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**Article**

## National Education Policy 2020 – Issues and Concerns

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### Abstract

The paper discusses the concerns in NEP 2020. It discusses the major changes in the education system which the policy introduces and thereby raises the issues and concerns related to it. The major concerns include those related to have-nots, who can barely afford the gadgets needed for online classes. Moreover there is no more rigid separation between science, arts and commerce streams is a good idea, even the non-science will be able to study in the premier colleges like IIT's. The negative side is that the IIT's have 0.7% acceptance rate, how will they accommodate more children? It will only make situation tougher for students until and unless more IIT's come into structure to accommodate the students. Another concern in this regard is about the foreign university being set up in India. With more emphasis given to the regional languages as medium of education then how will our kids will be able to manage to their higher education in these foreign universities? How many students from the economically backward families will be able to afford these foreign universities? The global students will be able to afford these comparing to the fee system of other developed countries, but what about the Indian students who cannot afford the college fee. The Indian students will get an opportunity to study in foreign universities while being in India. Will the govt. will be able to support the education of all those deserving students who want to study in those foreign universities but cannot afford to do so. We are left with few questions. The 6% GDP on education is proposed in this

*policy, the proposal for the same was given in 1986 policy but in practical govt. has only reached to 3 to 4%. Will 6% GDP will actually be given to education? We need a Need based education today. The NEP 2020 is really a progressive one if implemented correctly.*

### **Introduction**

*“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.”*

**Malcolm X**, Civil Right Activist.

The union cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi approved National Education Policy 2020 on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and renamed the Ministry of Human Resource and Development as the Ministry of Education. The NEP 2020 will replace the 34 year old National Policy on Education, 1986. This is India’s third NEP. The draft of the new policy was prepared by a panel headed by eminent scientist Dr. K. Kasturirangan. It had been in the making over 3 to 4 years wide ranging consultations were held and Govt. received more than 2.5 lakh suggestions from a cross section of people.

### **The Vision of National Education Policy 2020**

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.

### **New Education policy at a glance** **School Education**

1. This policy envisages that the extant 10+2 structure in school education will be modified with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of 5+3+3+4 covering

ages 3-18. The current 10+2 system in the school will be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively. Under the school curriculum, this new system will bring an uncovered age group of 3 to 6 years. This is the age that has been recognized globally as the crucial stage for the development of mental faculties of a child. As per the new policy, there will be 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ pre-schooling.

2. The aim of the new policy is the universalization of education from pre-school to secondary level with 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030.
3. Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools: Learning should be Holistic, Integrated, Enjoyable, and Engaging. The Foundational Stage will consist of five years of flexible, multilevel, play/activity-based learning. The Preparatory Stage will comprise three years of education building on the play, discovery, and activity-based pedagogical and curricular style of the Foundational Stage, and will also begin to incorporate some light text books as well as aspects of more formal but interactive classroom learning, in order to lay a solid groundwork across subjects, including reading, writing, speaking, physical education, art, languages, science, and mathematics. The Middle Stage will comprise three years of education, building on the pedagogical and curricular style of the Preparatory Stage, but with the introduction of subject teachers for learning and discussion of the more abstract concepts in each subject that students will be ready for at this stage across the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, and humanities. Experiential learning within each subject, and explorations of relations among different subjects, will be encouraged and emphasized despite the introduction of more specialized subjects and subject teachers. The Secondary Stage will comprise of four years of multidisciplinary study, building on the subject-oriented pedagogical and curricular style of the Middle Stage, but with greater depth, greater critical thinking, greater attention to life aspirations, and greater flexibility and student choice of subjects.
4. Multilingualism and the power of language: Wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language/mother tongue/local language/regional language.

5. Concerted curricular and pedagogical initiatives, including the introduction of contemporary subjects such as Artificial Intelligence, Design Thinking, Holistic Health, Organic Living, Environmental Education, Global Citizenship Education (GCED), etc. at relevant stages will be undertaken to develop these various important skills in students at all levels. Activities involving coding will be introduced in Middle Stage.
6. Every student will take a fun course, during Grades 6-8, that gives a survey and hands-on experience of a sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by States and local communities and as mapped by local skilling needs. From class 6, Vocational Education will start with internships.
7. Empower students through flexibility in course choices :There will be no hard separation among 'curricular', 'extracurricular', or 'co-curricular', among 'arts', 'humanities', and 'sciences', or between 'vocational' or 'academic' streams. Choice of subjects will start from class ninth.
8. Transforming Assessment for Student Development: The progress card will be a holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report that reflects in great detail the progress as well as the uniqueness of each learner in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. It will include self-assessment and peer assessment, and progress of the child in project-based and inquiry-based learning, quizzes, role plays, group work, portfolios, etc., along with teacher assessment.
9. Through the open schooling system, the NEP 2020 will bring 2 crores out of school children back into the mainstream.
10. Proposal of expanding Right to education till class 12.

