Journal of Transformative Pedagogies and Learner Engagement
Vol. 1. **Issue** 2, May 2026. Pp. 1-12
ISSN: 3139-2784

Journal homepage: https://spublication.in/journals/index.php/jtple



Article

Learner-Centred Pedagogy in Indian Social Science Education: Policy Intent, Classroom Realities, and Global Insights

Iram Sarver[1*]

1. Department of Educational Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India

*Corresponding Author:
iramsarver36@gmail.com

Article History

Received: 10-03-2026
Revised: 25-04-2026
Accepted: 15-05-2026
Published: 31-05-2026

Abstract:

Learner-centred teaching has been a key focus of Social Science education reform in India since the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005. It was further reinforced in the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023. These documents emphasise constructivist learning, inquiry, critical thinking, and students' active roles. However, many classrooms in Indian schools still focus mainly on textbooks and exams. This gap between policy intent and classroom practice has been documented across various Indian educational contexts, highlighting persistent challenges in pedagogical transformation. In contrast, education systems around the world, such as those in Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, have implemented learner-centred teaching through inquiry-based, case-based, and problem-based learning models, especially in Social Studies. This paper analyses the differences between learner-centred teaching in India and inquiry-oriented teaching methods in selected global contexts. The study argues that the issues in India stem not from policy intentions but from contextual challenges, including large class sizes, assessment methods, limited teacher autonomy, and resource disparities. These challenges are further compounded by the need for aligned teacher professional development and institutional support. Instead of simply copying global models, the paper proposes ways to adapt global best practices to Indian contexts. It uses examples from NCERT Social Science textbooks to show how inquiry questions, local case studies, debates, and problem-solving tasks can be integrated into existing textbook material without adding to the curriculum burden. The paper concludes that a context-sensitive approach to integrating inquiry-based and case-based learning, rooted in Indian social realities, can help close the gap between learner-centred policies and actual classroom practices. This could enhance the transformative potential of Social Science education in India.

DOI: 10.63960/sp.2026.jtple.1.2.8

Keywords: Learner-Centred Pedagogy, Inquiry-Based Learning, Comparative Education, Social Science Education, NCERT Textbooks, NCF 2005, NCF-SE 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Social Science education holds a vital place in school curricula because it helps students understand society, history, governance, economy, and citizenship. Besides conveying factual knowledge, Social Science education aims to foster critical thinking, democratic values, social awareness, and informed civic engagement. Internationally, there has been a continuous shift toward learner-centred and inquiry-based teaching methods in Social Studies, recognising that young learners actively build social knowledge through questioning, discussion, interpretation of evidence, and engaging with real-world issues (Bruner, 1961; Levstik & Barton, 2015). In this context, the teacher's role has shifted from simply delivering content to facilitating inquiry, dialogue, and reflective learning. This shift aligns with broader movements in teacher education that emphasise dialogic and liberatory pedagogies (Parey, 2025; P, 2026).

Journal of Transformative Pedagogies and Learner Engagement is a peer-reviewed open-access journal. © 2026.The Author(s). This is an open-access article published by Synergy Publication under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0). This license permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited. The Author(s) retain copyright of their work. Synergy Publication is granted a non-exclusive right to publish the article and to identify itself as the original publisher. For more information, *See http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.*

OPEN ACCESS

In India, this pedagogical shift was formally articulated with the introduction of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, which marked a significant departure from rote-based, textbook-focused teaching toward a constructivist vision of learning. The NCF 2005 explicitly critiqued the dominance of memorisation and examination-oriented practices and argued for classrooms where learners actively engage with ideas, question social realities, and connect knowledge to lived experiences (NCERT, 2005). Social Sciences were given a particularly important role in this vision, as the framework emphasised the need to develop critical perspectives on society, pluralism, power relations, and constitutional values. The document called for inquiry-based learning, the use of multiple sources, classroom discussions, debates, and projects as integral parts of Social Science pedagogy.

This learner-centred approach has been further strengthened in recent policy updates. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 emphasise the importance of competency-based education, critical thinking, and student agency across different curricular areas. The NCF-SE 2023 highlights constructivist learning principles, interdisciplinary methods, and formative assessment practices, positioning learners as active participants in meaning-making rather than passive recipients of information (NCERT, 2023). Together, these policy documents show a strong, consistent goal of changing classroom practices in Indian schools, especially in subjects such as History, Geography, Political Science, and Economics, which together form Social Science education. However, the translation of these policy goals into classroom practice remains uneven, a challenge that is observed across various dimensions of Indian education, including digital competence and teacher preparedness (Asagar, 2025).

Despite this clear policy direction, substantial research and classroom-based studies indicate that actual teaching and learning practices in many Indian Social Science classrooms remain dominated by textbook-focused instruction and exam preparation. Teaching often centres around covering syllabus content, dictating notes, and rehearsing answers likely to appear on exams, leaving little room for inquiry, discussion, or critical thinking (Kumar, 2005; Mir, 2013). The persistence of these practices has led scholars to note a growing gap between the curriculum's goals and actual teaching. Importantly, this gap cannot be attributed solely to teachers' resistance to change; it is influenced by systemic and contextual factors, including large class sizes, strict assessment systems, limited teacher autonomy, time constraints, and unequal access to resources (Evagorou et al., 2023). Recent studies have similarly highlighted how institutional structures, including rigid timetables and examination pressures, constrain the implementation of learner-centred pedagogies in Indian schools (Parey, 2025; Khullar & Ray, 2026).

In contrast, several education systems worldwide particularly in Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States have made continuous efforts to embed learner-centred and inquiry-based approaches in Social Studies education. In Finland, Social Studies and related subjects are taught using phenomenon-based and inquiry-driven methods that prompt students to investigate social issues across multiple disciplines. High levels of teacher autonomy, trust-based accountability, and formative assessment enable teachers to craft learning experiences rooted in students' questions and local contexts (Singh & Agarwal, 2023). Similarly, in the United Kingdom, inquiry questions form the backbone of History and Citizenship education, with students engaging with evidence, various interpretations, and structured classroom discussions. In the United States, the C3 Framework (College, Career, and Civic Life) highlights disciplinary inquiry, problem-based learning, and civic engagement, positioning students as active investigators of social issues. These international examples demonstrate that inquiry-oriented pedagogy can be sustained when supported by appropriate curriculum structures, assessment alignment, and teacher professional development (Asagar, 2025; Ruhalahti, 2019).

