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## NEW EDUCATION POLICY FOR NEW GENERATION

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### Abstract

The first new education policy was formulated in India in 1968 and then in 1986, after which the new education policy was revised in 1992. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a big revolution replacing the 34-year-old policy idea. The committee — which suggested changes in the education system under the NEP - was headed by former ISRO chief Dr. K. Kasturirangan. The vision of the policy is to reforms in school education, holistic development of learners, national assessment system, national testing agency, promoting libraries, academic bank of credit, new approach to teacher education. Features of NEP include imparting vocational education from class 6 onwards, progress card in place of report card and 5+3+3+4 structure. The NEP proposes sweeping changes including opening up of Indian higher education to foreign universities, introduction of a four-year multidisciplinary undergraduate programme with multiple exit options and discontinuation of the M Phil programme.

This paper aims at highlighting characteristics and new curricular and pedagogical structure for different stages of education.

**Key Words:** National education policy, multidisciplinary, learning outcomes, vocational, pedagogical, curriculum

### Introduction

The new education policy 2020 was announced by the Government of India on 29 July 2020. This policy will replace the National Policy on Education-1986, is an inclusive framework focusing on the elementary-level of education to higher education in the country. In this new policy, it has been decided to rename the Ministry of Human Resources as "Ministry of Education". As the objective of any education system is to benefit children so that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of circumstances of birth or background, NEP-2020 has a target of 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), in school education by 2030. The policy has maintained a delicate balance between the traditions and the interdisciplinary approach, which is the need of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Policy reaffirms that bridging social gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes in school education will continue to be one of the major goals of all education sector development programmes.

Many government and non-government surveys done in the last several years had hinted at the precarious state of the 'learning crisis' in India. However, the true picture emerged after a National Achievement Survey (NAS) was undertaken by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), which was ably supported by the Union ministry of education.

### Characteristics

1. The National Education Policy 2019 envisions an India-centered education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all.
2. The Policy emphasizes the criticality of the early years and aims to ensure quality early childhood care and education for all children between 3-6 years by 2025 with significantly increased investment and new initiatives. There will be special attention paid to early language and mathematics in Grades 1-5. A new developmentally-appropriate curriculum and pedagogical structure for school education based on principles of brain development and learning has been developed based on a 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 design. There will be equal emphasis on all subjects - science, social sciences, art, languages, sports, mathematics - with integration of vocational and academic streams in school.
3. The Policy aims to achieve 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio for all school education by 2030 through various measures. The Policy has several concerted initiatives to ensure that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background. Special education zones will also be set up to focus on this.

4. Teachers will be recruited through robust, transparent processes, promotions will be merit-based, multi-source periodic performance appraisals will happen and progression paths to become educational administrators or teacher educators will be available.
5. Schools will be organized into school complexes (cluster of 10-20 public schools) - this will be the basic unit of governance and administration that will ensure availability of all resources - infrastructure, academic (e.g., libraries) and people (e.g., art and music teachers) - along with a strong professional teacher community. Regulation and operations of schools will be carried out by separate bodies to eliminate conflicts of interest. There will be clear, separate systems for policy making, regulation, operations and academic matters.
6. A new vision and architecture for higher education has been envisaged with large, well-resourced, vibrant multidisciplinary institutions. The current 800 universities and 40,000 colleges will be consolidated into about 15,000 excellent institutions.
7. A broad-based liberal arts education at the undergraduate level for integrated, rigorous exposure to science, arts, humanities, mathematics and professional fields will be put in place. This would have imaginative and flexible curricular structures, creative combinations of study, integration of vocational education and multiple entry/exit points.
8. Institutional governance will be based on autonomy - academic, administrative and financial. Each higher education institution will be governed by an Independent Board.
9. Regulation will be 'light but tight' to ensure financial probity and public-spiritedness - standard setting, funding, accreditation, and regulation will be conducted by independent bodies to eliminate conflicts of interest.
10. Teacher preparation programmes will be rigorous and will take place in vibrant, multidisciplinary higher education institutions. The 4-year integrated stage-specific, subject-specific Bachelor of Education offered at multidisciplinary institutions would be the predominant way of becoming a teacher. Substandard and dysfunctional teacher education institutes will be shut down.
11. All professional education will be an integral part of the higher education system. Standalone technical universities, health science universities, legal and agricultural universities, or institutions in these or other fields, will be discontinued.
12. Policy aims to provide access to vocational education to at least 50% of all learners by 2025. A new entity will be set up to catalyze and expand research and innovation across the country. Technology in education Technology will be integrated into all levels of education to improve classroom processes, support teacher professional development, enhance educational access for disadvantaged groups and streamline educational planning, administration and management.

