



A Vision For Cosmopolitan Education Based On 'Optimal Learning Environments' And Supports Through National Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

Education in order to make it an 'all round development' must adhere to specific criteria that cater to the desires and requirements of both students and academics. In order to achieve such standards and norms in a realistic way, new technologies, approaches, and curriculum will need to be implemented. Following the 34-year-old National Education Policy (NEP) of 1986, the first education policy of the 21st century, called NEP 2020, took effect. The purpose of this article is to draw attention to the National Education Policy 2020's Optimal Learning Environments as a means to an idealized, globally-minded education. Colleges and universities in India should prioritize creating a conducive learning environment as part of the NEP 2020's plan to transform the country's educational system. It provides a comprehensive framework and program of action for schools and higher education institutions all over India.

Keywords: Cosmopolitan, Optimize, Curriculum, Assessment, Global standard, Integration.

Introduction

The world has transitioned into an era characterized by the widespread availability and sharing of information, resulting in a significant demand for knowledge. The introduction of the National Education Policy 2020, which aims to improve inclusive and equitable education, especially in higher education, has brought attention to specific areas where Indian education policies could help regain India's reputation as a global study destination that offers affordable education. The strategy also seeks to facilitate the establishment of campuses by international institutions in India, hence creating opportunities for cosmopolitan education. Subsequently, the Government of India revamped its education strategy and devised a new policy. However, it is important to note that the NEP 2020 is not a legally binding statute, but rather a set of guidelines and principles. The execution of NEP 2020 is contingent upon additional

regulation by both the States and the Centre, as education is under the purview of the Concurrent List. This implies that the states have the authority to decide whether or not to adopt the policy.

Cosmopolitanism and India

According to Cambridge Dictionary, cosmopolitan means “containing people and things from many different parts of the world, or having experience of many different places and things”. Thus cosmopolitanism in education means integrating education standard of a country with the global standard of quality.

As globalization keeps progressing, the amount of interconnection and reliance between nation-states has significantly grown. This interdependency manifests in several ways, including the field of education. Nations have global concerns that need collective responses (Rizvi, 2009). In order to be advantageous to everybody, knowledge and learning must be cosmopolitan in nature.

In India, the concept of cosmopolitanism, or having a global perspective, was not a mystery. Both historical and contemporary thinkers, such as Rabindranath Tagore, have put forth the idea of cosmopolitan nationalism. According to Tagore, fostering international solidarity and embracing a broader worldview is crucial for promoting global peace, as opposed to the narrow-mindedness and animosity often associated with nationalism (Bose, 2016). Ram Manohar Lohia proposed the concept of new Socialism, which included the notion of a world government and worldwide peace as fundamental elements for achieving positive transformation in Indian society (Nithya, 2019).

Vision for Cosmopolitan Quality Education under NEP 2020

The recently introduced National Education Policy 2020 is founded upon four fundamental principles - Accessibility, Fairness, Quality, and Accountability. The objective is to enhance the comprehensiveness, flexibility, interdisciplinary nature, and alignment with the demands of the 21st century in school and college education, while also fostering the development of each student's distinct skills (Kalyani, 2020). It is in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The primary goal is to convert India into a prosperous knowledge-based country and a dominant force in global education. Therefore, the goal of providing high-quality education with a global perspective was a key aspect of the Optimal Learning Environment project under the NEP. An optimal learning environment refers to a setting that is well-suited for effective learning. This includes offering a proper curriculum, interesting teaching methods, on-going evaluation, and sufficient support for students. These four components were essential for ensuring an excellent education (Aithal & Aithal, 2020). However, in order to achieve certain learning outcomes, quality education entails adherence to particular criteria.

1. **Promoting Creativity:** It is crucial for educational institutions to have autonomy in order to implement innovative methods regarding curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation. When institutions themselves determine the curriculum and pedagogy, it leads to a more stimulating and engaging learning experience for students. Additionally, a suggested criterion-based grading system aims to enhance fairness in the grading process and provide more accurate comparisons of outcomes.
2. **Integrated academic plans:** Creating a comprehensive Institutional Development Plan was essential for improving the quality of education at educational institutions. The Institutional Development Plan includes both standard curriculum and an extensive spectrum of student activities in academia, as well as their involvement in social domains. To facilitate student engagement in many fields such as science, mathematics, athletics, music, and literature, clubs can be formed with specific objectives. Given the effectiveness and satisfaction of this practice, it will be included into the curriculum, expanding the teacher's responsibility to include not just teaching, but also mentoring and guiding.