These global examples demonstrate that learner-centred Social Studies education is not merely an abstract teaching idea but a practical and sustainable classroom practice when supported by appropriate curriculum structures, assessment methods, and professional cultures. However, comparative education research cautions against uncritically adopting international models without thoroughly considering local contexts. Variations in class size, exam systems, socioeconomic conditions, and institutional cultures mean that teaching methods effective in one setting might not work the same way in another (Apple & Apple, 2018). Therefore, the challenge for Indian Social Science education is not to replicate global models entirely but to adapt their core principles to fit Indian classroom realities.

Within this context, NCERT Social Science textbooks play a crucial role. As the primary curricular resource used by millions of teachers and students nationwide, these textbooks can serve as mediating tools between policy goals and classroom practice. The NCF 2005 envisioned textbooks not just as repositories of facts but as resources that encourage thinking, questioning, and discussion (NCERT, 2005). Although subsequent NCERT textbooks have included source-based questions, activities, visuals, and reflective prompts, research indicates that these features are often underused in classrooms, with teachers focusing mainly on narrative texts that closely align with exam requirements.

This paper positions itself within the broader debate on learner-centred Social Science education in India. It aims to compare learner-centred pedagogical goals in Indian curriculum frameworks with inquiry-oriented teaching practices in selected global contexts. More importantly, it argues that the gap between policy and practice in India arises less from shortcomings in curricular vision and more from contextual constraints that influence everyday classroom realities. Instead of promoting the adoption of foreign pedagogical models, the paper examines context-sensitive strategies for integrating inquiry-based and case-based learning into existing NCERT Social Science

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.jtple.1.2.8

textbooks, without increasing curriculum load or imposing unrealistic demands on teachers.

2. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Learner-Centred and Constructivist Pedagogy

Learner-centred pedagogy believes students learn by actively constructing meaning from ideas, experiences, and social situations. This method departs from transmission-based education approaches, which view knowledge as fixed and focus on content. Learner-centred pedagogy evolved from constructivist learning theory, particularly the writings of Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Jerome Bruner, who shaped curriculum reform and teaching methods worldwide. According to Piaget's cognitive constructivism, learners actively incorporate new information into their mental structures and adapt them to new experiences (Piaget, 1970). From this perspective, learning involves investigation, questioning, and problem-solving, not just memorisation. Piaget focused on individual cognitive growth, but Vygotsky's sociocultural theory added social learning to constructivism. According to Vygotsky (1978), who introduced the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), social interaction, language, and cultural skills build knowledge. This theoretical shift makes discourse, collaboration, and teacher leadership essential to classroom learning. Based on these principles, Bruner (1961) proposed discovery learning, which encourages students to "discover" crucial concepts through inquiry rather than passively accepting knowledge. Bruner believed that encouraging students to ask questions, research difficulties, and use disciplined thinking makes learning more meaningful and transferable.

Learner-centred pedagogy changes teacher and student roles. Teachers facilitate, build learning settings, and mediate conversation, while students bring past information, experiences, and viewpoints to the classroom. Fosnot (2013) found that such teaching methods improve understanding, critical thinking, and learner independence. Teacher-centred instruction, especially in content-heavy courses like Social Sciences, prioritises surface-level learning and hinders higher-order thinking. This distinction is central to contemporary discussions of pedagogical transformation, which advocate for a shift from transmission to facilitation (P, 2026; Asagar, 2025).

Levstik and Barton (2015) believe that Social Science learning is interpretive and requires pedagogies that allow students to examine problems, assess diverse sources, and argue rationally. Inquiry-based methods teach students to ask questions, examine data, and draw conclusions based on logic rather than authority, as historians, geographers, and political analysts do. Students' critical engagement with social reality and public issues is essential for democratic participation.

Investigation-based teaching improves students' conceptual understanding, civic knowledge, and enthusiasm to study, according to Finnish, UK, and US studies. Curriculum frameworks that emphasise disciplinary inquiry, flexible assessment, and teacher professional independence support constructivist teaching in these circumstances. The US C3 Framework emphasises inquiry, question generation, source evaluation, and civic action in Social Studies teaching (NCSS, 2013).

Constructivist and learner-centred pedagogy was recognised in India with the 2005 National Curriculum Framework (NCF). The NCF 2005 attacks rote learning and textbook dominance as they deprive students of information and undermine critical thinking (NCERT, 2005). Based on constructivism, the framework envisions classrooms where students actively construct understanding through discussion, debate, projects, and reflection. Social Sciences promote critical thinking, multicultural awareness, and constitutional principles.

Many researchers believe the NCF 2005 changed Indian curriculum thinking by linking national policy with worldwide constructivist traditions (Kumar, 2005; Evagorou et al., 2023). Connecting information to learners' actual experiences, fostering different perspectives, and dealing with challenging social topics are hallmarks of learner-centred education. Since then, the NCF for School Education 2023 has stressed competency-based learning, inquiry, and student agency as fundamental to meaningful education (NCERT, 2023).

However, the literature also reveals considerable problems in integrating constructivist concepts in Indian classrooms. Despite governmental support, many teachers still employ lecture-based methods and textbook reproduction, especially in exam-focused environments (Mir, 2013). Learner-centred teaching is typically hindered by large class sizes, rigorous syllabi, time constraints, and factual recall assessments. Researchers warn against blaming teachers for this gap, citing structural and institutional constraints (Apple & Apple, 2018). These constraints are also evident in the limited integration of digital tools for inquiry and the lack of networked learning environments that could support dialogic pedagogy (Khullar & Ray, 2026).

2.2. Inquiry-Based, Case-Based, and Problem-Based Learning in Social Studies

Inquiry-based, case-based, and problem-based learning approaches are widely recognised as expressions of learner-centred and constructivist theories, especially in Social Studies and Social Science education. These methods emphasise active learning, critical inquiry, and the application of knowledge to real-world situations. However, each approach varies in structure, focus, and pedagogical goals, making them complementary rather than interchangeable in classroom practice. Inquiry-based learning (IBL) holds that knowledge in Social Studies is not fixed or value-neutral but is built through questioning, interpretation, and evidence-based reasoning. Bruner's (1961) support of discovery learning laid the groundwork for inquiry-based teaching by highlighting the importance of curiosity and exploration in learning. In Social

Studies, inquiry-based learning usually involves students developing questions, analysing sources, assessing multiple perspectives, and constructing well-reasoned arguments (Levstik & Barton, 2015). This model emphasises the disciplinary nature of inquiry, allowing students to engage with Social Studies as historians, geographers, or political thinkers rather than just passive consumers of information. Research indicates that inquiry-based learning improves conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and student engagement, especially when students work with authentic sources and socially relevant questions (Bermudez, 2015). The effectiveness of such approaches depends significantly on the teacher's ability to design inquiry cycles that are both challenging and achievable within classroom constraints (Alexander, 2008; Class, 2024).

