
Importance of National Education Policy-2020 in Imparting Education

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Abstract:

The year 2020 has been an exceptional year for countries across the globe. In India, apart from Covid-19, one of the important changes that took place was the development of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Time by time, various committees have recommended to increase the allocation of the budget for education to 6% of the GDP, this has lead to the interests of researchers. This paper aims to identify the concerns and focus of NEP 2020. NEP-2020 is an innovative and futuristic proposal with both positive and negative aspects, framed with the objective to provide a quality school education and higher education to everyone with an expectation of holistic & research-oriented progress. This paper initially depicts an overview of NEP-2020, distinguish the strengths & weakness of the policy at higher education & research part, evaluation of the implementation suggestions given in the policy, identifying and analyzing possible generic strategies for implementation of NEP-2020 to fulfill its objectives based on focus group discussions. The paper also includes many predictive proposals on issues like developing quality universities & colleges, institutional restructuring & consolidation, more holistic & multidisciplinary education, optimal learning environment & student support, transforming the regulatory system of higher education, technology usage & integration, and online & digital education. Finally, some recommendations are made to implement the NEP2020 effectively irrespective of various constraints.

Keywords: Indian Higher Education Policy, Implementation Strategies, Indian Higher Education System, Research and innovation focus.

Introduction

Countries plan their education systems to progress further (Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). To promote education at all economic classes and for the inclusion of common/ordinary people in the mainstream the Government of India (GOI) has formulated the National Policy on Education (NPE). This policy has broader coverage, starting from elementary school education (literacy level) to colleges for higher education (focusing specialization) – in both the settings, i.e. rural and urban. The first NPE was proposed and disseminated in 1968 by the GOI, the second policy was in 1986, and the third major reformative policy was in 2020, by the incumbent Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi (Govt. of India, 2020). National Educational Policy (NEP-2020) India has a challenge and hence goal to lift the country as a developed country by supporting developmental imperatives according to 4th goal of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030. India believes that through this new national education policy 2020, it can achieve this goal at least by 2040 with equitable access to high-quality education to everyone irrespective of social and economic background. With the vision of creating a platform to provide quality school & higher education to every citizen of the country with Indian ethos and values to transform the country as an equitable and vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by improving the quality of education at every stage by creating a new ideal system through the revision and revamping the current education structure including, policies, regulations, and control systems, the new policy NEP-2020 is designed [1-2]. Thus, it is expected that the new policy NEP-2020 is a thorough revision with less content but more skills for problem

solving, creativity for innovation, multidisciplinary and holistic for unity and integrity. The policy expects a new set of regulations to make the education pedagogy more experimental, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented learner-centered, analysis-based, flexible, enjoyable, and futuristic so that the educated output can support countries economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement, cultural preservation, and national integration.

In July 2019, Aithal P. S. et al published a paper on “Analysis of Higher Education in Indian National Education Policy Proposal 2019 and Its Implementation Challenges” which reviewed the related literature during the last few years on Indian Higher Education Policies and their consequences, salient features, and their focuses on the draft of National Education policy 2019 through content analysis. The paper highlighted various policies proposed in the draft with the special emphasis on the higher education section and compared them with the previous policies. The analysis also compared the possible effects of NEP 2019 proposal on private and public HEIs in terms of facilities & restrictions. The strength and weaknesses of the new policy proposal are identified with respect to various stakeholders and listed. The paper also contains some suggestions to realize the policy and make it defect free and effective from a public point of reference and for the prosperity of the country [2].

In August 2020, Sunil Kumar et al highlighted a new instructional procedure to see huge movements in schools and advanced edification. He has pointed the void between vision and mission would require more than the action plans and the strategy for execution. Therefore, it takes the right measures to ensure that implementation meets expectations [3].

In August 2020, Aithal, P. S. et al further published a paper on “Analysis of the Indian National Education Policy 2020 toward Achieving its Objectives” and highlighted various policies announced in the higher education system and compared them with the currently adopted system. Various innovations and predicted implications of NEP 2020 on the Indian higher education system along with its merits are discussed. Some suggestions are proposed for its effective implementation towards achieving its objectives [4].

Suryavanshi, S. (2020) has made an attempt to compare teacher education in Indian universities with that in Chinese university as a case study and concluded that autonomy is essential to faculty members and institutional leaders to innovate and explore in their teaching, research, and service. The paper also suggested that the universities must have the individual autonomy-as proposed by NEP-2020 is definitely the right step ahead [6].

Deb, P. (2020) published an article on “Vision for Foreign Universities in the National Education Policy 2020: A Critique” that deals with the internationalization of Indian higher education as one of the stated aims of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 [8].

About NEP-2020

The National Education Policy-2020 envisions an India centred education system by incorporating its tradition, culture, values, and ethos to transform the country into an equitable, sustainable, and vibrant knowledge society. The NEP-2020 is developed by considering the wide and deep historical heritage of the country and the contributions of many scholars to different subjects as the founding stone to build high quality multi-disciplinary liberal education at both school and higher & professional education level. With the objective to increase the gross enrollment ratio (GER) of school education enrollment and higher & professional education enrollment to increase from 28% and 05% to 50% and 20% respectively by 2030, by means of radical changes in the existing education policies and governance systems by introducing accountability in each stakeholder.

