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A New Paradigm Shift in Education with National Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

The 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 SDG4, 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 new education policy must provide to all students, irrespective of their place of residence, 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 various targeted opportunities to enter and excel in the educational system.

Key Words: education, higher-order, 21st Century, cognitive capacities, imperatives, governance

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 maximizing 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.

Education is fundamental to maximizing human potential, developing equal and just societies, promoting and national development. Providing universal access to quality education will ensure India's continued rise on the world stage in terms of economic growth, social justice and academic equity, progress, national integration and cultural preservation., is the key to leadership. Quality universal

Page: 97



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education is the best way to develop and maximize our country's rich talents and resources for the benefit of individuals, society, nation and the world. has the largest population of young people in the world, and the future of the country will depend on whether it can provide them with quality educational opportunities. The global education development agenda, reflected in Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in India in 2015, calls for, by 2030, "a It aims to ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities." . 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 (S DGs) 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 iobs worldwide may be taken over by machines, while the need for a skilled particularly involving workforce, mathematics, computer science, and data science, in conjunction with multidisciplinary abilities across 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, ag ain 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 development of vaccines and the

resultant social issues heightens the need for multidisciplinary learning. As India becomes a developed country and one of the top three economies in the world, the demand for humanities and arts will increase. In fact, the number is only increasing due to the rapidly changing employment landscape and global ecosystem.

Earlier Policies:

The implementation of previous policies on education has focused largely on issues of access and equity. The unfinished agenda of the National Policy 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 legal underpinnings for achieving universal elementary education.

The purpose of the education system is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, with sound 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.

Vision of Policy:

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 that support responsible dispositions commitment to human rights, sustainable development and living, and global wellbeing, thereby reflecting a truly global citizen. The Policy envisages that the curriculum and pedagogy of our institutions must develop among the



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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. 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.

Aims of NEP 2020:

NEP 2020 aims to provide infrastructure support, innovative education centres to bring back dropouts into the mainstream, besides tracking students and their learning levels, facilitating multiple pathways to learning involving both formal and nonformal education modes and association of counsellors or well-trained social workers with schools. Having a single regulator for higher education institutions, multiple entry and exit options in degree courses, the low-stakes board exams, and common entrance exams for universities — these are some of the key takeaways from the new policy.

Technology Use and Integration:

India is a global leader in information and communication technology and in other cutting-edge domains, such as space. The Digital India Campaign is helping to transform the entire nation into a digitally empowered society knowledge and economy. While education will play a critical role in this transformation, technology itself will play an important role in the improvement of educational and outcomes; processes thus, the relationship between technology and education at all levels is bidirectional.

Given the explosive pace of technological development allied with the sheer

creativity of techsavvy teachers and entrepreneurs including student entrepreneurs, it is certain that technology will impact education in multiple ways, only some of which can be foreseen at the present time. New technologies involving artificial intelligence, machine learning, block chains, smart boards, handheld computing devices, adaptive computer testing for student development, and other forms of educational software hardware will not just change what students learn in the classroom but how they learn, and thus these areas and beyond will require extensive research both on the technological as well as educational fronts.

Use and integration of technology to improve multiple aspects of education will be supported and adopted, provided these interventions rigorously are evaluated transparently in relevant contexts before they are scaled up. An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration, and so on, both for school and higher education. The aim of the NETF will be to facilitate decision making on the induction, deployment, and use technology, by providing to the leadership of education institutions, State and Central governments, and other stakeholders, the latest knowledge and research as well as the opportunity to consult and share best practices.

Key Takeaways of NEP:

The NEP proposes sweeping changes including opening up of Indian higher education to foreign universities, dismantling of the UGC and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), introduction of a four-year



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multidisciplinary undergraduate programme with multiple exit options, and discontinuation of the M Phil programme. In school education, the policy focuses on overhauling the curriculum, "easier" Board exams, a reduction in the syllabus to retain "core essentials" and thrust on "experiential learning and critical thinking".

In a significant shift from the 1986 policy, which pushed for a 10+2 structure of school education, the new NEP pitches for a "5+3+3+4" design corresponding to the age groups 3-8 years (foundational stage), 8-11 (preparatory), 11-14 (middle), and 14-18 (secondary). This brings early childhood education (also known as preschool education for children of ages 3 to 5) under the ambit of formal schooling. The mid-day meal programme will be extended to pre-school children. The NEP says students until Class 5 should be taught in their mother tongue or regional The policy also proposes language. phasing out of all institutions offering single streams and that all universities and colleges must aim to become multidisciplinary by 2040.

