



## Developing Curiosity Quotient to Enhance Learning as per National Education Policy 2020

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### Abstract

A child is curious by nature about the world they live in. They want to know the WHYs and HOWs of everything they observe in their surroundings. Incidentally, this quality of curiosity that the child possesses can fuel a child's desire to learn. Instilling a passion for learning can bring drastic changes in the life of the student. Nurturing your child's curiosity is an important tool through which you can help them become a lifelong learner. Curiosity boosts learning and helps in strengthening memory. Our national educational policy (NEP 2020) suggested the various methods through which curiosity can be developed in the students. Curiosity Quotient will be an emerging parameter for preparing and instilling the skills of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This paper focuses on knowing what is curiosity quotient is, how can it help the learners to enhance their learning, and some practical ways in which the curiosity quotient of a child can be encouraged by teachers keeping in mind the suggestions from our National Educational Policy 2020.

**Keywords:** Curiosity, Curiosity Quotient, NEP 2020, Developing Curiosity Quotient.

### Introduction

The world goes beyond the standard parameters for measuring the intelligence quotient, social quotient, and emotional quotient of an individual. There are new emerging quotients that need to be catered to for enhancing 21st-century skills among learners. Curiosity is an intrinsic and indispensable part of human nature. It is the primary motivation to seek new information and knowledge. A curiosity of an individual holds the attention and leads to the interest among them. Before a child can speak, he explores the things around him by paying close attention, physically approaching, and finding the cause and effect of his attempts on the objects, it is continued unless the child speaks and asks verbal questions about the things happening around him. It is a natural form of learning to ask questions. The interaction between the parent and child helps in learning and gathering information about the world they live in.

As a child grows older and is placed in a formal setting of school education. He lacks one-to-one interaction with his teacher as the ratio of instructor and student increases in the formal set-up. Also, our traditional way of respecting authority does not allow the child to ask questions. These impose some restrictions on his way of learning by asking questions which results in diminishing the student's natural curiosity and enhances delivering and transferring knowledge in one way. The traditional practice of teaching emphasizes memorization through the 'chalk and talk' lecture method.

Therefore, it becomes of utmost importance to again shift to the parent-child interaction type of educational learning. This can be done by arousing and sustaining curiosity among the learners.

Curiosity is an important aspect of learning. When a child is curious about any subject, they are self-motivated, learn better, and tend to have higher retention of the subject. Encouraging students to embrace their curiosity is a significant part of education. In the early twentieth century, many psychologists like William James, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky understood the exploratory behavior of learners and developed their theories. Jean Piaget emphasized the importance of curiosity by using various terms like schemas, assimilation, and accommodation to understand their childhood cognitive development and the processing of their cognition. Whereas Lev Vygotsky emphasized the role of More Knowledgeable Others (MKO) in encouraging and trapping the curiosity of the students. Though the literal term was not used in their theories they have focused on similar areas.

### Understanding Curiosity and Curiosity Quotient

Most of the advanced discoveries and outstanding inventions of the past are the result of curiosity. The Latin word "curiosus," which means "careful, diligent; inquiring eagerly, meddlesome," is the source from which the word curiosity originated (online etymology dictionary). Curiosity is the will

to know or learn about something; it is the quality of being inquisitive.

The term 'Curiosity Quotient' was coined by Thomas Friedman. According to Friedman, curiosity and passion are crucial factors in the education system. These factors help the learner to be self-motivated to learn and to know how to learn. Friedman states, "Give me the kid with a passion to learn and a curiosity to discover, and I will take him or her over the less passionate kid with a huge IQ every day of the week." IQ "still matters, but CQ and PQ matter even more." Friedman further states that "it is more important to be passionate and curious than to be merely smart." (Friedman, 2007). Intelligence Quotient may help to be predictive of a person's critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities.

According to Dr. Thomas Chamorro-Premuzic (2014), the "curiosity quotient is a measure of how inquisitive and open to new experiences you are." People with higher curiosity are generally more accepting of indistinctness. They make higher levels of intellectual investment and knowledge acquisition. Curiosity Quotient helps to generate more original ideas and is easier to cultivate than IQ. The antidote to a broken education system is to empower students to self-learn and be life-long learners, which requires building their CQ.

### Emerging Curiosity Quotient Parameter as suggested by National Education Policy 2020

The National Educational Policy 2020 emphasizes problem-solving and critical thinking skills among the students which can only be enhanced by developing a curiosity quotient. The goal of our traditional Indian educational system, which is founded on the philosophy of question-and-answer sessions, is to foster in students an inquisitive, imaginative, and critical-thinking mindset. It is therefore argued that this technique ought to be a part of our contemporary educational system.

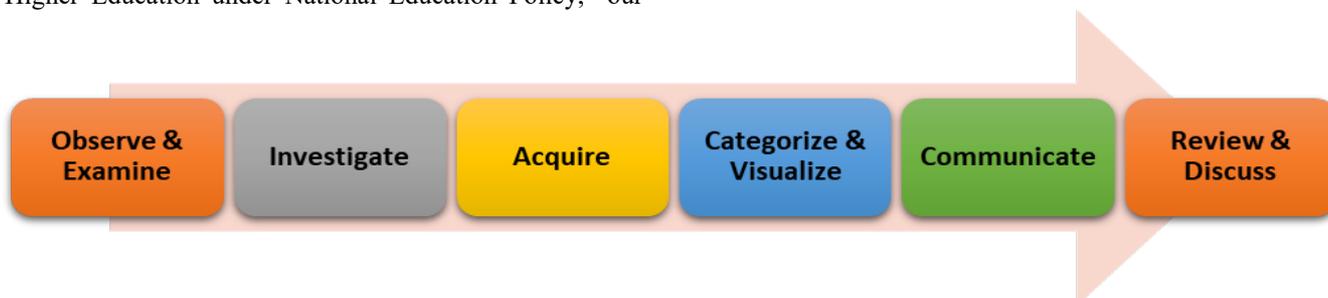
In his remarks at the "Conclave on Transformational Reforms in Higher Education under National Education Policy," our

