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Role of National Education Policy in Sustainable India – A Hope for Future Generations

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ABSTARCT

Developed, developing and under developed countries follow different education systems by considering the tradition and culture, adopt different stages during their life cycle at various stages of education levels to make it effectively and to provide valuable information to the students. As per the recommendations of an expert committee headed by Dr. Kasturirangan, the Govt. of India announced and approved the New Education Policy (NEP – 2020) pave the way for transformational reforms in both lower and higher education system. It is a well defined and futuristic education policy is essential for a country for economic and social progress.

This paper is a review article on New Education Policy implementation, comparisons with earlier policies at various stages of education system in India.

Key Words: New Education Policy, India, Higher Education System, Information, Implementation

Introduction:

Education plays a prominent role in any country in deciding the economy, social status, technology adoption etc. The NEP aims to facilitate an inclusive, participatory and holistic approach that takes into account field experiences, empirical research, stakeholder feedback as well as lessons learned from best practices. It is a progressive shift towards a more scientific approach in education. The prescribed structure will help to cater the ability of the child –stage of cognitive development as well as social and physical awareness.

Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability are the foundational pillars of the National Education Policy, it is the first education policy of the 21st century and replaces the thirty-four year old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. The main aim of policy is to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each student (NEP – 2020).

Evolution of Education Policies in India:

After the independence, in 1948, a commission headed by the second president of Independent India and one of the greatest teachers (in fact, the Teacher's day is celebrated on the occasion of his birth anniversary); Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

commission, tried to revamp the old policies and tried to align them for the present and future.[9] After a long gap of nearly 18 years, Kothari commission in 1966, National Education Policy 1968 and then in 1986, which was modified in 1992 (1986/92), Yashpal Committee of 1993, National Knowledge Commission of 2006, Tandon Committee of 2009 and 3rd NEP of 2019, were the major milestones in the evolution of educational reforms in India to shape the policies in correlation with the evolving challenges.

Based on five main foundation pillars, namely, access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability, NEP2020 has been aligned to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As we progress and proceed more and more, toward, the information and communication technology (ICT) oriented and artificial intelligence-dependent society, the unskilled and semi-skilled level jobs, shall be taken over by machines and computer/mathematics and technical based jobs shall be more in demand. With growing challenges due to pollution, climatic alterations, crises in basic needs and most importantly, constant looming threat of pandemics, there shall be increased requirement of jobs in physics, chemistry, biology, social sciences and infectious diseases control in an integrated manner. All of this point to a need of multidisciplinary teaching/learning process.

Thus, it would seem to be prudent to make sure that the education must have less of "content" and more of thought process, critical analysis and problem solving approach. It should make, the learner, a more creative, innovative, adaptive and multidisciplinary thinker. The pedagogy should aim 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, 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 prepare them for "gainful, fulfilling employment."The fundamental and paradigm shift between NEP2020 and previous policies is, "revision and revamping" of all the aspects of educational structure including its regulation and governance, to create a new system, that is aligned with the 21st century aspired educational goals while building on the India's traditional value system with more stress on developing the creative potential of each individual.

The Vision of the Policy:

☐ 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.

This policy envisions the following key changes to the current system:

o moving towards multidisciplinary universities and colleges, with more HEIs across India that offer medium of instruction in local/Indian languages;

o moving towards a more multidisciplinary undergraduate education;

o moving towards faculty and institutional autonomy;

o revamping curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and student support

o reaffirming the integrity of faculty and institutional leadership positions

o establishment of a National Research Foundation

o governance of HEIs by independent boards having academic and administrative autonomy;

o "light but tight" regulation by a single regulator for higher education;

o increased access, equity, and inclusion

Actual policy

There are mainly four parts, the first three being various levels of learning followed by the actual implementation.

• **Part I – School education**

• **Part II – Higher education**

• **Part III – Other key areas of focus**

• **Part IV – Making it happen (implementation).**

Part I – School Education:

1. Ensuring universal access to all levels of schooling from pre-primary to Grade 12 The ultimate target to be achieved shall be 100% gross enrollment ratio (GER). To achieve this, following initiatives shall be undertaken.

   a. Provision of effective and sufficient infrastructure

   b. Alternative and innovative education centers to minimize/reverse the dropout rate

   c. Careful tracking of learning level of students for their universal participation

   d. Continuous interaction between the teachers, counselors and specially trained social workers with the students and their parents for their continued attendance.

2. Early childhood care education:

   a. Emphasis on criticality of early years so as to ensure quality early childhood care and education for all

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the children between 3 and 6 years by 2025

b. A National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education for children up to age of 8 years by NCERT.

c. All of these activities shall be a joint venture of Ministries of HRD, Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare and Tribal Affairs.

3. New curricular and pedagogical structure:
i. Main aims shall be

a. "Experiential learning" to achieve the holistic development, with reduction in "content" to promote essential learning and critical thinking.

b. Wider flexibility and choices of subjects for them to pursue the paths of their own liking, according to their talent and interests.

c. No rigid boundary or separation between arts and science, curricular and extra-curricular activities, vocational and academic streams. All shall be integrated.

d. Equal emphasis accorded to all subjects such as science, social sciences, art, languages, sports and mathematics.

