

Impact of National Education Policy 2020 on Higher Education

Education is a lifelong process by which people learn new ways of action and thought. It encourages changes in behaviour which aim at improving the human conditions. Education plays a vital role in introducing the culture of the society among the students. In view of an essential education system The National Education Policy 2020 is built on the foundational pillars of Access, Quality, Affordability and Accountability. It also laid stress on cultivation of moral values and a closer relation between education and the life of the people. The National Education Policy 2020 replaces the National Policy on Education of 1986. In January 2015, a committee under former Cabinet Secretary T. S. R. Subramanian started the consultation process for the New Education Policy. Based on the committee report, in June 2017, the draft NEP was submitted in 2019 by a panel led by former Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) chief Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan. The Draft New Education Policy (DNEP) 2019 was later released by Ministry of Human Resource Development, followed by a number of public consultations. T74 Draft NEP was 484 pages. The Ministry undertook a rigorous consultation process in formulating the draft policy; “Over two lakh suggestions from 2.5 lakh gram panchayats, 6,600 blocks, 6,000 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), 676 districts were received.” The vision of the National Education Policy is: “National Education Policy 2020 envisions an India-centric education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all.” Himachal Pradesh has become the first state to implement New Education Policy 2020. The national educational policy should be implemented in all schools and colleges over India by this year.

Vision of NEP 2020

The National Education Policy 2020 offers an elaborative framework so that there can be development in the educational system. It provides a concrete path to education in the country. The NEP 2020 claims that, a holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings - intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral in an integrated manner. Such an education will help develop well-rounded individuals that possess critical 21st century capacities in fields across the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields; an ethic of social engagement; soft skills, such as communication, discussion and debate; and rigorous specialization in a chosen field or fields.

The visions of NEP 2020 are enlisted as follows:

- 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 curriculum and pedagogy of our institutions must develop 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.
- To instill 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.

Merits of NEP 2020

The NEP seeks to introduce a shift from 10+2 structure to 5+3+3+4 structure, where early childhood education will be a part of formal education. In addition, the NEP 2020 focuses on reducing the curriculum content to make space for critical thinking and in turn, develop individuals with 21st century skills instilled in them.

The policy envisages the redesign of the school curriculum. However, in order to deliver the curriculum effectively, schools and concerned authorities need to train teachers and understand the pedagogical needs to make a smooth transition to the new education system. Furthermore, they need to shift the focus from teacher-centred learning to student-centred learning to foster collaborative skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving and decision-making abilities in the youth.

As the policy is student-centric and has a competency-based credit system, a student can evaluate himself/ herself by taking courses through SWAYAM, MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses), or ODLs (Online Distance Learning) at their own pace.

The reforms to the adult education system attract adults to join and begin or complete their incomplete education and the multidisciplinary approach to syllabi ensures the students excel in the subjects they have chosen.

With the introduction of vocational classes into the school curriculum, the heritage of the country prospers. It also promotes the growth of a skilled workforce. The volunteer system, wherein volunteers are accepted at local schools to educate students, helps to best the quality of education.

The NEP focuses on formative assessment for learning rather than summative assessment. The primary purpose of changing the assessment system is to promote continuous tracking of

learning outcomes. However, continuous assessment requires schools and teachers to use innovative evaluation approaches and assignments.

Arts and music are introduced at the early stages of education allowing the growth of the culture of the country. The differentiation in the types of HIEs helps the idea of a limited and burdenless but effective curriculum. This also helps the students to study better based on their choice of institution. The improvement to the National Scholarship Portal encourages the students to excel at studies and scholarships also improve enrollment percentages.

The NEP 2020 lays emphasis on leveraging the advantage of technology in making the youth future-ready. Inclusion of research study into the curriculum promotes the students to explore the depth of their chosen subjects. Approval of the establishment of foreign universities in the country gives more chances for global exposure.