2.2.1 Case-Based Learning in Social Studies

Case-based learning (CBL) is a specific approach to inquiry that uses real or simulated social situations as the foundation for learning. In Social Studies, cases often involve historical events, civic dilemmas, public policy debates, or community conflicts. This method places knowledge within context, helping learners understand the complexity, ambiguity, and contested nature of social realities. In Social Studies classrooms, case-based learning also serves as a bridge between abstract ideas and real-life experiences. Historical cases, for example, allow students to see how social structures, power relations, and individual actions interact in specific contexts. Similarly, contemporary case studies on environmental issues, governance, or social justice help students connect textbook knowledge to current events. Scholars highlight that such contextualisation is vital for making Social Studies meaningful and relevant, especially for learners from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds (Bermudez, 2015).

2.2.2 Problem-Based Learning in Social Studies

Problem-based learning (PBL) broadens inquiry by organising learning around complex, open-ended problems that lack predefined solutions. Initially used in medical education, PBL has increasingly been adopted in Social Studies and civics education to promote higher-order thinking and civic engagement (Hessberg, 2012). In PBL environments, students collaborate to explore social issues, gather relevant information, propose solutions, and evaluate the implications of their decisions. Research indicates that PBL enhances learner autonomy, collaboration, and critical thinking, particularly when problems are rooted in real-world situations (Keegan & Losardo, 2017). However, scholars also caution that PBL requires careful scaffolding, as students might encounter difficulties with open-ended tasks without proper guidance. The teacher's role remains vital in designing problems, guiding discussions, and fostering reflective learning.

2.3. Inquiry-Oriented Social Studies Pedagogy in Global Contexts: Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States

Comparative research in Social Studies education shows that several education systems have consistently incorporated inquiry-oriented pedagogy into curriculum design, classroom practices, and assessment frameworks. Countries like Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States offer instructive examples of how inquiry-based, case-based, and problem-based learning approaches are implemented within Social Studies education, supported by structural conditions such as teacher autonomy, flexible curricula, and formative assessment methods. Analysing these contexts provides valuable insights into the real-world application of learner-centred pedagogy beyond policy rhetoric.

2.3.1 Inquiry-Oriented Social Studies in Finland

Finland's education system is widely recognised for its focus on learner autonomy, trust-based accountability, and constructivist pedagogy (Sahlberg, 2015). Inquiry-oriented learning is embedded through phenomenon-based learning, an interdisciplinary method that encourages students to investigate real-world phenomena spanning traditional subject boundaries (Kangas & Rasi, 2021). In Social Studies, this approach allows learners to explore complex social issues such as migration, sustainability, or governance, by integrating perspectives from history, geography, economics, and civics. Research indicates that phenomenon-based learning encourages higher-order thinking by requiring students to formulate questions, gather information from multiple sources, and collaboratively develop explanations (Kangas & Rasi, 2021). Teachers in Finland act as curriculum designers who choose themes relevant to local and global contexts, thereby ensuring the social significance of inquiry. This pedagogical flexibility is supported by a national curriculum that specifies broad competencies rather than rigid content, enabling inquiry-based approaches to thrive within everyday classroom practice (Singh & Agarwal, 2023). Another key aspect of the Finnish context is the alignment between pedagogy and assessment. Assessment practices emphasise formative feedback, self-assessment, and reflective learning over standardised testing. This reduces pressure to "cover" content and allows teachers to involve students in sustained enquiry and discussion (Ruhalahti, 2019). Studies suggest that such conditions enhance students' civic reasoning, collaborative skills, and conceptual understanding of social phenomena (Palsa & Mertala, 2022).

2.3.2 Inquiry-Oriented Social Studies in the United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, inquiry-oriented pedagogy has been most notably developed through enquiry-based learning, especially in History and Citizenship education. Enquiry questions act as the guiding principle of instruction, directing students to examine historical issues, interpret evidence, and formulate arguments (Huijgen et al., 2017). Instead of presenting historical narratives as final facts, enquiry-based teaching emphasises contested interpretations and the importance of evidence in constructing knowledge. Research in the UK context shows that inquiry-based approaches improve students' understanding of their discipline by helping them think like historians and social scientists (Huijgen et al., 2017). Classroom activities often include source analysis,

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.jtple.1.2.8

structured debates, role-play, and case studies, which promote dialogic interaction and critical reflection. These pedagogies are closely connected to citizenship education, as they allow learners to engage with questions of democracy, identity, and social justice in informed and reflective ways. While the UK system operates within a more standardised assessment framework than Finland, studies suggest that skilled teachers strategically employ enquiry-based approaches to balance curriculum demands with meaningful learning (Class, 2024). This emphasises the importance of teacher expertise and professional judgement in maintaining inquiry-oriented pedagogy even within accountability-driven systems.

2.3.3 Inquiry-Oriented Social Studies in the United States

In the United States, inquiry-oriented Social Studies education has been heavily influenced by the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards (College, Career, and Civic Life), developed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 2013). The C3 Framework emphasises inquiry as the core of Social Studies education, organised around four dimensions: developing questions, applying disciplinary concepts, evaluating sources and evidence, and communicating conclusions through civic action. The C3 Framework has promoted a shift from merely covering content to engaging students in disciplinary inquiry, where they actively explore social problems and civic issues (Grant et al., 2022). Problem-based and project-based learning methods are frequently employed to involve students with current issues such as public policy, social inequality, and environmental concerns. These teaching approaches aim to build civic agency by connecting classroom inquiry with democratic participation and community involvement (Rowland, 2022). However, scholars also observe tensions between inquiry-oriented pedagogy and high-stakes testing in the US context. While inquiry-based approaches are well-supported at the curriculum level, their implementation in classrooms varies considerably across states and schools due to differences in assessment regimes and resource availability (Grant et al., 2022). Despite these challenges, empirical studies show that inquiry-based Social Studies instruction improves students' critical thinking, civic knowledge, and motivation to learn (Hamblin, 2025).