### **Approach to Teacher Education.**

Earlier teacher education was placed in school education now it has been included in higher education. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree that teaches a range of knowledge content and pedagogy and includes strong practicum training in the form of student-teaching at local schools. The 2-year B.Ed. programmes will also be offered, by the same multidisciplinary institutions offering the 4-year integrated B.Ed., and will be intended only for those who have already obtained Bachelor's Degrees in other specialized subjects. These B.Ed. programmes may

also be suitably adapted as 1-year B.Ed. programmes, and will be offered only to 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. NCTE in consultation with NCERT will formulate a new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021. The minimum degree of qualification for teaching will be 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree by 2030.

### Higher Education

1. Institutional Restructuring and Consolidation: The main thrust of this policy regarding higher education is to end the fragmentation of higher education by transforming higher education institutions into large multidisciplinary universities, colleges, and HEI clusters/Knowledge Hubs, each of which will aim to have 3,000 or more students. A new conceptual perception/understanding for what constitutes a higher education institution (HEI), i.e., a university or a college. A university will mean a multidisciplinary institution of higher learning that offers undergraduate and graduate programmes, with high quality teaching, research, and community engagement. The definition of university will thus allow a spectrum of institutions that range from those that place equal emphasis on teaching and research i.e., Research-intensive Universities, those that place greater emphasis on teaching but still conduct significant research i.e. Teaching-intensive Universities. Meanwhile, an Autonomous degree-granting College (AC) will refer to a large multidisciplinary institution of higher learning that grants undergraduate degrees and is primarily focused on undergraduate teaching though it would not be restricted to that and it need not be restricted to that and it would generally be smaller than a typical university. The present complex nomenclature of HEIs in the country such as 'deemed to be university', 'affiliating university', 'affiliating technical university', 'unitary university' shall be replaced simply by 'university' on fulfilling the criteria as per norms.
2. In higher education, Gross Enrolment Ratio to be raised to 50% by 2035 and 3.5 crore seats to be added in higher education. The aim will be to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035.
3. Higher Education curriculum to possess Flexibility of Subjects.

4. Various Entry/ Exit to be allowed with relevant certification. The undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration, with multiple exit options within this period, with appropriate certifications, e.g., a certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field including vocational and professional areas, or a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor' s degree after a 3-year programme.
5. To facilitate Transfer of Credits, the Academic Bank of Credits will be established. An Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) shall be established which would digitally store the academic credits earned from various recognized HEIs so that the degrees from an HEI can be awarded taking into account credits earned.
6. For fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education, National Research Foundation will be created as an apex body.
7. Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up for the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. It will be a single overarching umbrella body. Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will have four independent verticals namely National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC ) for standard-setting, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding, and National Accreditation Council( NAC) for accreditation.
8. In 15 years, Affiliation System to be phased out with graded autonomy to colleges.
9. Internationalization of education will be facilitated through both institutional collaborations, and student and faculty mobility and allowing entry of top world ranked universities to open campuses in India.
10. Measures such as online courses and digital repositories, funding for research, improved student services, credit-based recognition of MOOCs, etc., will be taken to ensure distance learning is at par with the highest quality in-class programs. A comprehensive set of recommendations for promoting online education consequent to the recent rise in epidemics and pandemics in order to ensure preparedness with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional modes of education are not possible, has been covered.

#### **Some other Key areas**

1. NEP 2020 will also emphasise in setting up of the Gender Inclusion Fund, Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions, and groups.

2. To increase the public investment in the education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest and for this, both the Centre and the States will work together.
3. In both schools and higher education, NEP will promote Multilingualism. Therefore, the National Institute for Pali, Persian, and Prakrit, Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation to be set up.
4. 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.

