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THE PERSPECTIVES ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN NEP 2020

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ABSTRACT

Education is an effort to enable people to be self reliant. It is this vision of the United Nations that framed the sustainable development goals in order to create a pathway for the welfare of the people free from poverty. It envisions education to be vocationalised so that any academic pursuit could be enabling one to be economically reliant. In this context the National Education Policy 2020 is enacted so that India too becomes a participant in the global development plans. This research has the objective of assessing the development and practice of vocational education in the context of India with special consideration to know the proposals of NEP for vocationalisation of Education. This descriptive study makes use of the secondary sources and explores the provisions given in the NEP 2020 to identify the possibilities of implementation in a contextualized manner.

Key words: Academic pursuit, Vocationalisation, Implementation, Legal provisions, etc.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational education is the education or training of worker. It is a fundamental and powerful force in the life of man. It shapes the instrumental role in shaping the destiny of individual and future of mankind.

As we all know that our country is a developing country the development of which depends upon its people. So, vocational education is one of the helping aids in its development. Vocational education courses play an important role in making students become skilled and get employed. It lays an emphasis on the practical aspect of the relevant course or field. It includes various streams like art and craft, electrician, trade, technology, etc.

Meaning of Vocational Education

Vocational education refers to educational programs and courses that are designed to provide individuals with the skills, knowledge, and training needed to enter specific trades, professions, or industries. It emphasizes practical training, hands-on experience, and real-world application of skills, rather than theoretical or academic learning. Vocational education can include a wide range of fields, such as automotive technology, culinary arts, nursing, construction, cosmetology, information technology, and many others. It aims to equip individuals with the necessary skills, qualifications, and certifications to directly enter the workforce or pursue further education and training in a specific vocational field. Vocational education is often seen as an alternative to traditional academic education and can provide individuals with opportunities for immediate employment and career advancement.

Objectives of Vocational Education under NEP 2020

NEP 2020 proposes the objectives of Vocationalisation of education as the following:

- To provide students with practical skills and knowledge that are directly applicable to the world of work.
- To promote Inclusivity and equal opportunities by providing vocational education to all students, regardless of their socio- economic background.
- To enhance the employability of students by providing them with hands – on training and exposure to real world work environment.
- To encourage lifelong learning by offering flexible and modular vocational education programs that allow individuals to upskill and reskill through out their careers.
- To promote the integration of vocational education with academic education, allowing students to pursue both vocational and academic pathway simultaneously.
- To promote the use of technology in vocational education, enabling students to acquire digital skills that are essential in today's digital economy.
- To create flexible and dynamic vocational education system that can adopt to changing industry requirements and technological advancement.

- To provide career guidance and counselling services to students, helping them make informed decisions about their vocational education and career paths.
- To promote the recognition and certificate of vocational skills, enabling students to showcase their skills and qualifications to potential employers.

Types of vocational education

Under the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) the following types of vocational education are emphasized

- **Skill- based courses:** The NEP 2020 aims to integrate vocational education into mainstream curriculum, offering skill based courses that provide practical training in various fields such as plumbing, Carpentry, electrical work, automotive repair, healthcare, hospitality etc.
- **Internship and apprenticeship:** The policy encourages the inclusion of internships and apprenticeship as part of vocational education. This allows students to gain hands on experience and develop practical skills while working with professionals in their chosen field.
- **Industry partnership:** NEP 2020 emphasis collaboration between educational institutions and industries to ensure That vocational education aligns with industry requirements. This helps students acquire relevant skills and increases their employability.
- **Entrepreneurship education:** The policy promotes entrepreneurship education, encouraging students to develop an entrepreneurial mindset and skills.
- **Technology enabled vocational education:** NEP 2020 emphasis the use of technology in vocational education. This includes the integration of digital tools, online learning platform, virtual reality, and augmented reality to enhance the learning experience and provide practical training.
- **Recognition of prior learning:** The policy recognize the importance of prior learning and aims to provide opportunities for individuals who have acquired skills through informal means. Recognition of prior learning allows individuals to receive certification for their skills, enhancing their employability.
- **Flexibility learning pathways:** NEP 2020 promote flexible learning pathways allowing students to choose vocational education alongside academic education. This enhance student to pursue their interests and develop skills in their chosen field.

5. History of vocational education

Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of India's freedom movement, strongly advocated for vocational education as a means to empower individuals, promote self-reliance, and address unemployment. Gandhi believed that education should not be limited to the classroom, but must also include practical skills that enable individuals to earn a livelihood. Gandhi viewed vocational education as a way to bridge the gap between rural and urban

India and address the needs of the marginalized sections of society. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive education system that combines academic knowledge with practical skills.

Gandhi promoted various forms of vocational training, particularly in rural areas, to develop skills such as spinning, weaving, carpentry, pottery, and agriculture. He believed that these skills were not only essential for economic self-sufficiency but also contributed to the overall development and well-being of individuals.

To promote vocational education, Gandhi founded various institutions, including the Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat, where he encouraged individuals to engage in activities such as weaving, pottery, farming, and manual labor. He urged his followers to adopt a self-help approach, promoting Khadi (handspun and handwoven cloth) as a symbol of economic and political independence.

Gandhi's vision of vocational education aimed to break the hierarchical nature of formal education and create opportunities for all sections of society. He believed that skills acquisition and practical knowledge were an integral part of holistic education and nurturing responsible citizens.

Gandhi's emphasis on vocational education continues to influence educational policies and programs in India today. His ideas remain relevant as the country strives to enhance skill development, promote entrepreneurship, and create more inclusive opportunities for all individuals.

