



Research Article

Decolonising Curriculum Beyond Colonial Legacy: An Indian Perspective through a Critical Pedagogical Lens

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19385604>

Abstract

This paper is a critical analysis of decolonising curriculum in India as a critical pedagogy and identifies the prevalence of colonial epistemologies in modern-day education systems. The Indian educational system, even after the reforms, still favours Eurocentric knowledge, language hierarchy, and standardised practises of assessment, which excludes the indigenous and subaltern epistemologies. Basing the study on the theoretical contributions of Paulo Freire, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, the research conceptualises the form of decolonisation as an epistemic change, instead of the inclusion of indigenous material. Using a conceptual research design of qualitative research design, the study will rely on a systematic review of interdisciplinary literature in an interpretive manner and critical discourse analysis and thematic analysis to challenge knowledge hierarchies and curricular organisation. The conclusions demonstrate that the effective decolonisation process presupposes the radical reorganisation of the epistemic frameworks because superficial inclusion can lead to tokenism, and it is not effective in terms of solving the underlying inequalities. Another issue of the study is the presence of major challenges, such as nationalistic appropriation and pedagogical restraints, that can destroy transformative endeavours. In reply to it, it suggests a critical pedagogic model based on dialogic pedagogy, epistemic pluralism, reflexivity, and social justice orientation. The paper will further state that systemic change in policy, pedagogy and institutional practices is required to result in the decolonisation of the curriculum and promote the achievement of epistemic justice and learner agency. The research adds to current arguments in the curriculum study and provides important implications for policy changes, teacher training, and future research in the Indian scenario.

Manuscript Information

- ISSN No: 2583-7397
- Received: 13-02-2026
- Accepted: 28-03-2026
- Published: 02-04-2026
- IJCRM:5(2); 2026: 344-351
- ©2026, All Rights Reserved
- Plagiarism Checked: Yes
- Peer Review Process: Yes

How to Cite this Article

Kisku A. Decolonising Curriculum Beyond Colonial Legacy: An Indian Perspective through a Critical Pedagogical Lens. Int J Contemp Res Multidiscip. 2026;5(2):344-351.

Access this Article Online



www.multiarticlesjournal.com

KEYWORDS: Decolonisation, Critical Pedagogy, Epistemic Justice, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Curriculum Reform, Indian Education

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern Indian education system still carries the long-lasting effect of the colonial epistemologies, the most notable of them being the institutionalised ones in the form of the Macaulay Minute on Education. The policy by Macaulay was introduced in 1835 and specifically gave preference to the

English language as the instructional medium and placed Western knowledge in a superior position relative to the native intellectual traditions. This move not only transformed the linguistic environment of education but also set up an epistemic order of precedence that dominated other knowledge systems of India, such as oral traditions, philosophical schools, and

community-based learning practises (Kumar, 2005; Viswanathan, 2014). The educational project of colonialism was, hence, an education that did not simply act as a pedagogical reform but like an ideological machine that reconstituted the cultural identity and production of knowledge in India.

India, after gaining its independence, has gone through various educational reforms that are directed towards national development and social justice, but the epistemic structures run deep into colonialist structures. The curriculum still reproduces, as scholars have had to argue what Michael W. Apple (2012) has termed as official knowledge, a selective tradition that legitimises one type of knowledge at the expense of another. This frequently can be translated into the survival of Eurocentric views in fields like history, science and philosophy, and the relegation of indigenous and subaltern views on knowledge (Kumar, 2005; Nandy, 1988). As a result, education systems are susceptible to reproducing epistemic injustice where some forms of knowing are devalued or made invisible according to the system (Fricker, 2007).

These hierarchies are further supported by the fact that English remains a hegemonic medium of instruction. Although English has made the world a global village and knowledge economies accessible, it has also led to the loss of language diversity and impediments to the academic achievements of students who do not speak English (Mohanty, 2018). Such linguistic dominance is not only a pragmatic issue, but it is also an epistemological issue since language defines cognition, identity and access to knowledge. According to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong (1986), who makes a powerful case on the centrality of language to the decolonisation process, language holds culture and communal memory.