NCERT shall be entrusted to develop a new and comprehensive National Curricular Framework for School Education (NCFSE 2020–21). NCERT and SCERT shall develop high-quality textbooks and other materials. States will take the initiative in preparing their own curricula/textbooks incorporating their own local state flavor and material, with prioritizing the availability of these in all regional languages. Reducing the textbooks load and school bag weight shall be ensured.

4. Attaining foundational literacy and numeracy:

5. Multilingualism and power of language

6. Reforms in assessment

7. National entrance test

8. Equitable and inclusive education

9. Support for gifted students/students with special talents

10. Teacher recruitment and career path Recruitment, promotions

11. School governance To be streamlined.

12. Accreditation and standard setting of school education

13. Vocational education

Part II – Higher education:

1. Establishment of new quality universities and colleges

iAim: The main aim is to create good, thoughtful, well rounded and creative individuals. Such individuals may be allowed to study one or more specialized area in depth so that values such as intellectual curiosity, creativity, ethics & morality, scientific temperament and social commitment are allowed to develop, without the rigid barriers of streams, specializations

ii. To create more universities and colleges (HEIs) which offer multidisciplinary undergraduate as well as graduate programs/education with medium of

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instruction in local/Indian and other languages

iii. To establish a National Research Foundation

iv. Institutional and faculty autonomy

v. Increased access, equity, inclusion by revamping of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

2. Institutional Restructuring and consolidation

3. Toward a more holistic and multidisciplinary education

4. Optimal learning environment and support for students

5. Internationalization

6. Student activity

7. Faculty motivated, energized and capable

8. Equity and inclusion of higher education – government and HEIs equal partners

9. Impetus on vocational education

10. Research

11. Transformation of regulatory system of HEIs

12. Curbing commercialization of education

13. Effective governance and leadership for HEIs

Part III – Other key areas of focus:

1. Professional education: Health-care education:

a. All stand-alone universities be it, agricultural, health sciences, legal, technical shall transform themselves as multidisciplinary and holistic education providing HEIs

b. All institutions offering either professional or general education will aim to organically evolve into institutions/clusters offering both seamlessly and in an integrated manner by 2030

c. Health-care education needs to be re-envisioned so that the duration, structure and design of theeducational programs need to match the role requirements that graduates will play.

d. Students will be assessed at regular intervals on well-defined parameters primarily required for working in primary care and in secondary hospitals

e. Given that people exercise pluralistic choices in health care, our health-care education system must be integrative meaning thereby that all students of allopathic medical education must have a basic understanding of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy and vice versa

f. There shall also be a much greater emphasis on preventive health care and community medicine in all forms of health-care education.

2. Technology in education:
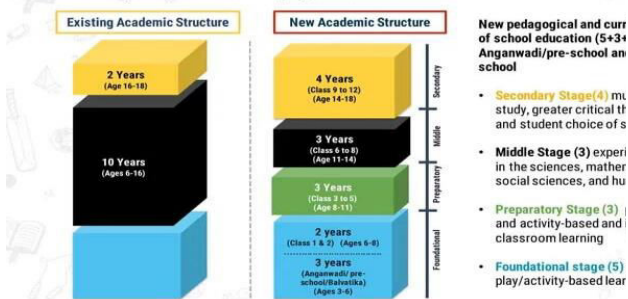
3. Online and digital education
4. The recommended key initiatives

Part IV – Making it happen (implementation)

1. Strengthening Central Advisory Board of Education
2. Redesignation of MHRD as Ministry of Education
3. Financial and other infrastructural support.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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.

NEP2020 has been unveiled, with lot of thought process, optimism, as well as fanfare by Government of India. The proposed delivery of education is extremely broad based, circumspect and all-encompassing. There are no specific compartments, boundaries and divisions. The predicted timespan is significantly prolonged, with nearly 20 + years of duration envisaged. It starts at the grass root; school level goes through the graduate and even higher level of education. Main thrust as contemplated is on multidisciplinary, holistic and broad-based education. There is also main emphasis on vocational education, which is supposed to start earlier in school phase itself. The policy is mainly divided in to three parts of delivery as per the level of the learner and fourth part as the ways to make it happen. The levels are school, higher education and other areas, specifically professional education.

NEP 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and replaces the thirty-four year old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. Built on thefoundational pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability, this policy is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each student.

The **Central Advisory Board of Education will be strengthened** to ensure coordination to bring overall focus on quality education. The remodeled and rejuvenated CABE shall also be responsible for developing, articulating, evaluating, and

revising the vision of education in the country on a continuous basis, in close collaboration with MHRD and the corresponding apex bodies of States. It shall also create and continuously review the institutional frameworks that shall help attain this vision.

Ministry of Education: In order to bring the focus back on education and learning, it may be desirable to re-designate MHRD as the Ministry of Education (MoE).

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.

These elements must be incorporated taking into account the local and global needs of the country, and with a 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 ethics in India's young people is considered critical for purposes of national pride, self-confidence, self-knowledge, cooperation, and integration.

Subject-wise implementation committees of experts in cooperation and consultation with other relevant Ministries will be set up at both the Central and State levels to develop detailed implementation plans for each aspect of this Policy in accordance with the above principles to achieve the goals of the Policy in a clear and phased manner. Yearly joint reviews of the progress of implementation of the policy, in accordance with the targets set for each action, will be conducted by designated teams constituted by MHRD and the States, and reviews will be shared with CABE. In the decade of 2030-40, the entire policy will be in an operational mode, following which another comprehensive review will be undertaken.

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