National Policy on Education(NPE) 1986

National Policy on Education(NPE) of 1986 in India did address vocational education as an essential component of the education system. The policy aimed to promote a more practical and skill-based approach to learning in order to address the rising unemployment rates and the need for a skilled workforce. Under the NPE 1986, vocational education was seen as a means to impart employable skills and enable students to pursue self-employment opportunities. The policy emphasized the integration of vocational education with general education, allowing students to choose between vocational and academic streams based on their interests and aptitudes.

One of the key recommendations of the NPE 1986 was the establishment of Industrial Training Institutes (it is) and Polytechnic Institutes to provide vocational training and skill development programs. These institutes focused on various trades and technical skills, including engineering, automobile mechanics, carpentry, electricians, etc.

The NPE1986 also emphasized the need for collaboration between educational institutions and the industry to ensure that vocational education was aligned with the demands of the labor market. It encouraged public-private partnerships and the involvement of industry experts in curriculum development and training activities.

Furthermore, the policy recognized the importance of entrepreneurship and self-employment. It recommended the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in both vocational and general education, aiming to foster an entrepreneurial mindset among students.

Overall, the NPE 1986 played a significant role in shaping the development and expansion of vocational education in India by laying the foundation for vocational training institutes, promoting skill development, and stressing the alignment of vocational education with industry needs.

6. NEP 2020 ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in India has outlined significant reforms and changes in the field of vocational education. The policy recognizes the importance of vocational education in equipping students with practical skills and making them job-ready.

The key provisions of NEP 2020 related to vocational education are the following:

1. **Integration of vocational education:** NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of vocational education into mainstream education. It recommends that vocational subjects be introduced from the middle school level (6th to 8th grade) as a part of the curriculum.
2. **Flexibility and multi-disciplinarity:** NEP 2020 encourages a multidisciplinary approach in education, allowing students to choose vocational subjects alongside academic subjects. It aims to provide flexibility in curriculum and enable students to develop a range of skills.
3. **Recognition of vocational subjects:** The policy recognizes the importance of vocational education by allowing students to take vocational subjects as electives in addition to the core academic subjects. It aims to remove the perception that vocational subjects are inferior to academic subjects.
4. **Skill-based training:** NEP 2020 emphasizes the need for skill-based training and hands-on experience in vocational education. It advocates for practical training and apprenticeship opportunities to enhance employability.
5. **Collaboration with industry:** The policy envisages close collaboration between educational institutions and industries to design vocational courses that align with industry needs. It aims to establish partnerships and internships to bridge the gap between education and employment.
6. **Certification and accreditation:** NEP 2020 emphasizes the importance of quality assurance in vocational education. It promotes the creation of an effective accreditation system for vocational courses to ensure their value in the job market.

By incorporating these provisions, NEP 2020 aims to transform vocational education in India and enhance its relevance, quality, and outcomes. The policy seeks to make vocational education an attractive and viable option for students, helping them acquire practical skills and contributing to the development of a skilled workforce in the country.

7.RECOMMENDATIONS

Some recommendations for the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in relation to vocational education are discussed below:

- ✓ **Integration and Relevance:** Ensure vocational education is seamlessly integrated into the overall education system and is given equal importance. The curriculum should be designed to be relevant to the changing needs of industries and the labor market.
- ✓ **Collaboration with Industries:** Foster strong partnerships between educational institutions and industries to develop vocational education programs. Involve industry experts in curriculum development, provide internships, and facilitate apprenticeships to enhance students' skills and knowledge.
- ✓ **Flexible Pathways:** Offer multiple pathways for students to enter vocational education, including options for students who do not desire or have access to general academic education. Allow for easy transitions between academic and vocational streams.
- ✓ **Quality Assurance:** Establish mechanisms to ensure the quality of vocational education programs through accreditation and regular evaluations. Set standards and benchmarks for the infrastructure, facilities, faculty, and outcomes of vocational institutions.
- ✓ **Entrepreneurship and Innovation:** Emphasize entrepreneurship education within vocational programs to equip students with skills to start their own businesses. Promote innovation and creativity through project-based learning and real-world problem-solving experiences.
- ✓ **Training for Instructors:** Provide comprehensive training and professional development for vocational education instructors to keep them updated with the latest industry practices, teaching methodologies, and technological advancements.
- ✓ **Industry Certification:** Strengthen the recognition and acceptance of industry certifications and qualifications obtained through vocational education. Collaborate with industries to develop standards for certification that are recognized and valued in the job market.
- ✓ **Information and Guidance:** Provide comprehensive and up-to-date information on vocational education options, career pathways, and job opportunities to students and parents. Establish career counseling centers to guide students in making informed decisions regarding their vocational education.
- ✓ **Regional Focus:** Ensure equitable access to vocational education across different regions, especially in rural and remote areas. Establish specialized vocational institutions or centers to cater to the specific needs of each region.

- ✓ Research and Development: Promote research and development in vocational education to identify emerging industry needs, evaluate the effectiveness of vocational education programs, and develop innovative teaching methods.

Implementing these recommendations will help shape a vocational education system within the National Education Policy 2020 that is responsive to the needs of industries, ensures employment opportunities for students, and fosters the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, vocational education plays a vital role in the National Education Policy 2020. It is crucial to provide students with practical skills and knowledge that align with the changing demands of industries and the labor market. By integrating vocational education into the overall education system, collaborating with industries, offering flexible pathways, ensuring quality assurance, promoting entrepreneurship and innovation, providing training for instructors, emphasizing industry certification, offering information and guidance, focusing on regional needs, and fostering research and development, vocational education can become a robust and effective component of the education system. This will empower students to explore diverse career opportunities, contribute to economic growth, and address the skill gaps in the workforce. With the implementation of these recommendations, vocational education can truly transform the lives of students and shape a brighter future for the nation.

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