13. Policy aims to achieve 100% youth and adult literacy by 2030.

14. The Policy will ensure the preservation, growth, and vibrancy of all Indian languages.

15. There will be substantial public investment to expand and vitalize public education. Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog or National Education Commission will be formed, headed by the Prime Minister - this will be the custodian of the vision of education in India.

### New Curricular and Pedagogical Structure for Different Stages of Education



Image courtesy: MHRD website

Objective: Curriculum and pedagogy are transformed by 2022 in order to minimize rote learning and instead encourage holistic development and 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, scientific temper, communication, collaboration, multilingualism, problem solving, ethics, social responsibility, and digital literacy. The curricular and pedagogical structure of school education will be reconfigured to make it responsive and relevant to the developmental needs and interests of learners at different stages of their development.

The curricular and pedagogical structure and the curricular framework for school education will therefore be guided by a 5+3+3+4 design:

**Foundational Stage** (age 3-8 years): Rapid brain development; learning based on play and active discovery. Children will be allowed to play, paint and enjoy the school.

**Preparatory Stage** (8-11 years): Building on play and discovery; begin the transition to structured learning. The student will have an option to keep his study in his mother/regional tongue.

**Middle Stage** (11-14 years): Learning concepts in subjects; begin navigating adolescence. Students will have to study computer coding, mathematics, science, arts along with a choice to take any vocational/technical skills

like cooking, sewing, gardening etc. In addition students have to take any Indian language as subject like Hindi, Urdu, Tamil etc.

**Secondary Stage** (14-18 years): Preparation for livelihood and higher education; transition into young adulthood. Students have to appear in exams on semester basis to keep the students updated always about subject knowledge.

The Secondary Stage will comprise four years of multidisciplinary study and will build subject depth, critical thinking, attention to life aspirations with flexibility for student choice. The content and process of school education will be reoriented to develop holistic learners. The curriculum load will be reduced to key concepts and essential ideas, thus enabling space for deeper and more experiential learning. All students will be encouraged to develop proficiency in languages, scientific temper, sense of aesthetics and art, communication, ethical reasoning, and digital literacy.

### **Graduation Stage- College Education**

The National Testing Agency (NTA) will be charged with conducting (optional) entrance examinations for admissions into higher educational institutes across the country. This will be a standardised test, similar to the SAT which is used for college admissions in the US.

Once selected into a college, students will enroll in a 3 or 4 year undergraduate degree, with an option of leaving whenever they want. If you complete one year, you'll get a certificate. Two years gets you a diploma. If you stick it out for three or four years (depending on the course), you'll get a degree. And if you pursue a four-year programme with research, you'll be an eligible PhD candidate.

Another really cool bit here is the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC). An ABC will store the academic credits that students earn by taking courses from various recognized higher education institutions. Whenever you complete a course, a number of credits will be added to your bank. You can then transfer these credits if you decide to switch colleges. And even if you're forced to drop out for some reason, these credits will remain intact. Meaning you can come back years later and pick up from where you left off.