2.3.4 Comparative Insights and Implications

Across these global contexts, several common features underpin successful inquiry-oriented Social Studies education: curricular flexibility, alignment between pedagogy and assessment, professional trust in teachers, and the use of real-world social issues as the basis for learning. Importantly, inquiry-based pedagogy in these systems is not treated as an "add-on" but as an organising principle of curriculum and instruction. Comparative education scholars caution, however, that these models are deeply embedded in their respective socio-cultural and institutional contexts (Apple & Apple, 2018). Direct transplantation of such approaches into the Indian context and characterised by large class sizes, examination-oriented assessment, and limited teacher autonomy that may not be feasible. Instead, these global practices offer conceptual and pedagogical principles that can inform context-sensitive adaptations. Such adaptations require not only curricular changes but also the development of teachers' digital and pedagogical competence to implement inquiry in resource-constrained settings (Asagar, 2025).

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The present study aims to critically analyse the conceptualisation and implementation of learner-centred pedagogy in Social Science education within the Indian context, especially considering recent curriculum reforms. While the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 strongly promote constructivist, inquiry-based, and student-centred approaches, classroom practices often remain rooted in textbook-dependent and examination-focused traditions. In this context, the study seeks to examine both the theoretical principles and practical opportunities for integrating inquiry-based pedagogies in Indian Social Science classrooms.

Accordingly, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How is learner-centred and constructivist pedagogy conceptualised in the NCF 2005 and the NCF-SE 2023, with specific reference to Social Science education?

RQ2: What are the key pedagogical features of inquiry-based, case-based, and problem-based learning models implemented in selected global contexts, namely Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States?

RQ3: What systemic and contextual challenges such as assessment patterns, class sizes, teacher autonomy, and resource availability which affect the implementation of learner-centred pedagogy in Indian Social Science classrooms?

RQ4: What context-sensitive strategies can be identified for integrating inquiry-based and case-based learning within existing NCERT Social Science textbooks without increasing the curricular burden?

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To analyse the conceptual framework of learner-centred and constructivist pedagogy as outlined in NCF 2005 and NCF-SE 2023, with specific reference to Social Science education.
- To examine inquiry-based, case-based, and problem-based learning models implemented in selected global contexts, namely Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States and to identify their key pedagogical features.
- To identify systemic and contextual challenges such as assessment patterns, class sizes, teacher autonomy, and resource availability that impact the implementation of learner-centred pedagogy in Indian schools.
- To explore context-sensitive strategies for integrating

inquiry-based and case-based learning within existing NCERT Social Science textbooks without increasing the curricular burden.

Through these objectives, the study aims to contribute to ongoing debates on curriculum reform and pedagogical transformation by advocating for an adaptive, contextually grounded approach to inquiry-oriented teaching in India. This approach aligns with contemporary scholarship on transformative pedagogies that emphasise learner agency, critical engagement, and the integration of local knowledge (Parey, 2025; Singh & Maurya, 2026).

4. METHODOLOGY

The current study adopts a qualitative, comparative, and document-based research approach to explore how learner-centred pedagogy is understood and applied in Social Science education in India, in comparison with select global contexts. The study is interpretive, focusing on analysing policy intentions, pedagogical frameworks, and curricular practices rather than producing statistical generalisations. It primarily relies on comparative analysis of curricula and policies. The research draws on theoretical literature related to constructivist pedagogy and inquiry-based learning, as well as national and international curriculum frameworks. The comparative analysis concentrates on three education systems such as Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, chosen for their well-documented emphasis on inquiry-oriented Social Studies education. These contexts provide clear examples of how learner-centred pedagogy has been put into practice.

4.1. Sources of Data

The study relies on secondary sources of data, including:

- Indian policy documents such as the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023.
- NCERT Social Science textbooks (Classes VI-X) to examine the presence of inquiry questions, activities, case studies, and discussion prompts.
- International curriculum documents such as Finland's National Core Curriculum and the United States' C3 Framework for Social Studies.
- Peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and research studies related to learner-centred, inquiry-based, case-based, and problem-based learning in Social Studies education.

These sources were selected to ensure a balanced understanding of both policy intentions and pedagogical practices.

4.2. Analytical Approach

Document analysis proceeded in three stages. First, the curricular and policy texts of NCF 2005 and NCF-SE 2023 were examined to identify the explicit and implicit pedagogical commitments made with respect to Social Science education, including references to inquiry, constructivism, dialogue, and assessment. Second, curriculum frameworks and peer-reviewed studies relating to Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States were examined to identify the structural conditions like curricular, assessment-related, and professional that support inquiry-oriented Social Studies pedagogy in these contexts. Third, NCERT Social Science textbooks for Classes VI-X were reviewed to identify existing inquiry-oriented features, such as source-based questions, discussion prompts, case-based illustrations, and project suggestions, which could serve as entry points for context-sensitive pedagogical adaptation. Findings from these three stages were then synthesised through a comparative lens, organised around the four research questions identified in Section 3, to generate the discussion presented in Section 5 and the recommendations presented in Section 7.

4.3. Scope and Rationale for Country Selection

Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States were selected for comparative analysis because each represents a distinct, well-documented, and influential model of inquiry-oriented Social Studies pedagogy, while differing considerably in their broader educational governance structures. Finland represents a system characterised by curricular flexibility, low-stakes assessment, and high teacher autonomy (Sahlberg, 2015); the United Kingdom represents a system in which inquiry-based pedagogy has been integrated into a more centrally defined and externally assessed curriculum, particularly in History and Citizenship education (Huijgen et al., 2017); and the United States, through the C3 Framework, represents a system in which a national disciplinary inquiry framework operates within a highly decentralised, state-governed education system (NCSS, 2013). Together, these three contexts illustrate a range of institutional conditions under which inquiry-oriented pedagogy can be implemented, providing a broader basis for identifying principles rather than specific models that may be adaptable to the Indian context.