Over the past few years, the idea of decolonising education has become increasingly popular at the international and Indian levels and, specifically, with policies like the National Education Policy 2020. Although these reforms focus on auralizing Indian bodies of knowledge and ensuring multilingualism, it is still important to question whether these initiatives go further than a form of symbolic inclusion to actual epistemic transformation. The decolonisation in this meaning cannot be abridged in the incorporative addition of indigenous material into an otherwise unchanged curriculum. Instead, it involves a complete redefinition of what knowledge production and dissemination are based on in terms of structure, assumptions, and power relations (Mignolo, 2011; De Andreotti, 2014).

In this paper, the issue of curriculum decolonisation is placed on the concept of critical pedagogy and based on the foundational work of Paulo Freire (1970). Critical pedagogy offers a revolutionary perspective according to which education can be seen as a place of power, opposition, and liberation. It questions the banking model of education and promotes

dialogic, participatory, and socially responsive modes of education that enable learners to critically contend with their realities. Such an approach is especially applicable to the Indian context, in order to resolve inequalities, which are deeply rooted in caste, class, language and indigeneity (Guru, 2011; Apple, 2012).

It is on this background that the current research is focused on the following key research question: How can curriculum in India be decolonised beyond a symbolic inclusion towards epistemic transformation through a critical pedagogical prism? Through addressing this question, the paper will make its contribution to the current discussion of curriculum studies and philosophy of education by predicting the necessity of a pluralistic, context-dependent, and socially just educational framework.

2. Conceptualising Decolonisation in Education

The process of decolonisation in education is often confined to an additive situation of including the indigenous material into the already existing curricular structures. Modern scholarship, however, claims that such a strategy is dangerous to being superficial and does not tackle structural and epistemic disparities ingrained in education systems. Decolonisation, in its turn, has to be perceived as a transformational undertaking questioning and redesigning the power dynamics of knowledge production, validation, and distribution (De Andreotti, 2014; Mignolo, 2011). It entails questioning the superiority of Eurocentric knowledge that has long marginalised non-Western knowledge modes.

In this sense, Ngugi wa Thiong (1986) pays special focus to the centrality of language in the decolonisation process, considering that linguistic imperialism is a primary means of control over culture. It is therefore part of the process of regaining epistemic agency and cultural identity through reclaiming the indigenous languages. On the same note, Walter Mignolo (2011) promises to theorise decolonisation as epistemic disobedience, a process that throws the hegemony of Western knowledge orders off track and creates room to allow alternative epistemologies. This view is consistent with more general decolonial thinking, which considers knowledge as specific and plural, and highly entangled with historical and political circumstances (de Sousa Santos, 2015).

2.1 Decolonisation as Epistemic Transformation

Decolonisation in its purest form involves a change from passive knowledge consumption to active knowledge co-construction. Instead of considering learners as consumers of authoritative knowledge, it considers them as contributors to the process of meaning-making. This change requires the acknowledgement of various epistemologies, such as indigenous, local, and experiential knowledge that have usually been marginalised in schooling (Battiste, 2019). More so, decolonisation is aimed at destabilising the established

hierarchies of knowledge that tend to place Western scientific rationality above other modes of knowing. Notably, decolonisation does not mean the substitution of Western knowledge with Indian or indigenous one in a simplistic or oppositional way. Rather, it requires the establishment of a dialogic epistemic environment in which different knowledge systems are able to engage, challenge each other and mutually enhance each other. This would help promote epistemic justice and foster the critical attention and not the blind following of one particular tradition (Fricker, 2007).

2.2 Beyond Binary Thinking

The binary oppositions like Western versus Indian, modern versus traditional, are also opposed by the critical decolonial approach. Such dichotomies can be dangerously simplifying real epistemological situations and can have the effect of romanticising tradition or supporting cultural essentialism. Homi K. Bhabha (1994) says that the identities and knowledge systems of cultures are always hybrid, as they have been formed in the course of historical encounters and continuous negotiations.

Thus, decolonisation is to be based upon critical pluralism that would not only respect the diversity but would be reflexive to all the systems of knowledge. With epistemic hybridity and dialogic interaction, education is able to transcend the dogmatic binaries and shift to a more pluralistic, fluid and socially equitable model.