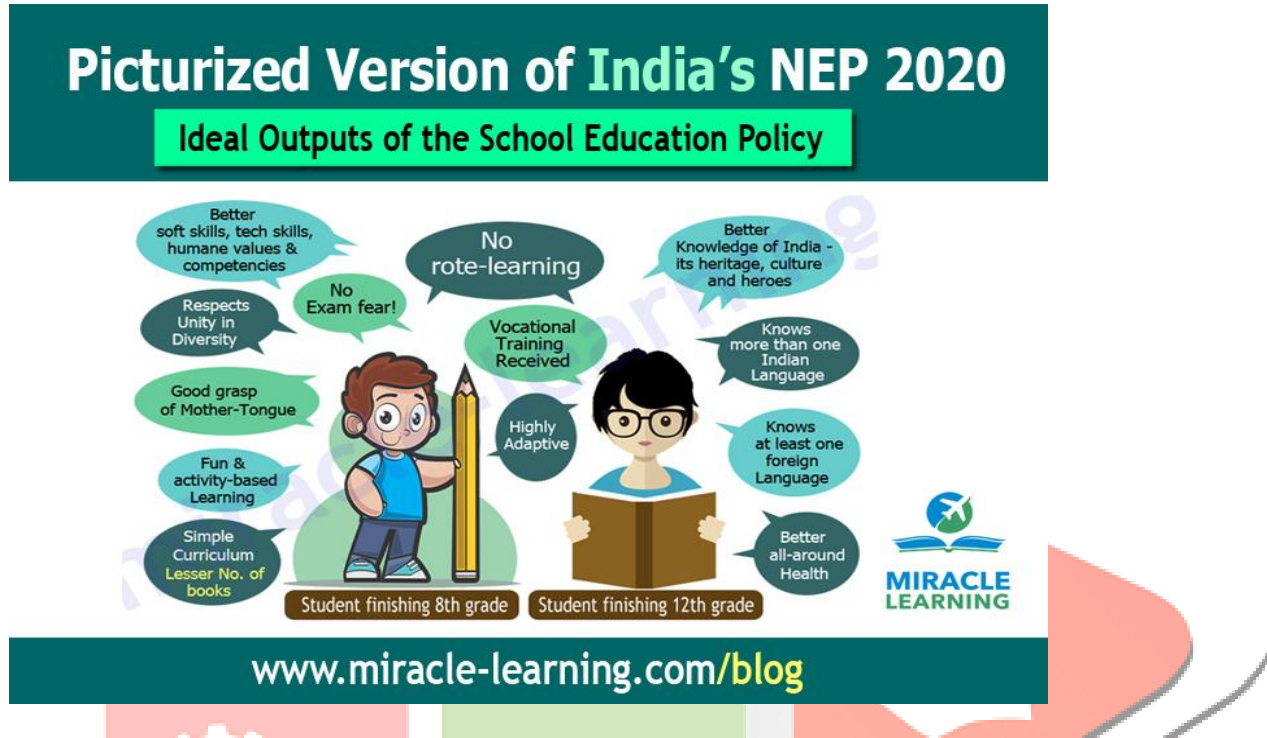
Another thing the policy focuses on is the need to make universities multidisciplinary. Meaning, they'll be expected to teach everything from arts, science, management, etc. under one roof. By 2040, the government seeks to phase out single-stream institutions in favour of this model.

All in all, the changes underlined in the NEP seem well thought out. As education expert Meeta Sengupta says, "*This is an NEP that offers Choice, Chance and Change.*" But as always, implementation is key and we'll just have to wait and see how things turn out.

**Post-Graduation-** Post graduation will be one year or two years course depending upon the duration of UG. If a student has passed three years of graduation course, he has to complete his PG Course for two years and a person who has completed his UG course for four years has to complete his PG Course in one year.

**Research under New Education Policy** – M.Phil course is eliminated entirely. Research course will continue as usual for 4 years. Now a central vigilance centre will control the research conducted at different colleges and universities.

## Positives Of NEP 2020



- With the help of the new education policy devised by the Government of India, education will be made available to everyone in the country from the pre-school to the secondary school level.
- NEP 2020 is beneficial to two crore school students as it will help them to come back to educational institutions.
- The existing 10+2 structure will be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 structure which will focus on the formative years of learning of a student.
- NCERT has been given the job to design and develop the National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCFECCE). This will be for children within eight years of age.
- There will be a formation of National Book promotion Policy in India.
- Under this new education policy, the National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy by the Education Ministry will be set up soon. The states in India will be responsible for the successful implementation for achieving the foundation numeracy and literacy for all students. This is applicable for students till class three and this has to be done by 2025.

