



New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for Quality Higher Education

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Abstract:

Education is the means of total development of individual's potentialities. A nation can be developed if it's all citizens are educated and economically sound. Society also makes its progress by full utilization of human resources. To be a developed country, India should require a well planned education system to improve the socio-economic and cultural approaches. There are a lot of commissions, plans, programs and policies were set up for the effective development of Indian education. All these plans and policies aimed to equal educational access to all people of India, irrespective of any discrimination. The Indian constitution in its different articles from different amendments, seeks to provide educational opportunities to the Indian citizens. After the Education Policy of 1986, the New Education Policy 2020 is the largest policy that leads to reform and reconstruction of Indian education from pre-primary to higher level. It is the policy approved by the Cabinet of Indian Government proposed new curricular and pedagogical structure as 5+3+3+4 following the mother tongue or local language as medium of instruction with holistic and multidisciplinary approaches. This policy wants to focus various reforms in higher educational system also. The present study aims to describe the major highlights recommended in higher education and find out the probable benefits.

Keywords: Higher Education, NEP 2020, Development of Indian Education.

Introduction:

Education is a specific and systematic process of gaining knowledge, experiences, information, skills and attitudes to make an individual socialized, cultured and civilized. It is the only means through which children refine their unlearned inborn instincts to be socially acceptable and perfect for everyday living. It is also the way which helps to overcome problems to adjust with changing environment that leads to celebrate every moment of our beautiful life. It wakes up from deep sleep of darkness to the bright light of knowledge and wisdom. It is the only means of harmonious development of individual to shape a wonderful personality.

In the formal sense, education is the knowledge and skills acquired by individual in formal institutions.

(Aggarwal, J. C. 1996)

Higher Education:

Higher education implies in depth knowledge and understanding in certain subject to expand and advance knowledge and attitude in students mind. It includes college and university education in which students attain higher educational qualification. It also allows people to upgrade knowledge and skills on the basis of which they can improve their educational desires. It gives opportunities to study an interesting subject thoroughly that can boost one's academic and career prospects and opens the doors of earning livelihood. Higher education is important to produce adequate and qualified human resources to develop the economy and productivity as a whole. It also leads to social, political, economic, cultural, civil and other development by facilitating our graduates and post graduates to face global competitions. The UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 declares in Article 13, that "Higher Education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education." (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966)

Higher education plays a very important role in socio-economic transformation of the society and produce skilled manpower as well. For weaker section of the society, the higher education provides upward mobility and ensures social justice, equality of educational opportunities and gives chances to catch the higher rank of any vocation. It develops quality of individual, quality in his living style and also the quality of the nation. Thus, higher education makes a person more confident and eligible for their further study and engages in jobs which strengthen the backbone of a country.

The University Education Commission (1948-49) aimed to provide leadership training, training for democracy, impart vocational and professional training, acquaint with cultural heritage, develop values and awaken innate abilities through university education. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) also laid emphasis on providing higher education to promote new knowledge, right sort of leadership, technology based education, correspondence courses, improvement of schools, adult education, social justice to healthy social living. This policy also recommended for giving higher education to women, opportunities for part-time education, raise enrolment in college, strengthen humanities and urgent steps towards research activities. To improve status of higher education, the NEP 1986 also recommended to manpower development, provision for equal educational opportunities to all, and strengthens higher educational bodies, like, UGC, NCERT, NIEPA, AICTE to maintain standard. It also gave priorities towards research development; ensure latest curriculum and materials, teacher orientation, development of autonomous colleges, redesign courses and programs, initiated open universities and distance learning, delinking degrees from jobs, provisions for rural universities etc. for greater expansion of higher education. The NEP 2020 also seeks to make a flexible and lifelong learning with facilities of multiple entry-exit system. It also leads to

increase quality of higher educational institutions for the development of entire country. (Aggarwal J. C., 2008)

Concept of quality development in Higher Education:

For the socio-economic development, the quality of higher education is the prime necessity. It leads to the accountability towards society or Government, clients or students and subjects or professions. The word quality in education refers to the wider sense of overall educational development. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), has doing very useful work in assessing performance of higher educational institutions. The administration and management are also two important poles to control quality in a higher educational institution. The facilities for teaching and learning access, protection from degradation, autonomy and freedom to the colleges, state level planning and coordination, transformation of teaching methods, research and support, and open learning system are needed to be initiated for quality improvement of higher education. (Aggarwal J. C., Development of Education System in India, 2008)

Objectives of the study:

The present study aims to highlight major structural reforms of NEP 2020 in regard to higher education. It also aims to find out the probable benefits of these recommendations on higher education in India.

Methodology applied:

This study is descriptive in nature. The secondary data were followed to this study. Books, articles from online and offline journals, governmental websites were also used to develop this study.

