

13. National Education Policy – 2020: A Bird's View

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Abstract:

New education policy is a positive step towards nation building and growth. On 29th July 2020, the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi approved the NEP 2020 with an aim to transform the India's Education system by 2040. The foundational principles of NEP 2020 are the access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability. This policy believes that the education system should develop good human beings with the rational thinking, empathy, courage, compassion, creative imagination, scientific temper and ethical values. National Education Policy 2020 is a big revolution replacing the 34 year old policy idea and brings about the needed and updated modification in the Indian education system. NEP has the potential to upgrade the skills of the youth of the country and the NEP has all the tools that are needed to be competitive at the global level. This paper mainly focuses on NEP 2020 and its objectives. It also outlines the salient features and concludes with the minimum limitations which is faced by NEP 2020 policy.

Keywords:

NEP, Education, Pedagogy, Mentoring.

Introduction:

The National Policy on Education was framed in 1986 and modified in 1992. Since then several changes have taken place that calls for a revision of the Policy. The National Education Policy is of the First Education policy of 21st Century which aims to address the developmental imperatives of our country. This policy modifies all

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the aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance in order to create a new system of educational policy. The national educational policy emphasises on the development of each and every individual to enhance their creative potential.

Salient features of the NEP 2020 are:

1. School Education

It ensures Universal Access at all levels of school education NEP 2020 emphasizes on ensuring universal access to school education at all levels- preschool to secondary. About 2 crore out of school children will be brought back into main stream under NEP 2020.

2. Early Childhood Care & Education with new Curricular and Pedagogical Structure

NCERT will develop a National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE) for children up to the age of 8 . ECCE will be delivered through a significantly expanded and strengthened system of institutions including Anganwadis and pre-schools that will have teachers and Anganwadi workers trained in the ECCE pedagogy and curriculum.

3. Attaining Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

Recognizing Foundational Literacy and Numeracy as an urgent and necessary prerequisite to learning, NEP 2020 calls for setting up of a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy by MHRD.

4. Reforms in school curricula and pedagogy

IN the NEP the school curricula and pedagogy will aim for holistic development of learners by equipping them with the key 21st century skills, reduction in curricular content to enhance essential learning and critical thinking and greater focus on experiential learning. Students will have increased flexibility and choice of subjects. There will be no rigid separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams.

5. Multilingualism and the power of language

The policy has emphasized mother tongue/local language/regional language as the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond. Sanskrit to be offered at all levels of school and higher education as an option for students, including in the three-language formula. Other classical languages and literatures of India also to be available as options. No language will be imposed on any student.

6. Assessment Reforms

NEP 2020 envisages a shift from summative assessment to regular and formative assessment, which is more competency-based, promotes learning and development, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity. All students will take school examinations in Grades 3, 5, and 8 which will be conducted by the appropriate authority. Board exams for Grades 10 and 12 will be continued, but redesigned with holistic development as the aim. A new National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), will be set up as a standard-setting body .

7. Equitable and Inclusive Education

The NEP 2020 has the aim to ensure that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background. Special emphasis will be given on Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which include gender, socio-cultural, and geographical identities and disabilities.

Every state/district will be encouraged to establish “Bal Bhavans” as a special daytime boarding school, to participate in art-related, career-related, and play-related activities. Free school infrastructure can be used as Samajik Chetna Kendras.

8. Robust Teacher Recruitment and Career Path

Teachers will be recruited through robust, transparent processes. Promotions will be merit-based, with a mechanism for multi-source periodic performance appraisals and available

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progression paths to become educational administrators or teacher educators. A common National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by the National Council for Teacher Education by 2022, in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers and expert organizations from across levels and regions.

9. School Governance

Schools can be organized into complexes or clusters which will be the basic unit of governance and ensure availability of all resources including infrastructure, academic libraries and a strong professional teacher community.

10. Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education

NEP 2020 envisages clear, separate systems for policy making, regulation, operations and academic matters. States/UTs will set up independent State School Standards Authority (SSSA). Transparent public self-disclosure of all the basic regulatory information, as laid down by the SSSA, will be used extensively for public oversight and accountability. The SCERT will develop a School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework (SQAAF) through consultations with all stakeholders.

11. Holistic Multidisciplinary Education

Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.

The National Research Foundation will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.

12. Regulation

Higher Education Commission of India(HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. HECI to have four independent verticals - National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC) for standard setting, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding, and National Accreditation Council(NAC) for

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accreditation. HECI will function through faceless intervention through technology, & will have powers to penalise HEIs not conforming to norms and standards. Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.

13. Motivated, Energized, and Capable Faculty

NEP makes recommendations for motivating, energizing, and building capacity of faculty through clearly defined, independent, transparent recruitment, freedom to design curricula/pedagogy, incentivising excellence, movement into institutional leadership. Faculty not delivering on basic norms will be held accountable

14. Teacher Education

A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree. Stringent action will be taken against substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).

15. Mentoring Mission

A National Mission for Mentoring will be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty – including those with the ability to teach in Indian languages – who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

16. Financial support for students

This policy efforts to incentivize the merit of students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, and other SEDGs. The National Scholarship Portal will be expanded to support, foster, and track the progress of students receiving scholarships. Private HEIs will be encouraged to offer larger numbers of free ships and scholarships to their students.

17. Open and Distance Learning

In the NEP many measures such as online courses and digital repositories, funding for research, improved student services,

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credit-based recognition of MOOCs, etc., will be taken to ensure it is at par with the highest quality in-class programmes.

The NEP, which is designed to ease the burden of classroom teaching and examination on students, will play an important role in creating the future of the country. It's success, however, lies in uniform and transparent implementation at all levels, with an equitable distribution of resources. This mammoth task can be realized only when there is a 100% cooperation and collaboration between the Central, State Government and the Ministry of Education.

Conclusion about NEP 2020

The NEP is a product of an extensive exercise that strives to achieve a 100 per cent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 2030. The policy intends to create a future where the child is at the heart of research-based, individualized learning.

The success of this new education policy will depend on how it is implemented. Therefore, it can be said that India is the country with the youngest population and India's future will depend on providing high-quality educational opportunities to these

With a clear focus on equity, inclusivity and digital literacy, the reforms under NEP 2020 aim to transform India into a knowledge superpower. It brings the Indian education system on par with global practices in the segment while creating a tech-driven generation who are ready to plunge into the future workforce.

By incorporating sustainable development goals (SDG) and the ethos of Indian philosophy in the curricula, NEP will create a generation of Young India with well-rounded critical skills and an innovative approach to work and life.

