



A Two - Day  
National Conference organised by



**Children's Research University &  
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad**

on

## **Gijubhai Badheka & NEP 2020: Academic Trends in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bharat**

**26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2025**



## Foreword: A Confluence of Visionaries for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bharat

The Gijubhai Badheka Chair at Children's Research University (CRU) is proud to present a landmark national conference, "Gijubhai Badheka and NEP 2020: Academic Trends in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bharat." This pivotal event, organised with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University (BAOU), Ahmedabad, will serve as a national platform for academic discourse and collaborative scholarship. The conference's central theme explores the profound philosophical connections between the pioneering educational legacy of Gijubhai Badheka and the transformative framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This initiative by Children's Research University, supported by a distinguished partner, underscores a deep commitment to shaping the future of education in India by drawing inspiration from both historical wisdom and modern policy.

Children's Research University is the intellectual home of this conference. The university's Gijubhai Badheka Chair embodies the vision of its namesake, a legendary figure who championed a child-centric, joyful, and fear-free approach to learning. Established under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, CRU is a unique university dedicated to the holistic development of children and youth, guided by the principles of "Every Child Matters". The university's specialised focus on innovative learning platforms, curriculum development, and traditional knowledge integration provides the foundational spirit for this academic gathering.

The conference itself will be held at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University (BAOU), Ahmedabad. Established in 1994 and accredited with a prestigious A++ grade by NAAC, BAOU has a long-standing mission to advance learning and knowledge, providing opportunities for higher education to all learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background. The university operates via a three-tier structure: Headquarter, 8 Regional Centres and 300+ Learner Support Centres across Gujarat. BAOU provides free education to diverse stakeholders & has specialised centres, including Atri - Centre for Equal Opportunities and Inclusive Education and Gargi - Centre for Holistic Development of Women. It supports disabled learners with physical and digital facilities, a disabled-friendly website.

### The Enduring Legacy of Gijubhai Badheka

Gijubhai Badheka (1885-1939) was a visionary Indian educator who fundamentally challenged the rigid, colonial-era educational system. His philosophy was rooted in the radical idea that education should be a process of natural growth and a life-long journey, not a standardised, one-size-fits-all system. He famously viewed education as the "hunger of the soul" and believed that a child's development should be driven by their own curiosity and independent action. His pedagogy, known as Bal-Mimamsa, centred on creating a fear-free and joyous environment where children could learn through experience, experiment, and observation.



Gijubhai's teaching methods were a dramatic departure from the norm. He rejected the traditional, lecture-based approach and instead used conversation, games, music, storytelling, gardening, and nature tours to impart knowledge. He believed that knowledge acquired in this way was permanent and led to a complete, all-round, and emotional development of the child. His model transformed the guru-shishya hierarchy into a collaborative community where teachers became guides who helped children follow their instincts rather than forcing them into a rigid curriculum. This emphasis on a teacher's rapport with students and their willingness to experiment with pedagogy is the heart of his classic book, Divaswapna. Gijubhai also valued the integration of indigenous knowledge systems and the importance of mother-tongue instruction, reflecting a deep respect for India's unique cultural and philosophical traditions.



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## NEP 2020: The Blueprint for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bharat



The National Education Policy 2020 is a comprehensive and forward-looking document that aims to reshape India's education system to meet the challenges of the modern world. Its vision is to create an education system rooted in the Indian ethos that directly contributes to transforming India into a vibrant knowledge society. The policy is built on a set of core principles that include access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability.

NEP 2020 introduces a series of key reforms designed to move away from the decades-old system of rote memorisation. It replaces the conventional 10+2 structure with a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure, which is more aligned with the stages of a child's cognitive development. The policy promotes a holistic and multidisciplinary approach, encouraging students to engage with arts, sports, and vocational education alongside traditional academics. It places the highest priority on achieving universal foundational literacy and numeracy, recognising these as the most basic learning requirements for all. The policy also strongly advocates for experiential and inquiry-based learning, aiming to foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills in learners from an early age.

The following table provides a clear overview of how Gijubhai's principles are mirrored in the modern context of NEP 2020:

Gijubhai Badheka's Principles	Their NEP 2020 Counterparts
Child-Centric Education	5+3+3+4 Curricular Structure, with emphasis on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
Play and Experiential Learning	Activity-based and inquiry-based pedagogy; use of toys, stories, and games
Fear-Free Environment	Shift from summative assessment to Holistic Progress Cards to reduce anxiety and label-based stigma
Teacher as a Guide	Emphasis on teacher professional development, autonomy, and the empowerment of educators
Mother-Tongue Instruction	Three-language formula and recommendation for instruction in the mother tongue up to Grade 5
Integration of Indigenous Knowledge	Inclusion of Indian knowledge systems, culture, and values in the curriculum
Holistic Development	Focus on the development of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical capabilities of learners

### Primary Objectives

The primary goal is to foster a national dialogue on the historical roots of child-centric education in India, explicitly linking the legacy of Gijubhai Badheka to the foundational principles of NEP 2020. Participants will be encouraged to engage in discussions on how traditional wisdom can be seamlessly integrated with contemporary educational policy. The conference also aims to explore the practical implementation of NEP 2020's reforms, particularly in the areas of experiential learning, multidisciplinary education, and value-based learning. The intent is to move beyond theoretical discussions to identify tangible, evidence-based solutions for addressing implementation challenges, such as digital inequities and the need for enhanced teacher capacity building. Furthermore, by bringing together scholars, educators, and policymakers, the event seeks to strengthen academic collaborations and develop a robust, India-centric education system for the 21st century.