3. Theoretical Framework: Critical Pedagogy

The theoretical basis of the research is the tradition of critical pedagogy, as expressed by Paulo Freire (1970) most of all. Critical pedagogy is a conceptualisation of education as a political process not only influenced by power and ideology, but also by social relations. Freire criticises the banking concept of education whereby learners are placed as passive receivers of knowledge deposited by authoritative teachers. Conversely, he suggests a dialogical and problem-posing approach which

develops critical consciousness (*conscientização*), which allows learners to question and reorganise repressive social facts (Freire, 1970/2005). In this regard, education is seen as the practise of freedom, which is geared towards emancipation and social justice.

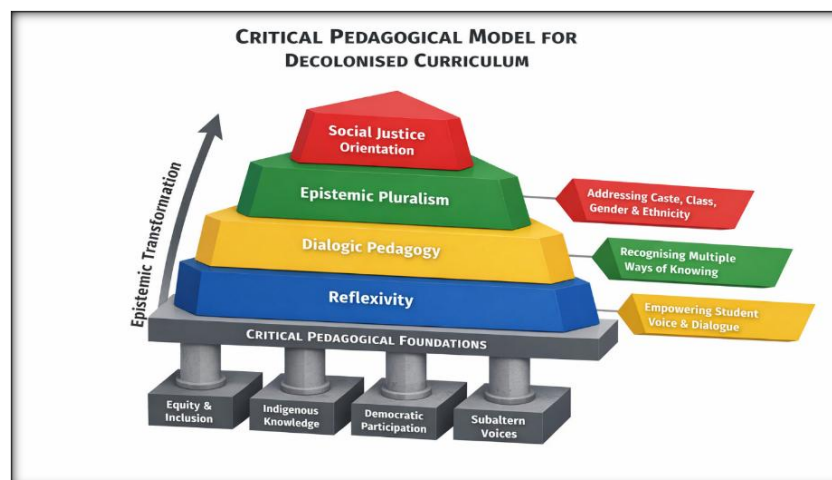
Later researchers have built upon Freire and highlighted the significance of school education in creating or challenging dominant ideologies. As an example, Henry A. Giroux (2014) emphasises the value of teachers as transformative intellectuals who may question the hegemonic knowledge framework, whereas Peter McLaren (2005) focuses on the necessity of education to counter structural inequalities associated with the idea of class, race, and culture. All these views place critical pedagogy as an important lens through which the curriculum can be decolonised and the knowledge that is accorded validity and the knowledge that is pushed to the periphery interrogated.

3.1 Relevance to the Indian Context

Critical pedagogy is a strong instrument for viewing the deeply rooted issues of caste, language, class, and indigeneity in the Indian context. The inequality of knowledge production in India is frequently associated with social inequalities, which in turn defines a need to align pedagogical strategies that preempt equity and inclusion (Kumar, 2005; Guru, 2011). Critical pedagogy can empower the marginalised groups in society by encouraging dialogic learning and participatory processes to enable learners, such as tribal and rural groups, to become agents of constructing knowledge.

Moreover, the study by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) is specifically pertinent to point out the epistemic silencing of the subaltern. The criticism of Spivak highlights that education spaces should not only accommodate but also give a voice to the marginalised voices. Therefore, critical pedagogy in India should not end at the availability of education but transfer to the promotion of epistemic justice, democratic participation and transformational learning.

Figure 1: A Three-Dimensional Critical Pedagogical Framework for Decolonising Curriculum in the Indian Context, illustrating the hierarchical integration of reflexivity, dialogic pedagogy, epistemic pluralism, and social justice orientation, grounded in critical pedagogical foundations of equity, indigenous knowledge, democratic participation, and subaltern voices.



Explanation

Figure 1 shows a three-dimensional critical pedagogical model of decolonisation of the curriculum, which is based on the emancipatory philosophy of Paulo Freire (1970). The stratified appearance denotes the progressive shift towards reflexivity, to dialogic pedagogy, to pluralism in epistemology, and finally to a social justice orientation. This is in line with the fact that education is a transformative practise as explained by Henry A. Giroux (2014). These principles include the three main pillars, namely equity, indigenous knowledge, democratic participation, and the voices of the subalterns, which capture the issues of epistemic marginalisation raised by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988). The model therefore theorises decolonisation as dialogic, dynamic and justice-focused learning.

