



A Brief Review Of New Education Policy Of India 2020 And Higher Education

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Abstract: It is a well-known fact that a well-defined, visionary, and futuristic education policy is a must for every country because education is the key driver of economic and social progress. Taking into account their respective traditions and cultures, different countries have adopted varied education systems. The Government of India recently announced its New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which aims to transform our country into a more equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all. It is a welcome step that will bring about a paradigm shift in India's education system and transform it into a modern, progressive, and equitable one. This conceptual research article is based on NEP 2020 and focuses on higher education (HE). The authors of the article intend to discuss background and emergence; highlight vision, focus thrust areas, and principle guidelines; and necessarily bring out features, impact areas, and opportunities for stakeholders as well. Finally, emphasising the need for planned, systematic, and careful implementation of the policy.

Keywords: National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), Higher Education, Quality Education

INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society, and promoting national development. Providing universal access to quality education is the key to India's continued ascent and leadership on the global stage in terms

of economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement, national integration, and cultural preservation. Universal, high-quality education is the best way forward for developing and maximising our country's rich talents and resources for the good of the individual, the society, the country, and the world. India will have the highest population of young people in the world over the next decade, and our ability to provide high-quality educational opportunities to them will determine the future of our country.

The global education development agenda reflected in Goal 4 (SDG 4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by India in 2015, seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030. Such a lofty goal will require the entire education system to be reconfigured to support and foster learning so that all of the critical targets and goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be achieved.

The world is undergoing rapid changes in the knowledge landscape. With various dramatic scientific and technological advances, such as the rise of big data, machine learning, and artificial intelligence, many unskilled jobs worldwide may be taken over by machines, while the need for a skilled workforce, particularly involving mathematics, computer science, and data science, in conjunction with multidisciplinary abilities across the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, will be increasingly in greater demand. With climate change, increasing pollution, and depleting natural resources, there will be a sizeable shift in how we meet the world's energy, water, food, and sanitation needs, again resulting in the need for new skilled labour, particularly in biology, chemistry, physics, agriculture, climate science, and social science. The growing emergence of epidemics and pandemics will also call for collaborative research in infectious disease management and the development of vaccines, and the resultant social issues heighten the need for multidisciplinary learning. There will be a growing demand for humanities and art as India moves towards becoming a developed country as well as one of the three largest economies in the world.

Indeed, with the quickly changing employment landscape and global ecosystem, it is becoming increasingly critical that children not only learn but, more importantly, learn how to learn. Education thus must move towards less content and more learning about how to think critically and solve problems, how to be creative and multidisciplinary, and how to innovate, adapt, and absorb new material in novel and changing fields. Pedagogy must evolve to make education more experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centered, discussion-based, flexible, and, of course, enjoyable. The curriculum must include basic arts, crafts, humanities, games, sports, and fitness, as well as languages, literature, culture, and values, in addition to science and mathematics, to develop all aspects and capabilities of learners and make education more well-rounded, useful, and fulfilling to the learner. Education must build character; enable learners to be ethical,

rational, compassionate, and caring, while at the same time preparing them for gainful, fulfilling employment.

The gap between the current state of learning outcomes and what is required must be bridged through undertaking major reforms that bring the highest quality, equity, and integrity into the system, from early childhood care and education through higher education.

The aim must be for India to have an education system by 2040 that is second to none, with equitable access to the highest-quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background.

This National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. This policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, including SDG 4, while building upon India's traditions and value systems. The National Education Policy lays particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities—both the "foundational capacities" of literacy and numeracy and "higher-order" cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving—but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions.

The teacher must be at the centre of the fundamental reforms in the education system. The new education policy must help re-establish teachers at all levels as the most respected and essential members of our society because they truly shape our next generation of citizens. It must do everything possible to empower teachers and help them do their jobs as effectively as possible. The new education policy must help recruit the very best and brightest to enter the teaching profession at all levels by ensuring livelihood, respect, dignity, and autonomy, while also instilling in the system basic methods of quality control and accountability.

The new education policy must provide all students, irrespective of their place of residence, with a quality education system, with particular focus on historically marginalized, disadvantaged, and underrepresented groups. Education is a great leveler and is the best tool for achieving economic and social mobility, inclusion, and equality. Initiatives must be in place to ensure that all students from such groups, despite inherent obstacles, are provided with various targeted opportunities to enter and excel in the educational system.

These elements must be incorporated, taking into account the local and global needs of the country and with respect for and deference to its rich diversity and culture. Instilling

knowledge of India and its varied social, cultural, and technological needs, its inimitable artistic, language, and knowledge traditions, and its strong ethical standards in India's young people is considered critical for purposes of national pride, self-confidence, self-knowledge, cooperation, and integration.

Previous Policies

The implementation of previous policies on education has focused largely on issues of access and equity. The unfinished agenda of the National Policy on Education (1986), modified in 1992 (NPE 1986/92), is appropriately dealt with in this policy. A major development since the last policy of 1986–92 has been the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, which laid down the legal underpinnings for achieving universal elementary education.