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## Expected Outcomes

The conference is designed to produce several concrete outcomes. Selected, high-quality papers will be considered for publication in a book and a special issue of CRU's Research Journal titled as **Horizons of Holistic Education** with an ISBN and ISSN. The collective dialogue and research will culminate in a set of policy recommendations informed by expert dialogue, which will be submitted to relevant educational bodies for consideration. The event is expected to foster a collaborative network of researchers and educators dedicated to advancing the visions of both Gijubhai and NEP 2020 for the future of Indian education.



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### Academic Sub-themes for Call for Papers

The conference invites original, high-quality research papers from scholars, academics, and practitioners. The following sub-themes are designed to explore the affinity between Gijubhai Badheka's philosophy and the provisions of NEP 2020. The sub-themes are more of guidelines. The researcher is free to look beyond with one's innovative insights on the core theme of the Conference.

#### 1. Pedagogy and Curriculum

- From Bal-Mimamsa to the Foundational Stage (5+3+3+4): A study of the pedagogical and structural alignment between Gijubhai's original model and NEP 2020's new curricular framework.
- The Art of Storytelling: Analysing the transition from Gijubhai's use of oral traditions to modern digital narratives for foundational literacy and cognitive development.
- Experiential and Inquiry-Based Learning: An exploration of Gijubhai's emphasis on learning through work activities, gardening, and nature observation and their modern application within the NEP framework.

#### 2. Teacher Development and University Trends

- The Divaswapna Model: Reimagining the teacher's role as a facilitator and experimenter in the context of NEP 2020's professional development initiatives.
- The Guru-Shishya Tradition vs. Democratic Classrooms: A synthesis of Gijubhai's philosophy and NEP's focus on fostering an inclusive and flexible learning environment.
- Higher Education Reforms: Investigating the institutional evolution from established models of Access and Equity to NEP 2020's vision for Multidisciplinary Higher Education.

#### 3. Holistic and Value-Based Education

- Beyond Rote Learning: Examining how Gijubhai's emphasis on creativity and self-reliance aligns with NEP 2020's promotion of critical thinking and Holistic Progress Cards.
- The Ethos of Bharat: Exploring the integration of indigenous knowledge systems and cultural values into a contemporary 21st-century curriculum.
- Moral and Ethical Development: Analysing how value-driven education and nurturing empathy through narrative can be institutionalised under NEP 2020.





**Dr. T.S. Joshi**  
Vice-Chancellor,  
C.R.U., Gandhinagar

### Patrons



**Prof. Ami U. Upadhyay**  
Vice-Chancellor,  
B.A.O.U., Ahmedabad

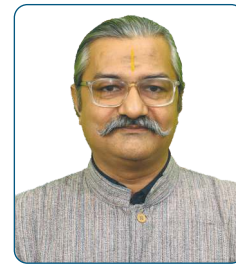


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**Dr. Dharmanshu Vaidya**  
Assistant Professor (English)  
C.R.U., Gandhinagar

### Convenors



**Dr. Nigam B. Pandya**  
Assistant Professor (Spe. Education)  
B.A.O.U., Ahmedabad

### Important Dates :

Event	Final Date
Last Date of Registration & Payment	15 <sup>th</sup> December, 2025
Abstract Submission	18 <sup>th</sup> December, 2025
Full Paper and PPTs Submission	20 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Conference Date	26 <sup>th</sup> and 27 <sup>th</sup> Dec., 2025



### Registration and Payment

All presenters must complete their registration and payment by the specified deadline to ensure their papers are included in the conference programme. Separate registration is required for each paper presenter.



Participant Category	Fee (INR)
Students and Research Scholars	500/-
Faculty and Academics	750/-



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### Link for registration and payment :

Link-1 for Registration and Payment	<a href="https://www.cugujarat.ac.in/RegistrationsPayments/Conference/registration">https://www.cugujarat.ac.in/RegistrationsPayments/Conference/registration</a>
Link-2 for Abstract Submission	<a href="https://forms.gle/U4V42hjrEdXgbUFQ9">https://forms.gle/U4V42hjrEdXgbUFQ9</a>
Link-3 for Full Paper along with PPTs Submission	<a href="https://forms.gle/EZAR47tf6jj1PUj8A">https://forms.gle/EZAR47tf6jj1PUj8A</a>

### Submission Guidelines :

- Full Paper Submission: Full papers must be submitted as an MS Word file (PDFs are not accepted). Selected papers in Gujarati and Hindi will be published in a book with ISBN number and selected papers in English will be published in **Horizons of Holistic Education**, an international research journal published by CRU.
- Article Structure:
- Title of the Article
- Authors' Details: Full names, designations, affiliations, emails & ORCID of all authors
- Abstract: Maximum 300 words
- Keywords: 5-6 keywords
- Main Body: Introduction, Literature Review, Objectives, Methodology, Discussion, Conclusion, Conflict of Interest, References.
- Formatting:
- Font: Size 12. Use Mangal for Hindi, Shruti for Gujarati, and Times New Roman for English.
- Layout: Normal margins and justified alignment.
- Citations: All citations must be listed in a "Works Cited" section at the end of the paper.
- Presentation (PPT) Structure:
- Participants may choose a layout relevant to their discipline, with a maximum of 10 slides.
- A suggested structure is: Title (1), Introduction (1), Objectives (1), Methodology (1), Discussion (2), Conclusion (1), References (2), and Thank You (1).

### Contact Information :

- **Organising Body :**  
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