4. METHODOLOGY

The conceptual research design of this research will assume a qualitative method of study that is based on critical and decolonial scholarship and is adopted to study curriculum decolonisation in the Indian context. Interrogation of theoretical constructs, epistemic assumptions, and normative frameworks in the field of education is well-suited to conceptual research (Rocco and Plakhotnik, 2009). The research uses a methodological interpretive review method of interdisciplinary literature, such as articles on critical pedagogy, decolonial theory, and curriculum studies. The works by Paulo Freire, Ngugi wa Thiong, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak are deliberately chosen because they form the basis of the arguments about epistemic justice and decolonisation.

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) paradigm that informs the analytical approach will allow exploring how the relations of power and knowledge hierarchy are encoded in the narratives of curricula and educational policies (Fairclough, 2013). Furthermore, thematic analysis is also used to determine the repetitive ideas as epistemic dominance, linguistic hierarchies, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), and pedagogical transformation (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The research undertaking takes a non-empirical, theory-making methodology, which synthesises findings to form a critical pedagogical model for decolonising the curriculum in India. Reflexivity is upheld in the process of analysis to explain the role of the researcher and guarantee critical interactions with various knowledge systems (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The approach to the research methodology allows understanding the decolonisation of the curriculum in a more nuanced and contextual manner, rather than merely including particular aspects of it, which is consistent with the purpose of the study, which is to promote epistemic change.

5. Colonial Legacy in Indian Curriculum

The modern Indian curriculum has been marked with extreme colonial influences, which still affect the epistemic orientation, language use, and assessment systems. Such legacies do not only exist as a residual of the past but are in fact actively recreating structures of knowledge and power in schools (Kumar, 2005; Michael W. Apple, 2012). The following

dimensions are vital in any meaningful decolonisation project of the curriculum.

5.1 Epistemic Dominance of Western Knowledge

The privilege of Western knowledge systems in disciplines like science, history, and philosophy is one of the most important colonial continuities in Indian education. Eastern intellectual traditions have frequently been marginalised when presenting the curriculum content, or represent only a selective sample of contributions in the Indian and other non-Western traditions. This is an epistemic imbalance, that is, what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) calls the silencing of subaltern knowledge systems. In the same vein, Ashis Nandy (1988) states that colonial education transformed the Indian consciousness by delegitimising the native modes of knowing and giving Western rationality a pre-eminence over the local. Consequently, they tend to alienate learners from their cultural and intellectual background and restrict the epistemic diversity and criticality.

5.2 Language Hierarchies

In Indian education, language is a focal point of colonialism. English is still used as the language of instruction, especially in higher levels and in elite institutions, which further reinforce social and educational inequities. Although English opens access to the global knowledge networks, its superiority excludes vernacular languages and weakens linguistic diversity. Mohanty (2018) explains that these hierarchies cause cognitive and pedagogical barriers to learners whose native language is not English, not only in understanding but also in engagement. Moreover, Ngugi wa Thiong (1986) points out that language is closely connected to cultures and knowledge regimes; therefore, its depreciation is a kind of epistemic marginalisation.

5.3 Assessment Practices

The Indian assessment practises are also influenced by the colonial practices, especially in an over-dependence on the standardised examinations. Such systems are more likely to emphasise memorisation and reproduction of information that conforms to the model that has been critiqued by Paulo Freire (1970) as the banking model of education. These strategies suppress thinking and creativity, situational comprehension, and thus the transformational possibilities of education. Researchers state that the high-stakes testing upholds the status of inequality and constrained learning curriculum through prioritising measurable outcomes over comprehensive learning (Apple, 2012; Biesta, 2015). As such, assessment is a control mechanism and not an instrument of significant learning and reflection.

Overall, the colonial past in the Indian curriculum continues to play itself out through epistemic superiority, language inequalities and reductive assessment cultures, which all require critical re-assessment in the quest to attain decolonised education.

6. Decolonising Curriculum: Indian Perspectives

The process of decolonisation of the curriculum in India is one that has to change the Eurocentric epistemic dominance to a more pluralistic and contextual education system. This will not only entail inclusion of the indigenous content, but also the change in pedagogical practises, hierarchies of knowledge and even the restructuring of the curriculum. According to scholars, this should be critically informed in order to prevent essentialism and tokenism and promote epistemic justice and inclusivity (Battiste, 2019; de Sousa Santos, 2015).