Significance of the study:

Higher education is now surrounded a lot of problems, like uncontrolled and unplanned expansion, inadequate funding, insufficient materials and falling standards, increase of educated unemployment, political involvement of college and university students, lack of relevance etc. are associated with higher education that effect in quality improvement. The universities should have adequate support from the Government for smooth functioning of its all educational and administrative activities. Thus, the author wants to carry out this study to draw a clear picture on NEP 2020 in higher educational scenario and expected that this policy will bring quality development by removing above mentioned problems.

Review of Related Literature:

Teachers and students should carry out their responsibilities to improve standard, strive to serve society and dedicated their work to pursuit of knowledge and national development. Government also takes initiative to proper implementation of different educational plans and programs, delinking degree from job and provides satisfactory conditions for work by funding sufficient amount of money and materials. (Aggarwal, J.C., 2008)

It is necessary to maintain quality in higher education. The quality assessment programs help to find out strength and weakness of an institution, identify planning and resource allocation, provide standard and a new sense of direction and identity. (Aggarwal J. C., Development and Planning of Modern Education, 2008)

“Impact of National Education Policy 2020 on Higher Education”- a study conducted by Prof. Smt. Teena P. Darbar. Here, the author stated that the equality in education is an utmost need for quality development of nation. In this regard, the NEP contributes directly by providing high quality education to all. This policy aims to universalization of education from pre-primary level to higher education in both urban and rural areas. It also aims to raise Gross Enrolment Ratio to 50% by 2035. This paper covers all the measures as focused by NEP 2020. (Darbar, 2021)

Dr. Ajoy Pal Singh Dhillon (2021) in the article, “NEP 2020: Transformation of Higher Education”, stated the key features of NEP 2020. The NEP 2020 proposes the emendation and remolding of all components of education by incorporating Indian tradition and value system. In order to have a practical and long term influence on country’s higher education, NEP 2020 has implemented a number of reforms from pre-primary to higher education level. To transform country’s higher education into a bright and quality level, NEP 2020 tries to give its touch to all pros and cons of Indian education system. (*NEP 2020: Transformation of Higher Education*, 2021)

“Higher Education for Excellence- An analysis of NEP 2020 and National Education Policies”- an article written by Dr. Raju Thomas, where the author acknowledged that our nation builders understood the role of education for development of society. From the time of India’s independence, there are a lot of commissions, plans and policies framed to make education free and compulsory. All those policies were focused on equity and access. The new education policy 2020 highlighted moreover all the areas of higher education. The NEP 2020 tries to do in its best level on all the dimensions and conditions of Indian education. But this policy gives less importance in inclusion in the bottom most strata of society and also in the RTE Act and universalization of education will not be achieved without backing. Without RTE Act universalization of education will be difficult. (Thomas, n.d.)

Discussion:

Recommendations of NEP 2020 in Higher Education:

The NEP endeavors a new system of education to overcome the challenges in the field of higher education and to deliver a high quality educational access. Some of such reconstructions are stated here-

- This policy ensures at least one, large, multidisciplinary university and college in or near every district.
- It seeks to offer medium of instruction in local/Indian language.
- It ensures integrity of faculty through merit appointment and career progression based on teaching, research and service.

- It leads to establishment of National Research Foundation to found good quality of peer reviewed research and actively seed research in universities and colleges.
- It ensures to increase equality and inclusion, scholarship, public education, online education and Open Distance Learning (ODL), accessible and available infrastructure and learning materials for the learner with disabilities.
- It aims to end the fragmentation of higher education by transforming higher educational institution into large multidisciplinary universities, colleges, cluster or knowledge hubs, which of each will have 3000 or more students.
- It aims to bring back the tradition offered in great Indian educational institutions, like, Nalanda, Takshashila, Vallabhi and Vikramshila, to create well rounded and innovative individuals.
- NEP also recommended making university as a multidisciplinary institution of higher learning that offers undergraduate and graduate programs with high quality teaching, research and community engagement. Equal emphasis should be given in teaching and research.
- The accreditation system will develop and use appropriately different and relevant norms.
- In addition to teaching and research, higher education institutions will have to support other higher education institutions in their development, community engagement, faculty development and support to school education.
- By 2040, all higher education institutions will aim to become multidisciplinary institutions and shall aim to have larger student enrolment for optimal use of infrastructure and resources. To become multidisciplinary institutions and aim to have larger student enrolment, the higher education institutions will firstly plan to become multidisciplinary by 2030 and then gradually increase student strength to the desired levels.
- The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of higher education will be to increase including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035 and a number of new institutions may be developed to attain these goals.
- Institutions will have the option to run Open Distance Learning (ODL) and online programs in order to enhance their offerings, improve access and increase GER and provide opportunities for lifelong learning.
- Single stream higher educational institutions will be phased out over time and will add more departments across different fields that would strengthen the institutions.
- The whole higher education sector will aim to be an integrated including professional and vocational education.
- All higher education institutions will aim to be developed in a holistic atmosphere.
- Offering multiple entry exit points, imaginative and flexible curriculum will be enabled.
- Value based education will include the development of humanistic, ethical, constitutional, truth, righteous conduct, peace, love, non-violence, scientific temper, citizenship and life skills, and the global citizenship education will be provided.