5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

5.1. Learner-Centred Vision in Indian Curriculum Frameworks

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 marked a decisive shift from rote memorisation towards constructivist pedagogy. It explicitly criticised textbook-dominated instruction and promoted interactive classrooms where learners question, interpret, and reflect on social realities. Social Sciences were positioned as vital for fostering democratic values, critical thinking, and sensitivity to diversity. The NCF-SE 2023 reaffirms these objectives by emphasising competency-based education, experiential learning, and interdisciplinary inquiry. In principle, therefore, the Indian curriculum policy aligns closely with global inquiry-oriented models. NCERT Social Science textbooks include features such as source-based questions, "Discuss" prompts, case snippets, maps, visuals, and project suggestions. These elements create opportunities for inquiry-based and case-based learning. For instance, chapters in Political Science frequently include constitutional dilemmas and civic debates that

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.jtple.1.2.8

can be transformed into structured classroom discussions. Similarly, History textbooks incorporate excerpts from primary sources that support evidence-based reasoning. However, the presence of inquiry-oriented components in textbooks does not automatically ensure their pedagogical use. Classroom practice often reduces these features to supplementary material rather than central learning processes. The dominant instructional pattern remains explanation, note-making, and rehearsal of examination-oriented answers. This pattern persists despite evidence that structured inquiry cycles, even when brief, can enhance student engagement and critical thinking (Alexander, 2008; Class, 2024).

5.2. Inquiry-Oriented Practice in Global Contexts

In contrast, inquiry-based pedagogy in Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States functions as a guiding principle rather than an optional strategy. In Finland, phenomenon-based learning integrates Social Studies concepts around real-life themes such as sustainability or citizenship. Teachers have curriculum flexibility and professional autonomy to design inquiry sequences that span disciplinary boundaries. Crucially, assessment practices are aligned with inquiry, emphasising reflection, collaboration, and formative feedback. In the United Kingdom, enquiry questions structure the teaching of History and Citizenship. Lessons are often centred around a key question such as "Was the Industrial Revolution a turning point?" that guides source analysis and discussion. The focus is not just on factual recall but on interpretation and argumentation. Similarly, in the United States, the C3 Framework institutionalises disciplinary inquiry by requiring students to develop questions, evaluate evidence, and communicate conclusions connected to civic action (NCSS, 2013; Grant et al., 2022). These systems demonstrate that inquiry-oriented teaching flourishes when supported by three key conditions: (1) alignment between curriculum and assessment, (2) teacher autonomy and professional trust, and (3) manageable classroom conditions that allow sustained discussion and collaborative work.

5.3. Contextual Constraints in the Indian Classroom

The gap between policy intent and classroom reality in India stems from structural and systemic constraints rather than conceptual shortcomings. Firstly, high-stakes examinations continue to emphasise content recall and structured written responses (Au, 2007; NCERT, 2005). Even when questions claim to evaluate higher-order thinking, they often reward standardised answers, exerting pressure on teachers to focus on textbook coverage and exam preparation. Secondly, large class sizes often exceeding 40-50 students restrict opportunities for sustained discussion, group inquiry, or project-based learning (Blatchford et al., 2011). Managing time and discipline becomes the main concern, which reduces the feasibility of dialogic pedagogy. Thirdly, teacher autonomy is limited by tightly scheduled syllabi, administrative expectations, and accountability mechanisms. Unlike in Finland, where teachers develop inquiry modules, Indian teachers frequently feel obliged to finish prescribed chapters within strict timelines. Fourthly, disparities in resources particularly between urban and rural schools impact the implementation of inquiry-based methods. Access to supplementary materials, digital tools, and library resources varies greatly. Moreover, the integration of digital technologies for inquiry is uneven, and many teachers lack the necessary digital competence to leverage online resources for case-based or problem-based learning (Khullar & Ray, 2026). These constraints suggest that the problem is not a lack of policy vision but a misalignment between pedagogical ideals and institutional conditions.

5.4. Adapting Inquiry within Existing NCERT Structures

Given these realities, the challenge lies in adapting inquiry-oriented pedagogy in ways that are feasible within Indian classrooms. Instead of promoting wholesale adoption of foreign models, a context-sensitive approach can creatively utilise existing textbook material. For example, end-of-chapter questions labelled "Discuss" or "Why do you think..." can be used as structured pair or small-group discussions lasting 10-15 minutes. Historical source excerpts can be analysed through guided questions that support interpretation rather than leaving students to navigate sources independently. Civic topics such as federalism or secularism can be explored through brief classroom debates using examples drawn from local contexts.

Case-based learning can be introduced by connecting textbook themes to local realities. A chapter on environmental conservation, for instance, can include a short case discussion about a nearby river, forest, or urban waste issue. This does not require additional curriculum time but reorients teaching from transmission to engagement. Such tasks promote higher-order thinking without expanding syllabus content.

Importantly, inquiry in the Indian context may need to be guided and structured, especially in large classrooms. Short, focused inquiry cycles such as question, evidence, discussion, reflection which can be incorporated into regular lessons rather than replacing them entirely (Alexander, 2008). This incremental approach aligns with classroom realities while gradually changing pedagogical culture. This approach also resonates with the concept of "bagless days" and activity-based learning, which emphasise experiential and skill-based education within existing curricular frameworks (Singh & Maurya, 2026).

5.5. Bridging Policy and Practice

The comparative analysis shows that learner-centred pedagogy in India is not conceptually weaker than inquiry-oriented teaching abroad. The difference lies in systemic alignment. While global systems integrate inquiry into curriculum, assessment, and teacher autonomy, Indian classrooms operate within exam-driven and resource-constrained environments. However, the analysis also shows that transformative potential exists within existing structures. NCERT textbooks already contain the seeds

of inquiry; the task is to activate them pedagogically. By making small but deliberate shifts that encouraging dialogue, using local cases, framing questions critically for teachers can progress towards learner-centred practice without waiting for a systemic overhaul. This incremental transformation requires ongoing professional development and collaborative learning communities, as highlighted in recent studies on teacher agency and pedagogical change (Asagar, 2025; Parey, 2025). Ultimately, bridging the gap between policy and practice requires recognising contextual constraints while maintaining the transformative aims of Social Science education. Inquiry-oriented pedagogy in India must be adaptable, scaffolded, and grounded in local social realities. Such an approach can reinforce democratic understanding and critical engagement among learners while remaining attuned to institutional limitations.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

The analysis presented above carries several implications for transformative pedagogy and learner engagement in Indian Social Science education. First, the study suggests that transformation does not necessarily require new curricular content but rather a reorientation of how existing content is taught. Treating NCERT textbooks as resources for dialogue and inquiry, rather than as scripts for transmission, represents a low-cost but potentially significant shift in classroom culture, consistent with the NCF 2005's original vision of textbooks as tools for thinking (NCERT, 2005).