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that to help kids learn and be equipped to live committed lives, teachers should place a strong emphasis on inquiry-based, discovery-based, discussion-based, and analysis-based teaching strategies. Curiosity building will increase the urge in children to participate in the classroom. All these years we have encouraged herd mentality instead of encouraging values of curiosity and imagination. In today's time, when there is a flood of information and content, it is important to understand what is necessary and what is not. It is the role of teachers to act as a facilitator. Also, the situations brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have made the world realize the importance of adaptability and innovations required in the field of education. A key focus area of NEP 2020 is transforming the 'quality of teaching, where teachers will be empowered to lead drastic change'.

A teacher can make use of the curiosity-based learning model as a pedagogical tool to teach a concept. According to Bussakorn Binson (2009), "Curiosity Based Learning has six different steps-

- a) Observe and examine the object; then compose a written description;
- b) Investigate others responses; then review the differences and similarities;
- c) Acquire more knowledge of the object from additional sources;
- d) Categorize and visualize: create a diagram of knowledge data;
- e) Communicate verbal and visual presentation with peer review;
- f) Review and discussion: instructor discloses the program's true intent".

Through this diagram, curiosity-based learning can be understood-



### Strategies for Teachers to Incorporate Curiosity Quotient among Learners:

We live in a world where we are all busy doing the tasks which are given to us without being curious about them. Knowing the unknown can help the individual to be open to various experiences. Most of us, don't know how to fuel the curiosity quotient among students. Fortunately, there are numerous ways in which Curiosity Quotient can be built in the students which are as follows:

i). **Read Aloud:** This strategy can be used to develop curiosity among learners where the teacher can read the content to the students, can pause, and ask various questions or give different situations. For instance, while reading a story, the teacher can ask students about the way they have ended the story. With this technique, they can develop imaginative and critical thinking skills among the students and allow them to think about the situation. Also, the habit of reading will enable them to explore more things on their own.

ii). **Observation:** Let the child develop the skill of observation. As a teacher, you can ask the children to observe the minute details of the things happening around them while they return home after school, or they can be given a task to grow a plant and observe the developmental pattern of the plant. Instilling observation skills might help them to develop curiosity about the things that are happening around them.

iii). **Encourage Questioning:** The curiosity begins with the questioning, why the sun rises from the east, why the sky is blue, why the rise spelled rise and not rice etc. Instead of imparting direct knowledge to students through lecturing, try to design your lesson where the child can ask questions or search the information about the different questions they encounter in their class. As a teacher, always end the class by posing a brainstorming question they need to discover.

iv). **Allow Them to Make Mistakes:** Let the child make mistakes while working on any task and learn from it.

They might come up with a better solution to a problem. Mistakes should not stop them to learn or attempt challenging tasks. When they will learn from their mistakes, they will have better clarity about the task.

- v). **Give Freedom:** At times, the child wants to be free and liberal to experiment with their task. They don't like restrictions or to follow any kind of rule. So even though as a teacher you have some strict norms for your students, it is also important to let children make their own decisions. Let them come up with their innovative ideas rather than the following routine. Don't cage them by imposing your perspectives.
- vi). **Be Flexible:** As a teacher, you must be flexible to accept the different ideas from the students. One must not be rigid in accepting the assignment in the same pattern, having the same perspectives, accepting the expected answers only, etc. Instead, ask them to justify their way of doing it.
- vii). **Deep Understanding:** Provide the students with lots of opportunities and learning resources to deepen their understanding of a subject of their interest. It will help them to develop their curiosity towards the subject. Also, deeper understanding could lead to better application of the content knowledge.
- viii). **Social Connection:** Allow the students to build a social connection with the community members. Let the child learn and explore things by interacting with their teachers, experts, peers, and other stakeholders. The social connection will help to satisfy the natural curiosity of a child.
- ix). **Challenging Task:** Students can be given a challenging task. Teachers can include project-based learning, experiential learning, activity-based learning, etc. by providing the different tasks related to it. The challenging task will help to unleash curiosity among the students.
- x). **Connecting to Previous Knowledge:** Let the child construct their knowledge and understanding of the concept through the materials being provided to them by teachers. Teachers can act as a facilitator and could help to connect their previous knowledge to new knowledge. For instance, the teacher can provide different materials like clay, toothpicks, etc, and ask students to think and develop the 3D shapes out of it. The student will be curious and attempt all the possible ways to make something out of provided materials.

## Conclusion

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aimed to bring a drastic transformation in the education system of India. The major role and responsibilities of bringing the change lie on the shoulder of teachers and teacher educators. A teacher must be well-trained in her content knowledge, various teaching-learning methodologies, towards the integration of technologies and discovering all the parameters which can help the student to learn and apply his content knowledge in their day-to-day life. NEP 2020 is aimed at empowering the youth to be citizens who can compete at a global level. Curiosity Quotient (CQ) can be an emerging parameter that can make this dream of NEP 2020 possible.

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