- The structure of degree program will be of either 3 or 4 years duration with multiple entry-exit option. After 1 year completion, it will be considered as certificate course, it will be considered as diploma when student will completed 2 years of degree course and a bachelor degree after 3 years of study. The 4 years of multidisciplinary bachelor programs shall be preferred option to experience the full range of holistic and multidisciplinary education in addition to focus on the chosen major and minor as per the choices of students and this 4 years degree will lead to a research degree.
- An Academic Bank of Credit shall be established which will be digitally stored.
- For 3 years degree completed students, there will be 2 years master's program and for 4 years degree completed students, there will be 1 year master's program. Undertaking a Ph. D. shall either a master's degree or a 4 years bachelor degree with research. The M. Phil. will be discontinued.
- This policy seeks to make curriculum interesting and relevant and updated regularly to align with the latest knowledge requirements and to meet specified learning outcomes.
- Provisions will be provided o international students to visit, study, transfer credits or carry out research to attain the goal of global quality standard.
- Students will be given plenty of opportunity for participation of sports, culture/arts clubs, activity clubs, community service projects etc.
- Financial assistance to students shall be made available through various measures.
- For equality and engagement of faculties, initiatives will be taken towards provision of opportunities on faculty development programs in terms of teaching, research and services in higher educational institutions in the desired level. Faculties will be given freedom to design their own curriculum and pedagogical approaches.
- In order to improve and reach the level of integrity and credibility in teaching profession, the regulatory system shall be empowered and by 2030, only educationally sound, multidisciplinary and integrated teacher education programs shall be in force. The higher educational institutions offering 4 years integrated B.Ed., may also run 2 years B. Ed for students who have already received a bachelor degree in specialized subjects and 1 year B. Ed. may be offered for the students who have 4 years undergraduate degree. Use of technology platform such as SWAYAM, DIKSHA for online training of teacher will also be encouraged.
- This policy aims to remove the social status hierarchy with vocational education and will be integrated vocational education programs into mainstream education in all educational institutions in a phased manner. By 2025, at least 50% learners through the school and higher educational institutions shall have exposure to vocational education.
- Multiple mechanisms with checks and balances will combat and stop the commercialization of higher education. All educational institutions will be held to similar standard of audit and disclosure.
- Through a suitable system of graded accreditation and graded autonomy, over a period of 15 years, all higher educational institutions will aim to become independent self-governing institutions pursuing innovation and excellence.

- Teaching and learning of Indian languages need to be integrated with school and higher education at every level.
- A rich variety of educational software will be developed and made available for students and teachers at all levels. Particular attention will need to be paid to emerging disruptive technologies that will necessarily transform the education system.
- The policy recommends strengthening and empowering the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) which will have a much greater mandate for educational and cultural development. (National Education Policy 2020)

Probable benefits of NEP 2020 on Higher Education:

1. The NEP 2020 leads to ensure quality higher education which will have to be aimed at a global standard.
2. There will be greater scope for the students of higher education by offering 4 years bachelor degree, 1 year for certificate, 2 years for diploma, 3 years for degree and 4 years for multidisciplinary bachelor degree based on preferred option.
3. NEP also leads to set up a Higher Education Commission of India to regulate higher education, whose major goal will be to increase Gross Enrolment Ratio to 50% by 2035 adding 3.5 crore seats for the students. It will have four verticals- National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), National Accreditation Council (NAC), Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) and General Education Council (GEC) to regulate and maintain standard of higher education.
4. By allowing foreign universities to set up campuses in India, it will helpful for Indian students to take education in these universities and spread Indian education and culture to these countries as well.
5. Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) is an excellent idea for the benefit of the students of higher educational institutions.
6. By introducing the new national assessment center, named, Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH), it will attempted to assist and supply high quality and standardized assessment which will lead students to achieve their full potential in different levels of education.
7. This policy proposes to enhance practical skills of students instead of rote learning.
8. Digitalization in teaching learning is an important contribution leading by this policy.
9. It also focuses on research and recommends on greater autonomy and multidisciplinary approach to higher education.
10. By introducing technology based courses for both students and teachers, this policy proposes to deliver high quality education, holistic development and equitable educational access. (Singh, 2023)

Conclusion:

NEP 2020 is the largest policy after 30 years. Focusing on the pillars of access, equality, quality, accountability and internationality, this policy aims to achieve, educate, encourage and enlighten holistic and

multidisciplinary approaches in Indian educational context. We should expect a revolutionary change by implementation of this policy and make Indian education more delightful and common for its all citizens.

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