Second, the comparative analysis underscores that transformative pedagogy is most sustainable when it is structurally supported through alignment between curriculum and assessment, professional trust in teachers, and manageable classroom conditions (Sahlberg, 2015; Huijgen et al., 2017; NCSS, 2013). For Indian Social Science education, this implies that pedagogical transformation efforts focused solely on classroom-level strategies are unlikely to be sustained unless accompanied, over time, by corresponding shifts in assessment design and teacher support structures. This finding aligns with research on teacher professional development, which emphasises the need for ongoing, context-sensitive support rather than one-time workshops (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Third, the emphasis on local case studies and locally relevant social issues, as proposed in Section 5.4, aligns with the broader transformative education goal of connecting learning to learners' lived experiences and social contexts (Levstik & Barton, 2015). By grounding inquiry in local governance issues, environmental concerns, and community histories, Social Science education can foster the kind of critical, place-based civic awareness that is central to transformative and equity-oriented pedagogy. This place-based approach is also reflected in recent pedagogical innovations that integrate local knowledge and community engagement into school curricula (Singh & Maurya, 2026).

Fourth, the incremental, scaffolded approach to inquiry advocated in this paper,short inquiry cycles embedded within existing lessons rather than wholesale curricular replacement (Alexander, 2008) offers a model for transformative change that is realistic within the constraints of large, under-resourced classrooms, and that does not place unsustainable demands on individual teachers. This approach recognises that pedagogical transformation is a gradual process, requiring the development of teacher competence across multiple dimensions, including digital literacy, dialogic facilitation, and assessment literacy (Asagar, 2025; P, 2026). This positions the proposed adaptations as a feasible pathway toward the broader transformative goals articulated in NCF 2005 and NCF-SE 2023, rather than as a parallel or competing agenda.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and analysis of the study, the following recommendations are proposed at policy, institutional, and classroom levels to reinforce the adoption of learner-centred and inquiry-oriented pedagogy in Indian Social Science education.

7.1. Alignment of Assessment with Inquiry-Based Learning

One of the most significant barriers to learner-centred pedagogy in India is the examination-oriented assessment system. Black and Wiliam (1998) suggest that assessment practices should gradually shift towards evaluating analytical reasoning, source interpretation, application of concepts, and reflective thinking. Question papers can include case-based scenarios, data interpretation tasks, and open-ended questions that promote multiple perspectives rather than standardised responses. Even small changes in assessment design can considerably influence classroom practices.

7.2. Strengthening Teacher Professional Development

Teachers play a vital role in translating curriculum frameworks into classroom realities. Professional development programmes should focus not only on curriculum orientation but also on practical strategies for implementing inquiry-based, case-based, and dialogic teaching in large classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Workshops might include demonstration lessons, collaborative lesson planning, and reflective practice sessions. Emphasis should be on manageable inquiry cycles that can be integrated within existing time constraints.

7.3. Enhancing Teacher Autonomy within Structured Frameworks

Although systemic constraints might limit complete curriculum flexibility, schools and educational authorities can grant teachers limited autonomy to choose examples, develop discussion tasks, and include local case studies. Encouraging teachers to contextualise textbook themes within local realities can make Social Science education more relevant and inquiry-driven.

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.jtple.1.2.8

7.4. Utilising Existing Textbook Spaces for Inquiry

Instead of expanding syllabus content, teachers can make better use of existing textbook features. Discussion questions can be turned into short, structured debates; source extracts can be analysed through guided questioning; project suggestions can be simplified into classroom-based collaborative tasks. This approach ensures that inquiry-based learning does not increase the curriculum load but improves engagement with prescribed content.

7.5. Integrating Local Contexts and Real-World Issues

Social Science education becomes more meaningful when linked to learners' real-life experiences. Teachers can include local governance issues, environmental concerns, community histories, and current social debates in classroom discussions. This contextualisation encourages civic awareness and critical thinking while staying consistent with textbook themes. This aligns with the broader movement towards experiential and skill-based learning advocated in recent policy frameworks (Singh & Maurya, 2026).

7.6. Promoting Dialogic Classroom Culture

Creating a dialogic classroom culture is crucial for learner-centred pedagogy. Even short peer discussions, think-pair-share activities, and structured questioning can foster opportunities for student voice. Over time, such practices can transform classroom norms from passive listening to active participation. Dialogic pedagogy has been shown to be particularly effective in conflict-affected and diverse classroom contexts, where it fosters mutual understanding and critical reflection (Parey, 2025).

7.7. Encouraging Small-Scale Action Research

Educational institutions and teacher training programmes may encourage teachers to carry out small-scale action research projects on inquiry-based strategies in Social Science classrooms. Documenting challenges and successes can create contextually relevant knowledge and guide policy improvements.

8. LIMITATIONS

This study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, as a qualitative, document-based analysis, the study does not include classroom observations, teacher interviews, or student assessments, and therefore cannot directly verify the extent to which the pedagogical practices described whether in Indian classrooms or in the comparative contexts of Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States reflect actual day-to-day teaching. The analysis is necessarily based on the representations of practice found in policy documents, curriculum frameworks, and published research.

Second, the comparative analysis is limited to three national contexts Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States selected for their prominence in the literature on inquiry-oriented Social Studies education. While these contexts offer valuable points of comparison, they represent a narrow slice of the wide diversity of educational systems globally, and findings from these contexts may not capture the full range of structural conditions relevant to inquiry-based pedagogy in other countries with class-size and resource profiles closer to those found in India.

Third, the analysis of NCERT textbooks in this study focuses on the presence and potential of existing inquiry-oriented features such as discussion prompts, source extracts, and project suggestions rather than on a systematic, exhaustive content analysis across all Social Science textbooks for Classes VI-X. A more fine-grained content analysis, mapping the frequency, distribution, and cognitive demand of such features across chapters and grade levels, would strengthen the empirical basis for the recommendations made in Section 7.

Fourth, the contextual constraints discussed in Section 5.3 such as class size, assessment design, and teacher autonomy are drawn from the broader literature on Indian education and may vary considerably across states, school types (government, government-aided, and private), and rural-urban settings. The recommendations proposed in this paper may therefore require further contextual adaptation depending on the specific institutional setting in which they are applied.

9. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Building on the analysis presented in this paper, several directions for future research can be identified. Further empirical research is necessary to explore classroom-level implementation of inquiry-based pedagogy across diverse Indian settings, including rural and urban schools, government and private institutions, and various socio-economic contexts. Such research can offer grounded insights into scalable models of adaptation. In particular, future studies could undertake systematic content analyses of NCERT Social Science textbooks across Classes VI-X to map the distribution and cognitive demand of existing inquiry-oriented features, providing an empirical baseline against which the strategies proposed in Section 5.4 could be piloted and evaluated. Classroom-based action research, in which teachers implement short inquiry cycles such as those described in Section 5.4 and document their experiences, could generate context-specific evidence on the feasibility and impact of these adaptations within large, examination-oriented classrooms.

Future research could also examine the relationship between assessment reform and pedagogical change in the Indian context more directly, for example by analysing how the introduction of competency-based assessment items under the NCF-SE 2023 (NCERT, 2023) influences teachers' instructional choices in Social Science classrooms over time. Additionally, studies exploring the role of digital and networked learning environments in supporting inquiry-based Social Science education would be valuable, particularly given the increasing availability of digital resources in Indian schools (Khullar & Ray, 2026; Asagar, 2025). Finally, comparative studies that include education

systems with class sizes, resource constraints, and assessment structures more similar to those found in India for instance, other South Asian or middle-income country contexts could provide additional, potentially more directly transferable, insights into how inquiry-oriented Social Studies pedagogy can be sustained under conditions of resource constraint.

10. CONCLUSION

This study aims to compare learner-centred pedagogy in Indian Social Science education with inquiry-oriented teaching models used in countries like Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Using a comparative, document-based approach, it shows that the gap between policy goals and classroom practice in India does not stem from a lack of ideas in the curriculum. Instead, it results from local, structural, and systemic factors that influence daily teaching practices.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 present a clear constructivist approach to learning. Both documents promote inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, interdisciplinarity, and student agency. Social Science education, in particular, is seen as a transformative space where learners explore questions related to democracy, diversity, justice, and social responsibility. In this regard, the Indian curriculum policy is philosophically aligned with global models that focus on inquiry.

Nevertheless, in many Indian schools, classroom practice remains dominated by textbook-based instruction and exam preparation (Kumar, 2005; Mir, 2013). The analysis shows that factors such as high-stakes assessments, large class sizes, limited teacher autonomy, strict time schedules, and resource disparities greatly impact teaching methods. These systemic conditions often force teachers to focus on syllabus coverage and factual memorisation rather than engaging in dialogue and inquiry-based learning. Addressing these constraints requires a multi-level approach that includes not only pedagogical retraining but also systemic reforms in assessment and teacher autonomy (P, 2026).

In contrast, inquiry-oriented Social Studies education in Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States is supported by strong institutional frameworks. Flexibility in the curriculum, alignment between teaching methods and assessments, and professional trust in teachers facilitate ongoing implementation of inquiry-based, case-based, and problem-based learning. Importantly, inquiry in these contexts is regarded not as an optional approach but as a core principle of curriculum and classroom practice. These systems also benefit from high levels of teacher digital competence and access to networked learning resources, which support inquiry and collaboration (Khullar & Ray, 2026; Asagar, 2025).

The central argument of this paper is that meaningful transformation in Indian Social Science education does not require a wholesale adoption of foreign pedagogical models (Phillips & Ochs, 2004)). Instead, it calls for a context-sensitive adaptation of inquiry-oriented practices within existing curricular frameworks. NCERT Social Science textbooks already contain discussion prompts, source-based questions, case illustrations, and activity sections that can serve as entry points for inquiry. By reinterpreting textbooks as pedagogical resources rather than scripts for content delivery, teachers can gradually integrate dialogic and investigative approaches without increasing the curriculum burden.

Thus, the way forward involves bridging the gap between policy and practice through adaptive strategies that respect institutional realities while upholding the transformative aims of Social Science education. A carefully scaffolded integration of inquiry-based and case-based learning, rooted in Indian social contexts, can improve students' critical thinking, civic awareness, and democratic participation. Such an approach has the potential to revitalise Social Science classrooms and better align them with the learner-centred vision expressed in national curriculum reforms. Ultimately, this transformation depends on a sustained commitment to teacher professional development, assessment reform, and the creation of dialogic, inclusive classroom cultures (Parey, 2025; Singh & Maurya, 2026).

DECLARATIONS

Author(s) Contribution

As the sole author, Iram Sarver was responsible for conceptualisation, literature review, analysis, and writing of the original draft, as well as review and editing of the final manuscript.

Uses of AI Acknowledgement

The author used Grammarly for language structuring and formatting assistance during manuscript preparation. All content was reviewed, verified against cited sources, and edited by the author.

Funding Information

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Availability of Data and Materials

This paper is based entirely on publicly available policy documents, curriculum frameworks, NCERT textbooks, and published literature, full citation details for which are provided in the reference list. No new datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

Competing Interests

The author declares that there are no known competing financial interests or personal

https://doi.org/10.63960/sp.2026.jtple.1.2.8

relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Clinical Trial Registration (if applicable)

Not Applicable

Human Ethics and Consent to Participate

The study did not involve any clinical interventions or experiments requiring formal ethical approval, as it is based solely on the analysis of publicly available policy documents, curriculum frameworks, and published literature.

REFERENCES

Alexander, R. J. (2008). *Towards Dialogic Teaching: rethinking classroom talk (4th Edition)*. Dialogos.

Apple, M., & Apple, M.W. (2018). Ideology and Curriculum (4th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429400384

Asagar, M. S. (2025). Digital competence in education: A comparative analysis of frameworks and conceptual foundations. *Synergy: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 2*(1), 9–23. https://doi.org/10.63960/synergyint.j.multidiscip.stud..v2i1.34

Au, W. (2007). High-stakes testing and curricular control: A qualitative metasynthesis. *Educational Researcher, 36*(5), 258-267. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X07306523

Bermudez, A. (2015). Four Tools For Critical Inquiry in History, Social Studies, and Civic Education. *Revista de Estudios Sociales, 1*(52), 102-118. https://doi.org/10.7440/res52.2015.07

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education, 5*(1), 7-74. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969595980050102

Blatchford, P., Bassett, P., & Brown, P. (2011). Examining the effect of class size on classroom engagement and teacher-pupil interaction. *Learning and Instruction, 21*(6), 715-730. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2011.04.001

Bruner, J. S. (1961). The act of discovery. *Harvard Educational Review, 31*, 21-32. Retrieved from https://digitalauthorship.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/the-act-of-discovery-bruner.pdf

Class, B. (2024). Teaching research methods in education: using the TPACK framework to reflect on praxis. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, *47*(3), 288–308. https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2023.2270426

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-prof-dev

Evagorou, M., Vrikki, M., & Papanastasiou, E. (2023). Students' and teachers' voice on the outcomes of a citizenship education curriculum. *Citizenship Social and Economic Education*, *22*(2), 100–117. https://doi.org/10.1177/14788047231193917

Fosnot, C. T. (Ed.). (2013). *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives, and practice* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.