6.1 Integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)

India is a country that has a rich and diversified treasure trove of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), and some of these areas include Ayurveda, ecological sustainability, agriculture, and oral traditions. Such knowledge systems tend to be community-based, experiential and place-based, providing useful information on sustainable livelihood and holism. They must, however, be incorporated in the formal education process with great care, being subjected to validation, contextualisation, and critical interaction instead of being blindly romanticised (Battiste, 2019; Shiva, 1993). This is because indigenous knowledge offers alternative ways of epistemology that can undermine the mainstream ideologies of development and scientific rationality (Vandana Shiva 1993). Thus, IKS should be included in the process of dialogic engagement with contemporary disciplines, be relevant, and scholarly.

6.2 Vernacularisation of Knowledge

Language is an important factor in determining knowledge and educational equity. Curriculum decolonisation should be considered as a major achievement with the promotion of multilingual education, which is a focus of the National Education Policy 2020. The policy promotes the use of mother-tongue or regional language as a medium of instruction, especially in elementary learning, as a way of improving understanding, cognitive advancement, and placing emphasis on the cultural context. It has been shown that students study better in their native language because it allows them to develop a clear concept and gain involvement (Mohanty, 2018; UNESCO, 2016). Besides, vernacularisation questions the primacy of the English language and allows for introducing various languages and cultural views into the curriculum.

6.3 Contextual Curriculum Design

A decolonised curriculum needs to be sensitive to local circumstances and capture the history of the various communities, their cultures and their experiences. This involves the incorporation of local histories, communal knowledge and regional diversity in the curriculum content as well as the pedagogy. Contextualisation is especially important in the case of tribal and marginalised communities where knowledge systems and experiences have always been marginal to mainstream education (Xaxa, 2008). Through the integration of these views, education can be more inclusive, relevant, and empowering.

Decolonising curriculum in India, in essence, means that it is based on a shift toward epistemic pluralism, linguistic inclusivity, and contextual relevance, which will contribute to a more democratic and socially just education system.

7. Risks and Challenges in Decolonisation

Although the call of decolonising curriculum has recently become especially popular in recent years, its application is full of conceptual, political, and pedagogical problems. Through the lack of the critical engagement, decolonisation may serve as a mere project of rhetoric or symbolism as opposed to a transformative project. Researchers warn that the process should also be reflexive and critically based, not to repeat the new forms of epistemic dominance (De Andreotti, 2014; Walter Mignolo, 2011).

7.1 Tokenism

The most notable of these risks is the tokenism which occurs when the indigenous knowledge or cultural aspects are added to the curriculum, but they do not change its epistemic framework. This inclusion is often in the form of solitary subjects, instances or cultural allusions that neither disrupt the superiority of the Western knowledge structures. According to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988), even when subaltern voices are merely represented, it does not mean that the epistemic justice has been achieved when they are structurally marginalised. Tokenistic measures can therefore give the sense of inclusivity without any change in the hierarchies that exist (Battiste, 2019). True decolonisation, consequently, involves bringing systemic changes in the design of curriculums, pedagogy, and assessment.

7.2 Nationalist Appropriation

The other notable difficulty is in the fact that decolonisation discourse can be subjected to nationalistic or ideological use. In other respects attempts to decolonise education can be confused with creation of one homogenised national identity instead of another dominant narrative. This threatens to suppress internal diversity and questioning especially on a plural society as in India. Such scholars like Ashis Nandy (1988) warn about the perils of cultural essentialism and politicisation of tradition. On the same note, Homi K. Bhabha (1994) also urges the need to acknowledge cultural hybridity and the need to resist fixed or essentialist identities. Decolonisation should then continue to be a serious and pluralistic initiative as opposed to an instrument of ideology unification.

7.3 Pedagogical Constraints

Pedagogical capacity and especially teacher preparedness is also essential in the successful implementation of decolonised curricula. Some teachers might not be trained, and may not have the resources or institutional backing to embrace the use of critical pedagogical practises. Dialogic and transformative education requires changes in the teacher roles in that they are no longer knowledge transmitters but facilitators of critical thinking (Paulo Freire 1970). Nevertheless, such changes are

usually limited by established traditions, including rote learning, standardised testing, inflexible curricula, and so on (Apple, 2012; Biesta, 2015). As a result, decolonisation will not have a lot of practical implementation without continued investment in teacher education and professional development. Overall, to tackle such obstacles critically informed, context-sensitive and structurally oriented approach to decolonisation of education is needed.