3. **Establishment of High-Quality Support Centres:** Support can manifest as the act of inspiring and motivating students to maintain a healthy psychological state, or as the provision of financial assistance to students. Students from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds often face challenges associated with financial hardship when trying to pursue higher education. This is widespread throughout India. In order to address this issue, universities and colleges should establish well-equipped support centres with sufficient funding and resources to effectively implement support services. Furthermore, universities have the option to establish counselling centres to enhance the mental and emotional well-being of students.
4. **Open Distance Learning and Online Learning:** Open Distance Learning (ODL) and Online Learning are becoming popular and are integral components of inclusive education, which aims to provide education to all individuals. The objective of the NEP 2020 is to enhance open distance learning by using evidence-based strategies for its extension, in order to ensure that it is on par with high-quality in-class programs. ODL will be supplied with norms, standards, and guidelines to facilitate systematic development and offer a framework for assessing the quality index of ODL. This will create new opportunities for the certification, rating, and regulation of Open Distance Learning.

Ultimately, the aggregate of these standards will lead to Indian education system at par with the global standard of quality education, thereby, integrating into cosmopolitan quality of education. Furthermore, the higher education offered by Indian universities and colleges, as per the NEP 2020, would integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to cater to the need of education in the new normal after the COVID-19 pandemic (Kumar, 2021). India has the potential to achieve the same level of quality education as the rest of the world, rather than just passively accepting it. There will be common entrance exam conducted twice a year (Sudha et al., 2022). There can be multiple trends and positive outcomes which followed the integration of Indian education with the cosmopolitan quality of education, such as:

1. **Increasing international students:** As Indian education standards expand to enhance and correspond with global norms, there is an anticipation that more international students and researchers would choose to study in Indian universities and colleges. Likewise, it would also provide Indian students the opportunity to pursue their studies overseas.
2. **Dissemination of Indian knowledge before the world:** Higher educational institutions in India have the opportunity to incorporate disciplines that are unique to India, such as Indology, Indian languages, art and literature, Indian political thought and philosophy, Ayush system of medicine, yoga, and more, in addition to offering courses and programs of worldwide standards (Sharma, 2022). So that India can achieve the objective of 'internationalization at home'.
3. **Providing premium education at affordable cost:** The objective here lies in an attempt to restore India's role as a Vishwa Guru (Sharma, 2022). Providing better education facilities of high-quality but yet affordable will certainly attract more foreign students and researchers to pursue their education in India. The number of students of Third World countries, particularly from Africa has increased tremendously in the recent years to pursue their education in India.
4. **Collaboration in Research and Teaching:** Universities and colleges in India can optimize their credibility by opening exchange program in terms of faculty exchange, or student's exchange. NEP aims to establish National Research Fund and a new Higher Education Commission of India with an amount up to 6% of India's GDP (Yenegu, 2022). Further, the NEP will also render space for high performing Indian universities to set up campuses in other countries, and similarly, will also persuade to operate foreign universities in India. Establishment of legislative framework as a regulatory measure for entrance to these foreign institutions will be necessary.

Facilitating Student Activity and Participation as part of Cosmopolitan Quality Education

The new policy seeks to improve student-centered curriculum and co-curricular activities that are relevant to learning, with the goal of boosting students' capacity and developing their learning ability. The NEP stipulated that students should be considered the primary stakeholders in education and, as such, should be the focal point of focus. An optimal learning experience necessitates a dynamic campus environment that is also conducive to student engagement.

In addition to traditional classroom instruction, kids should engage in a variety of activities to develop and enhance their physical and mental abilities. Students must be given many opportunities to engage in athletics, literature, music, eco-clubs, and community service, among other activities (NEP, 2020). A significant number of young individuals in contemporary society are experiencing mental health and emotional challenges, primarily stemming from the stress associated with academic pursuits, leading to heightened levels of anxiety and despair among students. Therefore, it is crucial for educational institutions to undertake programs aimed at addressing mental health difficulties. Subsequently, the NEP made the decision to implement a counselling system in all higher educational institutions in India.

Providing Support for Quality Education

In order to better integrate Indian education with the global system, it is necessary to revise its policies on student support. When students from rural villages transfer to metropolitan metropolises, they often face a shortage of funding for education, which becomes a hindrance. Thus, the government-authorized institution can provide a structured framework to help students, such as offering accommodations and healthcare services, in addition to financial support. The NEP 2020, in accordance with this direction, can offer specific features that would be advantageous to students in numerous capacities. Students from marginalized groups like as SC, ST, OBC, and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) will be eligible for incentives to fund their educational pursuits. The National Scholarship Portal will be expanded to accommodate these students and offer them with financial assistance. Hence, the primary objective of NEP 2020 was to incentivize private educational institutions to provide their students with scholarships based on merit and give reduced prices in the form of free ships.

Conclusion

The cosmopolitan vision of Optimal Learning Environments and Support open opportunity for education in India to reach up to the level of global education system. Introduction of high-quality learning process coupled with integrated academic plan has the potential to bring about quality education. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is anticipated to significantly enhance the quality and progress of higher education in India. The objective is to establish India 2.0 in the 21st century, with the aim of assuming a leading position on the world stage. The NEP 2020 is an extensively forward-thinking document, demonstrating a strong understanding of the present socio-economic environment and the ability to address upcoming obstacles. If executed well, this initiative possesses all the necessary elements to establish India as a worldwide hub for education by 2030.

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