Implementation of Reforms:

The NEP only provides a broad direction and is not mandatory to follow. Since education is a concurrent subject (both the Centre and the state governments can make laws on it), the reforms proposed can only be implemented collaboratively by the Centre and the states. This will not happen immediately. The incumbent government has set a target of 2040 to implement the entire policy. Sufficient funding is also crucial; the 1968 NEP was hamstrung by a shortage of funds.

The government plans to set up subjectwise committees with members from relevant ministries at both the central and state levels to develop implementation plans for each aspect of the NEP. The plans will list out actions to be taken by multiple bodies, including the HRD Ministry, state Education Departments, school Boards, NCERT, Central Advisory Board of Education and National Testing Agency, among others. Planning will be followed by a yearly joint review of progress against targets set.

National Education Policy – A Paradigm Shift:

The year 2020 marked a major positive breakthrough in the form of the National Education Policy 2020 — re-imagining the educational landscape through equity, inclusion and excellence in education. Though the vear started with unprecedented times, NEP 2020 was the much-needed silver lining. As complete a year to this progressive roadmap, let's look at the instructional sensitivity and mounting steps which are accelerating our progress towards the realisation of this omnibus policy. Based on the pillars of "Accessibility, Equity, Quality, Affordability, Accountability", NEP aims at transforming India into a vibrant knowledge hub.

With almost 85 per cent of brain development of children occurring before the age of 6, the policy emphasises early childhood care and education universal provisioning and equipping young children to participate and flourish in the educational ecosystem. Schools are gradually moving towards a flexible, multifaceted, play-based, multilevel, activity-based and inquiry and domainbased learning. With this overarching goal, it has already made headway towards universal access to high-quality ECCE in a phased manner.

Gradually breaking the shackles of the past in adopting a curricular framework and classroom pedagogy that is based on the

Page: 100



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5+3+3+4 system, starting at age 3, there is an emphasis on the primacy of the formative years from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future.

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart." The focus on instruction in the mother tongue is largely to celebrate the idea of being Indian, globalising Indian thoughts, eulogising the rich cultural heritage of our country and bringing it to our classrooms. The policy necessitates the continuation of the three-language formula and its implementation to promote multilingualism — a USP of the educated Indian.

2021, we have already shifted assessment gears to a diagnostic approach — from content-based assessment to competency-based, making Board exams "easier" in the sense that they test primarily core competencies rather than content memorisation. With the ongoing emphasis on transforming assessment for optimising learning and the holistic development of all students in tandem with the environment, the focus is on regular, formative and competency-based learning and development; focus on "assessment for learning", testing of higher-order skills (analysis, critical thinking and conceptual clarity, etc), multimodal assessment through multiple-choice questions to reach the top bracket of Bloom's Taxonomy, learning through reasoning, storytelling, podcasts, puppetry, etc. Report cards are becoming 360-degree holistic progress that will give comprehensive feedback on skills and capabilities, substituting the age-old system of marks.

Holistic development and a wide choice of subjects and courses are proposed as the new distinguishing feature of secondary school education. Today, the school planners and annual calendars are reflecting no hard separation amongst "curricular", "extra-curricular" and "co-curricular" activities among arts, humanities, and science or between vocational or academic streams.

With the idea that learning should be child-centric, holistic, integrated, enjoyable and engaging, schools are slowly breaking the straitjackets of arts, commerce and science streams in high school, and aiming to introduce vocational courses with internships. The policy envisages a 100 per cent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030.

It is said that the jobs of the future are yet to be invented, but with the focus on 21stcentury skills - scientific temper and evidence-based thinking, creativity and innovativeness, sense of aesthetics and art, oral and written communication, health and nutrition, physical education, wellness, fitness and sports, collaboration and teamwork, problem solving and logical reasoning, coding and computational thinking, environmental awareness, water and resources conservation, etc. — we are slowly beginning to resonate with the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Therefore, one of the targets is that curricular and initiatives including pedagogical introduction of contemporary subjects such as artificial intelligence, design thinking, holistic health, organic living, etc, are integrated.

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Page: 102