8. Towards a Critical Pedagogical Model of Decolonised Curriculum

Based on the above discussion, this paper suggests a critical pedagogical framework that will contribute to decolonising curriculum in India. This framework transcends the content inclusion to the transformative reconfiguration of the pedagogy, epistemology and institutional practice. The model is based on the emancipatory vision of Paulo Freire (1970) that anticipates dialogue, plurality, reflexivity, and social justice, which, when put together, facilitate epistemic transformation. This strategy is congruent with the overall decolonial literature, in which it is argued that there is a need to break down hierarchical knowledge and further inclusive and participatory modes of education (Giroux, 2014; de Sousa Santos, 2015).

8.1 Dialogic Pedagogy

The decolonised curriculum is based on dialogic pedagogy. It does not support the transmission-oriented approach of banking, but focuses on interaction, co-learning, and critical engagement between teachers and students. Freire (1970) defines dialogue as the way of developing critical consciousness that would allow learners to challenge the dominant narratives and express their own points of view. Dialogic pedagogy is especially important in the Indian context in terms of ensuring that marginalised voices are heard, not only those of tribal, rural, and lower-caste communities. According to the views of Henry A. Giroux (2014), these participatory practises will turn classrooms into democracies in which knowledge is not imposed but is co-created.

8.2 Epistemic Pluralism

An decolonised curriculum should be open to epistemic pluralism; this should acknowledge the validity of different systems of knowledge. This entails the incorporation of indigenous, local and experiential information and formal academic education. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2015) supports the idea of an ecology of knowledges when different epistemologies exist and interrelate without subordination. In India, this means the appreciation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, vernacular traditions, and practises that used to be marginalised by the communities. Nevertheless, epistemic pluralism mandates that one critically interacts as opposed to blindly assimilating and makes all systems of knowledge open to be reflected and discussed (Battiste, 2019).

8.3 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an essential aspect of decolonising pedagogy and both teachers and students are supposed to critically look at their assumptions, prejudices and positionalities. This includes challenging the presumption of the authority of the dominant knowledge systems and the socio-political settings in which knowledge is created. Such critical self-awareness is emphasised by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) as the way to counter epistemic marginalisation and allow the subaltern to have a voice. Reflexivity practises can help learners to rise beyond the passive acceptance to the active criticism to enable them to engage intellectually and be morally responsible (De Andreotti, 2014).

8.4 Social Justice Orientation

In essence, a decolonised curriculum should be social justice-oriented, calculating structural inequalities based on caste, class, gender, language, and ethnicity. In this case, education is not only a method of bringing knowledge but also a social change. Freire (1970) highlights the point that critical pedagogy is political by nature and it is oriented towards oppression and emancipation. This requires engaging in a fight against systemic inequalities inherent in access to education, the content of the curriculum and the method of pedagogy in India (Guru, 2011; Apple, 2012). Social justice orientation will therefore make sure that decolonisation is not based in the imaginary lives of the learners and be used to build a more representative and democratic society.

Overall, this critical pedagogical paradigm offers an all-encompassing framework of rethinking of curriculum as a place of dialogue, plurality, reflexivity, and justice and pushing the whole project of decolonising education forward.

9. Implications

The decolonisation curriculum project has far-reaching consequences in educational policy, teacher education as well as research in the future. Beyond rhetoric commitments, it requires systematic and long-term reforms that touch on the structural, pedagogic and epistemic aspects of education. Researchers point out to the fact that in case of the lack of the institutional alignment, decolonisation will be not more than a formality (De Andreotti, 2014; Apple, 2012).

9.1 Policy

On the policy level, the decolonisation process should be aligned with the movement of representational inclusion to structural changes in the curriculum framework, assessment systems, and institutional priorities. Although the initiatives like the National Education Policy 2020 are an indication that there is a willingness to encourage the inclusion of Indian knowledge systems, and multilingualism, their success hinges on their fidelity to implementation and critical orientation. Epistemic diversity, fair accessibility and relevance to context should be key priorities of the policies so that marginal knowledge systems are not attached, but rather integrated in a meaningful way (de Sousa Santos, 2015). Moreover, systemic inequity

based on caste, language, and region must be discussed within the framework of the policy, and, in this way, educational reform should be aligned with the overall objectives of social justice (Tilak, 2015).

