NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY-2020: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

Well defined and futuristic education policy is essential for a country at school and college levels due to the reason that education leads to economic and social progress. Different countries adopt different education systems by considering the tradition and culture and adopt different stages during their life cycle at school and college education levels to make it effective. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29 July 2020, outlines the vision of India's new education system. The new policy replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986. The policy is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. The policy aims to transform India's education system by 2021. Shortly after the release of the policy, the government clarified that no one will be forced to study any particular language and that the medium of instruction will not be shifted from English to any regional language. The language policy in NEP is a broad guideline and advisory in nature; and it is up to the states, institutions, and schools to decide on the implementation. Education in India is a Concurrent List subject. Himachal Pradesh has become the first state to implement New Education Policy 2020. The national educational policy should be implemented in all schools over India by 2022.

KEYWORDS: Higher Education, National Education Policy 2020, NEP-2020, Overview & Analysis, Implementation Strategies, Approaches, Challenges, Opportunities of NEP 2020.

I. INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy 2020 is a welcome and ambitious re-imagination of India's education system into a modern, progressive and equitable one. Successful execution of this policy calls for dramatic simplification of decision-making structures and re-prioritization of budgetary resources in months and years to come.

Given that there are around 350 million Indians today in school-going or college-going age groups, the NEP calls for a large-scale implementation of a magnitude never before attempted anywhere in the world. This presents substantial execution challenges, both quantitative and qualitative.

Major Features of NEP-2020

The concern for improvement of education has been at the top of India's development (Saxena and Anu, 2019). The New Education Policy seeks to positively upgrades the present education system. It is bundled with some very innovative and contemporary proposals. The policy foresees a model of all-inclusive learning that is immersive, consistent and appealing.

NEP-2020 seeks to implement both informal and formal education models. Formal learning in the classroom is through the teacher's instructions and books. The new policy endeavours to take learning beyond the classroom and inspire students to learn from practical experience. From the preliminary stages of education, students will be exposed to multilingualism that will have a great cognitive advantage. A concerted effort will be put in to promote contemporary subjects such as Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning which are being touted as the career of the future. A student-centric approach will be developed to replace the current teacher-centric approach, in which the students will have

the choice to select the subjects they want to learn. Keeping in view the reputation of the rich culture and languages of India Sanskrit can be offered at all levels of school and higher education. rather than compartmentalization of humanities, art and sciences and between 1academic and vocation: education, which is indeed a revolutionary shift. The salient recommendations of NEP 2020 are:

1- The multi-disciplinary system wherein subject from different streams i.e., Science, Humanities andCommerce can be chosen which will for on innovativeness, creativity and ingenuity students.

2- The policy emphasizes skill development particularly of vocational crafts and life skills training.

3- Flexibility to choose learning trajectory. importance is given to subjects from all the stream so that students can choose subjects as per their aptitude and interest.

4- inclusive & Equitable Education System by 2030.

5- Board Exams to test core concepts and application of knowledge.6-

Every Child will come out of School adept in at least one Skills.

7-Common Standards of Learning in Public & Private Schools.

Some critical issues in implementation of NEP-2020Skill
Development
Requirement of Trained Teachers Change
Management
Legal Complexities
Inter- disciplinary Higher Education
Learning or certificate/degree Digital
connectivity
Re-thinking assessment

Skill Development

One of the major highlights of the policy is skill development, especially life skills and vocational training. The life skills training prepares children to be skilful in social behaviour, making children socially adaptable and is comparatively easier to implement. The major challenge, however, lies in imparting vocational training as there is a danger of attributing certain vocations to certain specific communities who have been traditionally dependent on certain occupations for many generations. The proposed vocational training should bebased on the identified aptitude of the students. The people need to change their perception towards vocational education while the policymakers and administrators have to introspect the reasons why India is still far from achieving the target set by Kothari Commission in 1964-66 (Kukreti, 2020).

Requirement of Trained Teachers

Implementing this policy will need trained teachers, facilitators and support staff supplemented hy a pool of inspiring mentors, Leaming need to be made an engaging and enjoyable activity rather than s monotonous routine mental workint which eventually produces unemployable youth.