### Concerns of the NEP 2020

1. As earlier, the students had choices of 3 streams and the students were confused choosing them now after this policy it will be a tough job for the students to choose the combinations out of 40 or 50 subjects.
2. Common entrance test for the courses after 12<sup>th</sup> so this will be a tough task for the students of rural areas to crack this exam and get admission in the courses.
3. When NTA will be conducting entrance test for entering into higher education then what is the need of Board examination.
4. Before the sixth standard, a student will be introduced with subjects in regional language. Suppose a child has completed 4 years of foundation class from Assam and due to some reason the child has to shift to Kerala then how the child will be able to cope up with the subjects in Malayalam.
5. The policy is highly regulated and poorly funded. In school education establishment of Education Department (for policy making), Department of Education (monitor the govt. schools operations), School regulating authority (to regulate the Govt. and private schools), Education Commission (individual directorate at state and Centre), SCERT/ NCERT and Board of Education. All agencies will have conflicts in common decision making and will try to regulate individually. Thus policy is highly regulated. Moreover this is a poorly funded education model. Since 6% GDP for education was recommended since 1968 (in NEP 1968) but still India spends 4.6% of its total GDP in education. There is no clear cut funding solution in the policy only recommendations is there. There are no rules and regulations for funding in the policy or by the govt. so far.

6. The policy advocates the importance of preprimary education, there exists 2 models of education the existing anganwadi and preprimary schools. No equal level of education exists. Moreover for the preprimary education the policy advocates community participation/ engagement which is actually not possible as many children in the govt. schools are first generation learners. How will community volunteer specially in the rural areas?
7. It is the responsibility of the govt. to provide quality education. There is lack of initiatives to improve the existing schools but policy emphasizes on the roles of private parties. Thus there is excessive thrust on privatization and operationalization.
8. This paves ways for public private partnerships. As India is moving towards knowledge economy, more and more minds are likely to aspire for higher education, we need to lay a good foundation for that.
9. This policy advocates that by 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree that teaches a range of knowledge content and pedagogy and includes strong practicum training in the form of student-teaching at local schools, which will prepare future teachers. Presently in India 30 crore students are studying and almost 80 lakh teachers are teaching. The policy focuses on future teachers but has excluded the quality enhancement of the existing teachers. No clear cut provision for the training and updating of the existing teachers.
10. Chanakya said "The highest salaries in any country should be reserved for their teachers and for their armed forces". This policy has a chapter for teacher but does not talk about what you are going to do with the teacher. And hope this must come in the plan of action which will help in getting the best brains in the educational system.
11. The policy advocates the promotion of vocational education from the middle school. Even today there are vocational courses in schools but since the subject is given no weightage in higher education, resulting into low inclination towards vocational education in schools. How this vocational education will get a recognition in higher education for this nothing is given in the policy. It is a roadblock in the higher education.

12. The policy advocates reforms in examination in school education, the board exams will be easy and will be held two times. Assessment must focus on the learning outcomes (what the child has learnt) rather than on his rote memory.
13. Multiple entry and exits in higher education would lead to higher dropouts.
14. Autonomy to institutions of national importance will only realize their true potential when whatever is said on the paper should be actually implemented when brought into practice.
15. The NEP contention of allowing top 100 universities in world to set up campus in India will definitely increase the cost of education/ expenses.
16. Regulatory framework is required for those universities who are planning to set up campuses in India.
17. Since education comes in the concurrent list. This policy seems to be anti-democratic hence less consultation with the state. This policy promotes centralization because this policy has a point that “New teachers training board will be set up for all kinds of teachers in the country and no state can change that.” The power has been taken from the states and placed with the Centre. The decision making power is more centralized.
18. Since third language is mandatory, choice is left to the state and not to the student.
19. No regulation in the fee of the schools.
20. The progress card will be a holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report that reflects in great detail the progress as well as the uniqueness of each learner in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. It will include self-assessment and peer assessment. How peer review will be done is still a question?

### Conclusion

Any policy is only as good as its implementation. Such implementation will require multiple initiatives and actions, which will have to be taken by multiple bodies in a synchronized and systematic manner. The National Education Policy will be followed by a suitable Plan of Action which will understand the problems in implementation of the policy and due changes which are more judicial and acceptable all over the country is expected. Through this NEP 2020 government is looking forward to making India a “**global knowledge superpower.**”

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