Grant, S. G., Swan, K., & Lee, J. (2022). *Inquiry-based practice in social studies education: Understanding the inquiry design model*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003262800

Hamblin, T. (2025). How do average citizens solve civic problems? A lesson from an interdisciplinary, inquiry-based curriculum. *The Great Lakes Social Studies Journal, 9*(1), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.25035/glssj.05.02.06

Hessberg, K. (2012). *PBL? A case study of inquiry learning in a secondary civics course* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest.

Huijgen, T., van Boxtel, C., van de Grift, W., & Holthuis, P. (2017). Toward Historical Perspective Taking: Students' Reasoning When Contextualizing the Actions of People in the Past. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, *45*(1), 110–144. https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2016.1208597

Kangas, M., & Rasi, P. (2021). Phenomenon-based learning of multiliteracy in a Finnish upper secondary school. *Media Practice and Education, 22*(3), 279-298. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1977769

Keegan, L. C., & Losardo, A. (2017). Problem-based learning and civic engagement in undergraduate education. *Communication Education, 66*(4), 1-19. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/88676469/Problem_Based_Learning_and_Civic_Engagement_in_Undergraduate_Education

Khullar, L., & Ray, U. (2026). Networked Learning Environments and Educational Collaboration in the Digital Age. *Journal of Transformative Pedagogies and Learner Engagement*, *1*(1), 30-48. https://doi.org/10.63960/ksrmhm06

Kumar, K. (2005). *Political agenda of education: A study of colonialist and nationalist ideas*. Sage Publications. Retrieved from https://arvindguptatoys.com/arvindgupta/pol-agenda-kk.pdf

Levstik, L. S., & Barton, K. C. (2015). *Doing history: Investigating with children in elementary and middle schools* (5th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315818108

Mir, G. A. T. (2013). *What is my pedagogy? Shifting understandings and practices of teachers in government schools in Kashmir, India*. University of Toronto. Retrieved from https://utoronto.scholaris.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/187c80ba-0037-4fb0-bd01-6de1a8b1a1cf/content

National Council for the Social Studies. (2013). *The C3 framework for social studies state standards: Guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics,*

geography, and history. NCSS. Retrieved from https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf

NCERT. (2005). *National Curriculum Framework 2005*. National Council of Educational Research and Training. Retrieved from https://educationforallinindia.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/National-Curriculum-Framework-2005-NCERT-English.pdf

NCERT. (2023). *National Curriculum Framework for School Education*. National Council of Educational Research and Training. Retrieved from https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/focus-group/NCF-SE_2023EN.pdf

P, K. (2026). Tracing the evolution from pedagogy to heutagogy in teacher education: A scientometric perspective. *Journal of Transformative Pedagogies and Learner Engagement, 1*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.63960/gcn9j739

Palsa, L., & Mertala, P. (2022). Disciplinary contextualisation of transversal competence in Finnish curricula: The case of social studies. *Education Inquiry, 13*(2), 245-262. https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2020.1855827

Parey, M. A. (2025). Dialogic pedagogy as a liberatory praxis in schooling: Challenging power dynamics and neoliberalism in the context of schools in Kashmir. *Synergy: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 2*(2), 105–115. https://doi.org/10.63960/SIJMDS-2025-2270

Phillips, D., & Ochs, K. (2004). Researching policy borrowing: Some methodological challenges in comparative education. *British Educational Research Journal, 30*(6), 773-784. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141192042000279495

Piaget, J. (1970). *Genetic epistemology*. Columbia University Press. Retrieved from https://www.rexresearch1.com/PiagetChildPsychologyLibrary/GeneticEpistemology.pdf

Rowland, R. M. (2022). *A Problem-Based Learning Approach to Civics Education: Exploring Citizenship Through Authentic Scenarios* (Doctoral dissertation). University of South Carolina. Retrieved from https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7620&context=etd

Ruhalahti, S. (2019). *Redesigning a Pedagogical Model for Scaffolding Dialogical, Digital and Deep Learning in Vocational Teacher Education*. University of Lapland. Retrieved from https://lauda.ulapland.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/63734/Ruhalahti.Sanna.Acta%20electronica%20Universitatis%20Lapponiensis%20257.pdf?sequence=16&isAllowed=y

Sahlberg, P. (2015). *Finnish lessons 2.0: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* Teachers College Press. Retrieved from https://www.daneshnamehicsa.ir/userfiles/files/1/19-%20Finnish%20Lessons%202.0%20What%20Can%20the%20World%20Learn%20from%20Educational%20Change%20in%20Finland,%20Second%20Edition.pdf

Singh, G., & Maurya, H. K. (2026). Learning beyond textbooks: Vocational and skill-based education through bagless day activities. *Journal of Transformative Pedagogies and Learner Engagement, 1*(1), 58–63. https://doi.org/10.63960/vtnwfv10

Singh, J., & Agarwal, T. (2023). *Creating an equitable space for teaching and learning: Towards theory and evidence-based practice*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003407478

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press. Retrieved from https://home.fau.edu/musgrove/web/vygotsky1978.pdf

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions, and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of Synergy Publication or the editor(s) of the journal. While reasonable editorial and peer-review procedures are followed, Synergy Publication and the editor(s) do not endorse any products, methods, or claims described in the content.

Author Bio:

1. Iram Sarver is a Senior Research Fellow and Ph.D. scholar in the Department of Educational Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Her core doctoral research investigates the critical dynamics of Refugee Education, exploring equitable learning access and policy frameworks. With an academic foundation spanning an M.Ed. from JMI and an M.A. in Counselling Psychology, her work bridges educational policy with mental health advocacy. Her broader academic interests include Inclusive Education, Educational Psychology, and the Internationalization of Education. She has actively shared her insights through published work tracking primary stakeholder educational challenges.