Hence, the policy will have to develop a learning regime that takes into account the cultural and geographical diversity of our great nation as well as the different learning pace of each pupil. The upcoming breed of technology savvy teachers will act as mentors to students in guiding their students about new technologies and will be the main motivators and initiators of the IT implementation at schools (Gupta, 2020).

Change Management

NEP 2020 endeavours not only to improve the cognitive skills in students wherein developing high order thinking skill and critical thinking along with building the foundation of literacy but also life skills which will prepare the students for the varied challenges in their adult life. Hence the change in the curriculum and teaching methods is the need of the hour so that maximum benefit can be incurred from the new policy. NEP demands a value-based education system along with pedagogical and curriculum changes. Hence, new methods need to be improvised and innovated for the successful application of the policy.

Legal Complexities

To implement any policy, it must be in coherence. with various laws and acts. There is a legal complication. in implementing this policy as per The Right Education Act, 2009 with respect to age. Certain provisions such as the age of starting school will need to be clarified, to resolve any problem between the Act and the recently introduced policy in the long run.

Inter- disciplinary Higher Education

An inter-disciplinary educational regime is a great initiative that will provide flexibility to the students to study the subjects of their choice. For ages, Indian universities have developed in a very compartmentalized manner, scholars and professors have remained fiercely protective of their subject speciality turf. This culture. isdeep-rooted with very few exceptions and the new policy calls for changing the same. To implement ant interdisciplinary higher education model the teaching faculty need not only to be a subject expert but also leanon into other disciplines, which is not an easy task to accomplish. In order to make the system successful, thereis a need to have a disruptive cultural shift over the next decade or so.

Learning or certificate/degree

Though flexibility in the higher education model through the concept of multiple exits is an important step for reducing the number of dropouts, a question still arises on the value of such certifications and diplomas. The Indian psyche closely associates jobs with the degrees acquired. Hence, to implement the new system, we first have to dismantle the archaic thinking that only with a degree can one successfully secure a job. This is a dangerous paradigm which undermines and discourages other innate talents of an individual.

Digital connectivity

We require internet penetration in remote areas because e-learning is the way forward, as witnessed during the pandemic. Digital infrastructure for this purpose will include digital classrooms, expertise-driven online teaching models, AR/VR technologies to overcome gaps in physical teaching and lab infrastructure, uniform assessment schemes across schools, career counselling sessions and teacher training to become adept at new-age technologies. This will continue to be a major challenge in the next decade.

Re-thinking assessment

The boards that conduct school leaving examinations will have to re-think their assessment parameters for students and also identify the appropriate learning content rubric. School textbooks will have to be accordingly realigned. Formative assessment is virtually absent. How do we adapt and implement it seamlessly? As majority of K-12 learners in India are enrolled in schools with annual tuition fee below Rs 12,000; the proposed changes will have to be conveniently cascaded across different tiers of schools.

Curriculum and Content

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. Hence, all aspects of the curriculum and pedagogy need to be restructured to attain these goals.
The challenges in successfully implementing these changes include modifying the curriculum in accordance with the National Curriculum Framework. Also, educators need to rethink the learning content rubric and modify the textbooks accordingly.

Examination Structure

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. These approaches demand technological intervention and active involvement of teachers and students.
According to a study, out of the 1.5 million schools in India, 75 per cent are run by the government. Of the remaining 400,000 private schools, nearly 80 per cent schools are 'budget private schools'. Hence, deploying a continuous assessment framework is a challenging task in these schools.

II. CONCLUSION

NEP2020 is an advanced regime that will facilitate value-based education and scientific learning. It will replace the older system of 'curriculum' which is rigid and unamenable to change with changing time dues to the unwieldy bureacratic system to change it. the NEP 2020 lays emphasis on making the education system holistic, flexible and aligned to the needs of 21st-century education. However, in order to accomplish all these goals, we must overcome all the execution challenges in a sustained manner for years to come. The drafting committee of NEP 2020 has made a comprehensive attempt to design a policy that considers diverse viewpoints, global best practices in education, field experiences and stakeholders' feedback. The mission is aspirational but the implementation roadmap will decide if this will truly foster an all-inclusive education that makes learners industry and future ready.

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