Principles of this Policy

The goal of education is to create good people who are capable of rational thought and action, who have compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, and who have strong ethical moorings and values. It aims at producing engaged, productive, and contributing citizens for building an equitable, inclusive, and plural society as envisaged by our Constitution.

A good education institution is one in which every student feels welcomed and cared for, where a safe and stimulating learning environment exists, where a wide range of learning experiences are offered, and where good physical infrastructure and appropriate resources conducive to learning are available to all students. Attaining these qualities must be the goal of every educational institution. However, at the same time, there must also be seamless integration and coordination across institutions and across all stages of education.

The fundamental principles that will guide both the education system at large as well as the individual institutions within it are:

- **recognizing, identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each student**, by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres;
- **according the highest priority to achieving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy** by all students by Grade 3;
- **flexibility**, so that learners have the ability to choose their learning trajectories and programmes, and thereby choose their own paths in life according to their talents and interests;

- **no hard separations** between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning;
- multidisciplinary and a **holistic education** across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary world in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge;
- **emphasis on conceptual understanding** rather than rote learning and learning-for-exams;
- **creativity and critical thinking** to encourage logical decision-making and innovation;
- **ethics and human & Constitutional values** like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice;
- **promoting multilingualism and the power of language** in teaching and learning;
- **life skills** such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience;
- **focus on regular formative assessment for learning** rather than the summative assessment that encourages today's 'coaching culture';
- **extensive use of technology** in teaching and learning, removing language barriers, increasing access for Divyang students, and educational planning and management;
- **respect for diversity and respect for the local context** in all curriculum, pedagogy, and policy, always keeping in mind that education is a concurrent subject;
- **full equity and inclusion** as the cornerstone of all educational decisions to ensure that all students are able to thrive in the education system;
- **synergy in curriculum across all levels of education** from early childhood care and education to school education to higher education;
- **teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process** – their recruitment, continuous professional development, positive working environments and service conditions;
- a '**light but tight**' **regulatory framework** to ensure **integrity, transparency, and resource efficiency** of the educational system through audit and public disclosure while encouraging innovation and out-of-the-box ideas through **autonomy, good governance, and empowerment**;
- **outstanding research** as a co-requisite for outstanding education and development;
- continuous review of progress based on sustained research and regular assessment by educational experts;
- **a rootedness and pride in India**, and its rich, diverse, ancient and modern culture and knowledge systems and traditions;

- **education is a public service;** access to quality education must be considered a basic right of every child;
- **substantial investment in a strong, vibrant public education system** as well as the encouragement and facilitation of true philanthropic private and community participation.

However, these guiding principles need to be followed in the process of implementation of the National Education Policy i.e. NEP 2020. They will certainly help to keep aside the hurdles in its smooth implementation and to overcome the challenges as well.

The Vision of this Policy

This National Education Policy envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India, that is Bharat, sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high-quality education to all, and thereby making India a global knowledge superpower. The Policy envisages that the curriculum and pedagogy of our institutions must develop among the students a deep sense of respect towards the Fundamental Duties and Constitutional values, bonding with one's country, and a conscious awareness of one's roles and responsibilities in a changing world. The vision of the Policy is to instill among the learners a deep-rooted pride in being Indian, not only in thought, but also in spirit, intellect, and deeds, as well as to develop knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions that support responsible commitment to human rights, sustainable development and living, and global well-being, thereby reflecting a truly global citizen

NPE, 2020 AND HIGHER EDUCATION

NEP 2020, the national education policy, aspires to modernise education while maintaining the learner at its core. It builds on the recommendations of the Education Commission (1966–1966), the Justice J. S. Verma Commission (2012), and earlier iterations of the policy, such as the National Policy on Education (1986–1992), which was modified in 1992, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009–2009), and the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016–2016). Indeed, it represents a giant step towards proper education. In ensuring access, relevance, equity, quality, and solid fundamental learning, it primarily focuses on the overall development of kids. Stakeholders in the education sector can take advantage of the policy's many advantages. It aims to integrate curriculum throughout all levels of education, from early care and education to high school and college. Reforms in assessment, which have been long overdue, are another area of attention. The most essential aim of NEP 2020 is to ensure that everyone has access to opportunities for lifelong learning throughout the course of the following ten years, putting India on the path to achieving the 2030 Agenda's goals for sustainable development.

Higher Education (HE) is a key part of Education System (ES) in choosing the economy, social standing, acceptance of technology, and healthy human behaviour in every country," is a statement that is true. The policy's main objectives are to improve the quality of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and establish India as a centre for international education. The emphasis is on offering a flexible curriculum through an interdisciplinary approach, generating numerous departure points in a four-year undergraduate degree that would catalyse research, strengthening faculty support, and expanding internationalisation. Concern about policy, specifically with regard to higher education, is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Features, Impact Areas and Opportunities to Stakeholders

| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact Areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to Stakeholders |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of vocational education with higher education • Enhanced equity and inclusion • Movement towards multi-disciplinary and integrated teacher education programmes • Conversion of existing standalone institutions to multi-disciplinary Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) • Three -tiered institutional structure i.e. Research Universities, Teaching Universities, and Autonomous Colleges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality universities and colleges through large-scale consolidation Institutional restructuring and consolidation Focus on multi-disciplinary education • Accessible and inclusive higher education system Enhanced equity and inclusion Improving equity and access through ODL and online programmes • Quality and well incentivised faculty Addressing faculty shortage and quality Catalysing research through NRF | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Governments Better outcome monitoring and resource sharing Improved budgetary efficiency enhancing educational outcomes • HEIs Ease of starting and operating HEIs through clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities Increased academic and administrative autonomy Opportunities of expansion and for increasing enrolments in terms of ODL and online programmes Development of own vocational courses by HEIs |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing Scale of HEIs and promoting multi-disciplinary education • Encouragement to reputed international universities • Career progression pathways for faculty • Flexible curricular structure with multiple entry and exit points • Focus on online learning and Open Distance Learning (ODL) • Establishment of National Research Foundation • Single regulator for all of higher education • Disclosure of information to public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting excellence through internalisation Internationalisation reforms • Accountability and transparency for governance Improved governance, efficiency and accountability | <p>Enhanced opportunities for private HEIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Better service environment for faculty Career advancement for faculty Minimal career gap and continuous learning for trainers through use of technology platforms Rationalisation teaching duties and greater opportunity to faculty to design curricular and pedagogical approaches • Students More opportunities to enter higher education system Greater flexibility for course choices Digital stored credits for future reference Hands –on learning and practical exposure Improved transparency by HEIs Reduced pressure on students through single common |
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| | | <p>entrance examination Greater exposure to Indian students through exchange programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry and other service providers Collaboration opportunity to industrial players in block chain, AI and predictive analytics System-wide ICT transformation leads to potential for private participation Opportunity for financial services and technology players Opportunity for industry multifaceted participation Opportunity for private sector to come ahead as expert in operation of National Education Technology Forum (NETF) |
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Source: National Education Policy 2020 (MHRD)

So, some significant elements of NEP 2020 in regard to higher education may be deduced from the features, effect areas, and opportunities to stakeholders listed above as follows.

- The policy provides for a broad-based liberal education through comprehensive but flexible curricular structures, creative study combinations, integration of vocational education, and multiple entry as well as exit points. • The policy envisages for a new vision and architecture for higher education with large, well-resourced, vibrant multi-disciplinary institutions leading towards excellence.
- As institutional governance will be based on academic, administrative, and financial autonomy, the policy encourages voluntary and self-directed governance.
- The strategy aims to guarantee that there is good regulation since there will be light but strict regulation because it will be in the
- The policy seeks to ensure good regulation, as regulation will be light but tight, as the regulation will be in the hands of independent bodies to eliminate conflicts of interest.

Although the policy document includes and calls for a number of guiding principles for its easy implementation, there are some obstacles that cannot be ignored, such as acceptance of the flexible higher education model, acceptance of the idea of multidisciplinary institutions, the need for more public funding, the need for a robust digital infrastructure, and others. A successful implementation of the policy necessitates the adoption of the fundamental principles outlined in the policy document, a radical simplification of the decision-making processes, a reordering of the budgetary resources, automation and mechanisation of the system, a shift in perspective, and the planned and systematic implementation of the new policy over the ensuing months and years.

CONCLUSIONS

Due to the fact that education promotes social and economic advancement, it is commonly known that a nation's school, college, and university systems require a well-defined, well-designed, and comprehensive education strategy. Even now, adopting a suitable educational system is essential in light of the current circumstances. In other words, it is a well-known truth that a sound education policy always results in good, high-quality education in a nation. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is an admirable and ambitious attempt to modernise, advance, and equalise India's educational system. NEP 2020 is in line with the 2030 Framework for Sustainable Development and is based on the fundamental pillars of access, equality, quality, affordability, and accountability (SD). By enhancing the comprehensive, adaptable, multidisciplinary, and needs-based nature of both school and college education, it seeks to convert India into a thriving knowledge society and a worldwide knowledge superpower. The policy requires massive implementation on a scale that has never been tried before in the history of the globe. The real changes will begin with the school year 2021–2022 and last through 2030, when it is anticipated that the first stage of changes will become apparent. Although the aim is lofty, its effective execution depends on how well would-be implementers comprehend the difficulties and attempt to overcome them. It takes a significant amount of acceptance, dedication, optimism, and attitude and

mindset adjustment. With the announcement of its new education strategy, the Indian government has made a significant advancement. Even the NEP 2020 drafting committee has put a lot of effort into creating a policy that takes into account many points of view, international best practises in education, real-world experiences, and comments from stakeholders. While the goal is lofty, the implementation roadmap will determine whether it actually promotes a comprehensive education that prepares students for the workplace and the future.

In conclusion, the authors want to convince the reader that the timing of the policy and the nature of its goal are impeccable. Yet there is a huge difference between putting a policy in writing and really adhering to it. How well the government, universities, and schools navigate the logistical difficulties they face will greatly influence NEP 2020's success and the pace of its implementation. We Indians must persist in overcoming significant execution hurdles over the ensuing years and decades if we are to achieve the visions it contains. To sum up, the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) introduces bold improvements that might overhaul the educational system. The key, however, is its effective implementation and execution.

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