9.2 Teacher Education

The issue of teacher training is central in the process of decolonising the curriculum. Teachers are not supposed to be armed with only the knowledge of the contents; they should also possess critical pedagogical skills. Based on the work of Paulo Freire (1970) teacher training programme must focus on dialogic teacher training, critical reflection and learner-focused. Moreover, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) must be incorporated in the educational process that will compel the teacher to work with local contexts and community knowledge and leave textbook-focused teaching (Battiste, 2019). Bilingual instructional practises are also needed, especially in language heterogeneous settings such as India, where language may serve as a facilitator and an obstacle to education (Mohanty, 2018). These approaches might not be effectively implemented by teachers without the support of a long-term professional development and institutional context.

9.3 Research

Decolonisation of curriculum also presents new avenues to research in education. The need to conduct empirical research is acute to find out the way, in which the decolonial and critical pedagogical frameworks are put to practical use in the classroom and to determine their effects on student learning. These studies must use context-sensitive and participatory research approaches and appreciate learners and communities as co-producers of knowledge (Smith, 2012). Also, research on the subject of community involvement can inform about how the knowledge systems existing in the localities can be effectively incorporated into formal education. Some scholars, including Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), note that the methods of decolonising research, rather than the research practises, should be focused on, as these need not support the same hierarchies that they are intended to challenge.

Overall, the results of decolonising curriculum are spread on the various levels of the education system making it necessary to coordinate the actions of policy changes, teacher training and research innovation.

10. Conclusion

Decolonising the curriculum in India should not be viewed as a one-time move to reform the national education system but as a continuous process of epistemic change that could be involved in the historical, cultural and political aspects of education. It involves a systematic critical challenge of prevailing knowledge regimes, pedagogical regime and institutional formations that are still reproducing colonial histories. The fact that Eurocentric epistemologies remain embedded in postcolonial systems of education despite scholarly advocacy is an indication that there is a need to further reform the manner in which knowledge is

generated, authorised and conveyed (Kumar, 2005; Walter Mignolo, 2011).

Taking the prism of critical pedagogy, the decolonisation process becomes a revolutionary one that is directed at social justice and emancipation. Paulo Freire (1970) also conceptualises education as a practise of freedom in which learners come to build critical consciousness and also take active part in creating their social realities. Such as in the Indian case, regarding inequalities in caste, class, language and indigeneity that are deeply rooted, and developing educational spaces that are inclusive, dialogic and participatory (Guru, 2011; Apple, 2012). Decolonisation then is not only about the content of the curriculum but also reconsidering education as a place of democratic participation and critical questioning.

Notably, decolonisation should not be done through the traps of epistemic replacement or cultural essentialism. Instead of substituting Western knowledge with the homogenised concept of the so-called Indian knowledge, the risk of creating new forms of marginalisation and exclusion may be observed. Rather, they are made to be hybrid and historically influenced, as Homi K. Bhabha (1994) suggests, in the form of cultural and epistemic identities. The decolonised curriculum must therefore promote epistemic pluralism whereby different knowledge systems can co-exist, interact and engage each other critically. This is consistent with the fact that researchers such as de Sousa Santos (2015) have suggested an ecology of knowledges, which highlights the existence of various epistemologies without subordination.

Besides, decolonisation should be based on reflexivity and ethical responsibility. To make sure that decolonial work is not turn into a symbol or becomes absorbed by the mainstream ideologies, educators, policymakers, and researchers should constantly analyse their own assumptions and positionalities (De Andreotti, 2014). This involves being committed to keep on talking and critically reflecting and the institutional accountability.

To sum up, decolonisation curriculum in India involves the development of a pluralistic, dialogic and emancipatory pedagogical space that is reminiscent of the diversity and complexity of the Indian society. It is an ongoing, dynamic process that aims not only at changing education but also at having a part in larger projects of social justice, democratic change.

11. Acknowledgement

The author is grateful to the help of colleagues and friends who have supported him all through the execution of this research work. The author is also very grateful to all the well-wishers and supporters who always gave him the encouragement and motivation to go through with this paper and without them, this paper could not have been completed within the expected time.

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