School Education

With the key principles of (i) respect for diversity & local context, (ii) Equity & inclusion, (iii) Community participation, (iv) Emphasizing conceptual understanding, (v) Building unique capabilities, (vi) Imparting critical thinking and creativity, (vii) Use of Technology, and (viii) continuous review, NEP-2020 has intended to focus on universal access to early child care & education. This is to be done through foundational learning curriculum, multifaceted learning models, and preparatory classes at the childhood level. Ensuring universal access to education at all levels, school education emphasizes multiple pathways, bringing back drop-outs, promoting on building schools, promoting alternative and innovative education centres, achieving desired outcomes, and peer tutoring at all levels to ensure access and opportunities to all children [4]. The salient features of school education as depicted in NEP-2020 are:

Higher Education

(Governors Conference on 'Role of NEP-2020 in Transforming Higher Education' Landmark in the history of education: DrNajmaHeptulla, Source: The Sangai Express / DIPR Imphal, September 07 2020:) A video conference of Governors and Lieutenant Governors on 'Role of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in Transforming Higher Education' was held today at New Delhi. The conference was organised by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India. The occasion was divided into different sessions such as inaugural session, interaction with Governors and Lieutenant Governors, Education Minister of States and Union Territories, Special Session on NEP-2020, Technical Session and discussion. In the interaction with Governors and Lieutenant Governors, Governor of Manipur, Dr Najma Heptulla stated that the New Education Policy-2020 will certainly be a landmark in the history of education in India, for the policy is comprehensive, holistic, far sighted and will certainly play a pivotal role in the Nation's future growth. This Policy was passed after more than three decades-the first one was framed in 1986 and modified in 1992. "During this period of more than three decades, significant changes were noticed in our country pertaining to socio- economy and the globe at large. Therefore, it appears quite legitimate that the education sector also needs to strengthen itself towards the demands of the 21st century and the needs of the people and the country. "Quality education as well as innovation and research will be the pillars on which India will become a knowledge superpower. It is, in this context, a New Education Policy is needed at this juncture, " she said. Dr Najma Heptulla added that the Government of India, accordingly, mooted the process of formulating a New Education Policy, to begin with, through the consultation process in which expert opinions, field experiences, stakeholder feedback as well as lessons learned from best practices were taken into consideration. She strongly viewed that the New Education Policy 2020 will certainly be a landmark in the history of education in India, for the policy is comprehensive, holistic, far sighted and will certainly play a pivotal role in the Nation's future growth. "The policy is welcomed by one and all of our Nation which seeks to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society. It is a pride in India as well as acceptance of the best ideas and practices in the world of learning from across the globe. It is a matter of great satisfaction to note that one of its loftier goals is to bring crores of out of school children into the school system and reduce innumerable dropouts. More importantly, to reduce the burdensome syllabus, focus on vocational education and environmental education are crucial aspects well covered by NEP. Students will be much more empowered and have the opportunity to choose the subjects they wish to study, " she added. Acknowledging NEP-2020 for barring Medical and Law Colleges, Dr. NajmaHeptulla said that the NEP also makes an attempt to improve governance by bringing in a single regulator to look after all educational institutions. This is a significant step. In addition, the NEP also aims at a holistic education by envisioning the convergence of Science and Arts streams. The focus on ethics and human and Constitutional values will go a long way in the creation of an enlightened citizenship essential for deepening our democratic roots. The Governor opined that the policy also expands the scope of foundational education, increasing the school going years from 3 to 18 instead of the prevalent 6 to 14. This will enable a more holistic development of children in the formative age group of 3-6 years.

Setting up a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy is a much needed, timely step to improve the quality of education at the primary education level NEP recognises the importance of nutrition to the all round development of children and has therefore included a provision for an energy filled breakfast, in addition to the nutritious midday meal, to help children achieve better learning outcomes. It may be mentioned that Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the inaugural session and President Ram Nath Kovind graced the conference. Minister of Education, Government of India Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' attended the conference too.

Teachers Education

The highlights of NEP-2020 for teacher's education part of higher education section [1], [2], [4] are listed below:

- 1) All stand-alone Teachers Education Institutions should convert themselves as Multi-disciplinary HETs by 2030 to offer only four-year integrated B. Ed. programme.
- 2) All schools of foundation, preparatory, middle, and secondary level should appoint 4-year integrated B. Ed. degree holders as teachers with dual major specializations (Education & Subject).
- 3) Till 2030, there will be two years B. Ed. programme for 3-year UG and one-year B. Ed. for four-year UG and those who have Master's degree in other subjects.
- 4) M. Ed. will be one-year with a research focus. The faculty profile in Departments of Education will be diverse with Ph. D. 's in different areas.
- 5) All interested senior or retired faculty will be utilized for short or long term for guiding, mentoring, or professional support for research/training/innovation. A separate National Mission for Mentoring will be established.

Conclusion

India is geared up to implement the guidelines of National Education Policy 2020 throughout the country to reform and make radical changes in school education and higher education with an objective of creating a new education system which should empower the youngsters and boost their confidence to create new knowledge, new skills, along with human values to solve current and future problems and challenges of the civilized society by means of their enhanced innovative ability and tech-savviness. It is known that technology which is an application of scientific thinking has the capabilities to improve the quality of life of everyone in this universe and quality education is the foundation for it. With the objective of providing value based, knowledge based, and skill based higher education for everyone in the country, the new education policy has many intrinsic propositions to improve the quality of school and higher education to creating interest in their chosen area to find challenges and converting them into opportunities by discovering innovative solutions to make life comfortable and successful with expected happiness. The quality higher education has the objective of developing human beings who are responsible for creating better society by means of improved human value-based discipline, and respecting each other for growth and prosperity. Quality higher education also makes everyone to contribute to discovering new technology, adopting new technology, or promoting new technology which can contribute to the progress of society. It is expected that the new education policy which is research focussed, will accelerate the attainment of the above objectives and makes every stakeholder as innovator.

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