- There will be board examinations like before in class 10 and class 12. But they will have lesser stakes and more stress will be given on the holistic upgrading of the student.
- School examinations will only be held in classes 3, 5 and 8, and the other classes will be assessed by the school authorities.
- It has been announced that PARAKH will be set up soon. This will be a National Assessment Centre set up by the Government under the new education policy.
- Emphasis has been given on setting up Gender Inclusion Fund and Special Education Zones. This will be beneficial for underprivileged people.
- Bal Bhavans will be established in every state. This will be a boarding school where the students can take part in art, play or career-related activities.
- It has also been announced that a National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be formulated by the National Council for Teacher Education by the year 2022. This will be done after consulting with SCERTs, NCERT, teachers and institutions.
- There will be an establishment of an Academic Bank of Credit where the credits earned by the students will be stored so that it can be later on counted when the final degree is completed.
- Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) will be set up in the country. These institutions will be at par with the existing IITs and IIMs and will aim to showcase multidisciplinary education for the Indian students.
- The public and private academic bodies will be guided by the same list of accreditation and regulation rules.
- The college affiliation will be phased out and colleges will be granted autonomy.
- A four-year B. Ed degree will be recognized as a minimal degree for teaching by the year 2030.
- Online education will be promoted so that the students can be prepared for pandemic situations. This will also prepare the system while imparting quality education during such difficult times.
- College teachers teaching UG students can mentor Ph.D. students.

### **Negatives Of NEP 2020**

- Language seems to be a negative factor in the National Education Policy 2020. India has the problem of a disturbing teacher and student ratio. So, introducing mother languages in academic institutions for each subject is a problem. This is simply because finding a competent teacher is a challenge at times. And now the challenge is to bring study material in mother languages. The Indian Government wanted

to follow in the steps of other countries like China, Germany, France where the foreign student needs to learn the language of the country to understand the country better. And India has 22 active languages and not one national language like in the other countries.

- Education Policy 2020 will further increase the differences between the sections of the society. While the students in the government schools will be taught in their respective regional language, the students in private institutions will be introduced to English from the early classes. This will further increase students who will not be comfortable with English as they will be introduced to the subject about seven years later than the students in private schools.
- Under the new system, one has to study for four years to complete their graduation. However, the question arises as to why the student will continue with the program if he/she can get the diploma in two years? If he/she left the program mid-way after two years, then he/she could easily have two years of experience which will be valuable in the long run.
- The government had decided to set up a national testing agency to conduct entrance examinations after 12<sup>th</sup> to achieve higher educational institutions. What if the student is not good at studies but has an interest in other fields?
- English as optional till class 8. As it is not mandatory so the eminent school will anyway not give up on English and the gap would be wider between the influential and weaker sections. Government schools will dismiss the language and it would be difficult for the child to grab the basics after class 8.
- There was a separate slot for multi-discipline in NEP which is attractive and flexible at the same time. Under these learners are allowed to opt-in a particular stream as usual and are allowed to explore their interested options. But the options given were not enough. Some important areas are still missing such as environmental studies, women's studies, cultural studies, etc. as these options must be explored and taught as well.
- There must be regular teacher training as they can only frame the child. In the NEP nothing was mentioned about the funding for teachers training which is the need for an hour. Proper funding, infrastructure must be provided in order to make the NEP worthy.

## Conclusion

### The top 5 highlights of NEP 2020 are:

- Multiple entry and exit options in degree courses
- Discontinuation of MPhil Programs
- Single regulator for higher education institutes
- Low stakes Board Exams



- Common entrance exams for Universities

National Education Policy has more positives than negatives. However, it is only after the execution that the people will finally be able to judge its effectiveness. Education is a pious and vast field and we all stakeholders are concerned with it. As a parent, we all want our ward to achieve what they want and lead a successful, happy and healthy life. To make effective implementation of NEP-2020 there must be a proper student-teacher ratio. The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.

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