and modernize education and development process before

1950s but real and extensive programs came only after 1950. In the post 1950, we see the formation of ideas of the nation and of development with the cultural and social traits associated with the ruling groups (Bista, 2001). Education in the late fifties and sixties expanded rapidly and opened to greater ranges of people. According to Bista (2001:122), ‘the main impetus for change in the realm of education at that time came not from the ministry or from the existing school and college system but from the initiative of people’. So far as development is concerned, development of infrastructure and communication was focused in the early period. Increasing GDP with the growing agriculture production in Terai had been given priority (Khadka, 1994). So the education and development in fifties and sixties were highly driven by reconstruction approach and growth approach through technology development and transfer. So industries, manufacturing factories and vocational test of education were focused in those days.

Development in 1970s in Nepal was characterized by regional planning and ‘distribution with growth’ concept. Integrated rural development approach was focused and education was taken as an element of development (ibid). 1980s was characterized by basic needs approach and participatory development approach along with co-operative movement and evolution of civil societies. Non-formal education and mass education were focused in the period.

The relationship between education and the global vision of development is maintained immensely in the 1990s that linked the level of education and fertility levels, farming productivity and child mortality. This discourse with the promotion of education in Nepal linked even more strongly to the idea of development (Cadell, 2007). Similarly NEC Report in 1992 highlighted the education as ‘a key role to play in bringing about the social changes, in the reconstruction of the nation as a whole (p1). Poverty alleviation through different interventions to the targeted groups of people and empowering them through education was emphasized. Apart from these people centered and sustainable development approach with human rights, good governances and decentralization was noticeable in this period.

The effects of globalization can be visible 2000 onwards. So development and education were guided through those perspectives. More focus was given to expand educational and developmental access to all, particularly focusing on excluded and disadvantaged groups, women and the poor. People led right based development approach like EFA, MDGs, Inclusion, SSRP and donor harmonization are focused nowadays. In this way development and education of Nepal are characterized/ influenced by different paradigms in different periods.

Synthesis Summary of Theoretical outlook in Education and Development of Nepal

Theory	Education motives	Development motives
Growth theory (generally in 1950s)	-educational expansion -test of vocational education	-infrastructure and communication development -growth through technological development and transfer
Integration and Rural development (1960s/70s)	-education as an instrument of development -mass education and non-formal education	-distribution with growth -integrated rural development approach
Neo.liberalization (1980s/90s)	-emergence and emphasis on private schooling	-market-led development -poverty reduction strategies

२५

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Public Partnership (PPP) (2000s)	Private	The concept of the efforts of educational development through public private partnership -concept of inclusiveness	-Public private partnership in development works -people led right based development -inclusiveness
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Source: Bhatta (2007), Khadka (1994), Bista (2001)

In my opinion these paradigms in different periods focus certain things or aspects both in education and development. So we can say that development and education are interpretations and are always relative. Education is a speed of development but we are not planting it properly. So is the reason education is now unable to address the adverse effects of development and development on the other hand could not reach to all people's access. Dalits, madhesi, women, and the poor are excluded from both education and development. As a result there is extreme dissatisfaction within those groups of people. In this context now it is necessary to take education as an inherent right of each child and the states prime responsibility. It should be able to develop the ability to think critically and creatively and have the knowledge, confidence and skills to make independent and useful contribution to society. Such education should be equitable. If so the education really contributes the overall development of a country with a sustained growth and they respond to each other.

A Responsive Education Model

Education plays a crucial role in promoting peoples' participation and development. Development is possible only if there is democracy and quality education. Development is possible when the system of education is in line with democratic polity; and development in a democratic polity depends upon the participation of people which largely depends upon how people learn the skills of participation through education (Khaniya, 2007). It is also the true that educated and civilized man power is the assets and the real agents of the development and prosperity of the nation. Multi dimensional development, progress and prosperity depend upon the educational quality, relevancy and practicability along with the policy adopted by a country. On the other hand development also should respond to education. The education devoid of the modern technology and infrastructure would be lame to the development. Education should also incorporate all aspects of development. Moreover there should be good governance for the implementation of both education and development; and make responsive to each other. In this regards as Ananda Aditya (n.d.) says:

२५४

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Education, governance and growth are reciprocally related in significant ways with a critical bearing upon the overall process of nation's course of development. If, therefore, the pace of development is to be sustained, policies related to education, governance and economic growth must be reformulated and implemented in a substantively new framework: policies that materialize the goal of mass education, policies that can affect the objective of good governance, and policies that fuel up the process of vibrant economic growth. Only the synergy that such policies engender can transform the pace and movement of nation's development (pp.100).

So to make the education and responsive to each other, it is necessary to reformulate the broad policy of education, governance and development. It should reflect the current needs and long term vision of the nation on education and development based on the ground needs, reality

and ideology. Likewise education should also have quality, relevancy, practical, need based, inclusive having adopted the modern –technology and infrastructure. Similarly the development should also be multidimensional dealing with overall progress and prosperity. If the education is tuned to fulfill th development objectives, it would really be responsive to development.

For such responsive model, I think it is necessary to reorient our curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation and monitoring and supervision. So far as our curriculum is concerned it should balance the global and local tension, should be multidimensional and inclusive finely tuned to address the needs of the society and the individual development. It should also link the global vision of the development. Likewise our pedagogy should also be inclusive, practical, use based along with the adoption of the modern infrastructure and technology of the development. The evaluation of education and development should also measure the access, quality, relevancy and practicality of both of them. Above all, the monitoring and supervision mechanism should also be linked with education and development for quality, feedback and relevancy. The nalysis ans application mechanism in supervision should also be effective foe the implementation. In this way, if we maintain the coherent relationship among curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation and monitoring and supervision, the education and development would really be responsive to each other.

Moreover education should address the problems of development contributing towards developing an understanding of different meanings, theories and practices of development and their relationship with the process education, by promoting the idea of development from within, and by supporting the development that from both local knowledge and practices as well as modern technological advances. The education should carry all those aspects. The synergy gained through all those components makes the development and education responsive to each other.

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