Provisions related to Higher Education

India has one of the largest networks of higher education systems in the world, with more than 900 universities and 40,000 colleges. But GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) of India in higher education is 26.3%, which is significantly low and more than 7 Lakhs of Indian students are studying abroad. The National Education Policy 2020 essentially aims at quality of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and positioning India as a global education hub. The focus is on providing flexible curriculum through an inter-disciplinary approach, creating multiple exit points in what would be a four year undergraduate programme catalysing research, improving faculty support and increasing internationalisation.

The certain key points of NEP 2020 in respect of higher education can be derived as follows.

- The NEP aims to establish Higher Education Commission of India which will be the single regulatory body except for legal and medical education.
- There will be multiple entry and exit options for those who wish to leave the course in the middle. Their credits will be transferred through Academic Bank of Credits.
- Quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, etc. will be developed.
- Technology will be part of education planning, teaching, learning, assessment, teacher, school, and student training. The e-content to be available in regional languages, starting with 8 major languages – Kannada, Odia, Bengali among others to join the e-courses available in Hindi and English.
- World's top 100 foreign universities will be facilitated to operate in India through a new law. According to the HRD Ministry document, "such (foreign) universities will

be given special dispensation regarding regulatory, governance, and content norms on par with other autonomous institutions of India.”

- The common Entrance exam for all higher education institutes to be held by National Testing Agency (NTA). The exam will be optional.
- A Higher Education Council of India (HECI) will be set up to regulate higher education. The council's goal will be to increase gross enrolment ratio. The HECI will have **4 verticals**:

a) **National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC)**, to regulate higher education, including teacher education, while excluding medical and legal education.

b) **National Accreditation Council (NAC)**, a ‘meta-accrediting body’.

c) **Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC)**, for funding and financing of universities and colleges. This will replace the existing National Council for Teacher Education, All India Council for Technical Education and the University Grants Commission.

d) **General Education Council (GEC)**, to frame ‘graduate attributes’, namely the learning outcomes expected. It will also be responsible in framing a National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF). The National Council for Teacher Education will come under the GEC, as a professional standard setting body (PSSB).

Multiple entries and exit in the undergraduate curriculum in the National Education Policy 2020. The system has been adopted under this, in a three or four year undergraduate program, students will be able to leave the course at different levels and they will be awarded degrees or certificates accordingly. Like, Certificate after one year, Advanced Diploma after two years, and Bachelor’s degree after three years after four years, Graduate Certificate with research. Students doing four years degree will be able to do Ph.D. with MA in one year. MPhil program has been abolished in the new education policy. The Academic Bank of Credit will be formed through this policy. In this, the digit or credit received by the students will be preserved digitally.

There will be provision of all the facilities required to provide, comfortable, safe and quality education such as, adequate hostels, medical facilities, counselling center, various clubs like, sports, art, culture, eco, activity community service so on and so forth will be established. Departments such as art, dance, economics, education, indology, language, literature, mathematics, music, philosophy, pure and applied science, sociology, sports, statistics, translation and interpretation shall be established and strengthened in all the HEIs.

Provisions for Vocational Education

Vocational courses to be included in all the bachelor's degree programs. By 2025, 50% of learners shall have exposure to vocational education. Higher Education Institutions to provide vocational education individually or in collaboration with industry/NGOs and vocational education through ODL mode will be explored. "Lok Vidya" the traditional Indian vocational knowledge will be integrated. National Committee for Integration of Vocational Education under Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD) will be established. Indian Standards (ISI) to be aligned with International Standard Classification of Occupations with the help of credit-based framework, cross mobility between the general and vocational education to be facilitated.

Provisions for Online and Distance Education

National Educational Technological Farm will be formed to promote digital education. It will carry out the work of coordination for digital infrastructure, materials, and capacity building. With this, study and assessment technology along with teaching training is an important part will form. To ensure the preparation of alternative means of quality education, the Ministry of Education will become a dedicated entity for digital infrastructure, digital content, and capacity building to cater to the e-education needs of both school and higher education. Technology will be part of education planning, teaching, learning, assessment, teacher, school, and student training. The e-content will be made available for study in regional languages.

Provisions for Teachers

The NEP 2020 in the preamble well articulates grounding the entire education system in Indian culture, values, traditions, wisdom, and nationalism. This needs further reflection and practical formulation for schooling as well as teacher education in-context. Every system of teacher education in the world is grounded in its own culture, values, and life styles. For the Indian system, it not impossible to work out in terms of educational goals, curriculum design and transaction, interaction and engagement, self-reflection, assessment and evaluation, and the like if educators sit together in appreciation of each other's articulation toward a national (Bhartiya) system of education including teacher education.

Teacher education will gradually be moved into multidisciplinary colleges and universities by 2030. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree. The 2-year B.Ed. programmes will also be offered only for those who have already obtained Bachelor's Degrees in other specialized subjects. Adapted 1-year B.Ed. programmes for those who have completed the equivalent of 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's Degrees or who have obtained a Master's degree in a specialty

and wish to become a subject teacher in that specialty. Multidisciplinary higher education institutions having accreditation for ODL may also offer high-quality B.Ed. programmes in blended or ODL mode. The use of technology platforms such as SWAYAM/DIKSHA for online training of teachers will be encouraged.

Teachers will be recruited through robust, transparent processes. Promotions will be merit-based, and a mechanism for multi-source periodic performance appraisals will be put in place. Progression paths to become educational administrators or teacher educators will be available for the teachers. A common **National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST)** will be developed by 2022, by the National Council for Teacher Education, in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers from across levels and regions, expert bodies in vocational education, and higher education institutions etc. The standards would cover expected roles of the teacher at different levels of expertise/stage, and the competencies required for that stage. This could be adopted by states to determine all aspects of teacher career management, including tenure, professional development efforts, salary increases, promotions, and other recognitions. The professional standards will be reviewed and revised in 2030, and thereafter every ten years. A technology-based comprehensive teacher-requirement planning forecasting exercise will be conducted by each State to assess expected subject-wise teacher vacancies over the next two decades.

Teachers will be given more autonomy in choosing aspects of pedagogy, so that they may teach in the manner they find most effective for the students in their classrooms. Teachers will also focus on socio-emotional learning - a critical aspect of any student's holistic development. Teachers will be recognized for novel approaches to teaching that improve learning outcomes in their classrooms. Teachers will be given continuous opportunities for self-improvement and to learn the latest innovations and advances in their professions. These will be offered in multiple modes, including in the form of local, regional, state, national, and international workshops as well as online teacher development modules. Platforms (especially online platforms) will be developed so that teachers may share ideas and best practices.

Conclusion

It is well known fact that a good education policy always leads to good and quality education in a country. The NEP 2020 paves the way ahead for many young aspiring students to be equipped with the right skillset. It aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and higher education more

holistic, flexible, multi-disciplinary, suited to 21st century needs. Use and Integration of technology with Promoting Multi-lingualism will be a key factor for developing scientific temper, inculcating of knowledge and practice of human and constitutional values i.e. patriotism, sacrifice, non-violence, truth, honesty, peace etc. The introduction of Online and distance learning in every HIEs helps to promote education even in remote rural areas. Foreign collaborations enable local institutes to design their curriculum in alignment with international pedagogy and offer a diverse portfolio of subjects and specialization to students. The reforms to the adult education system attract adults to join and begin or complete their incomplete education. The present policy is considering the training of teachers as an important ingredient. With a multidisciplinary approach to curriculum, students get to study subjects of their choice. Due to attractive scholarship offers, study methodology, credit-based system, and curriculum, the percentage of GER in higher education is expected to increase. The role of National Testing Agency (NTA) to offer a high quality Common Aptitude Test will definitely increase the quality of the education. The heritage and culture are also uplifted with the addition of vocational classes and art and music classes, and with the inclusion of aesthetics as a part of the curriculum we can expect the youth to have a better lifestyle and India would be established as a powerful country in the world.

Dr Satya Deva Mishra
Associate Professor
Department of Philosophy
MBB College, Agartala, Tripura
E-mail: satyadevamishra@gmail.com