
1. New Education Policy (NEP 2020) of India-Scope and Challenges

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Abstract:

The fourth goal of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 set by United Nations is Quality Education. One of its targets is that by 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. The New Education Policy (NEP 2020) of India has to be fully implemented by 2040. The institute or the university has to function as a universe of knowledge implying that the knowledge is always an intersection of various disciplines. The NEP 2020 talks of having a single regulatory body to govern the higher education in the country. To fully implement the NEP 2020 there has to be a broad consensus between the central government and all the state governments.

The NEP 2020 also talks about inculcating innovation and creativity among the students of schools and colleges. Since India is a signatory to the SDGs of United Nations therefore the NEP 2020 includes provisions of value education at different levels. The NEP indicates increasing the expenditure on education sector up to 6% of the GDP. This policy also provides the multiple entry and multiple exit options to be given to the students of higher education. The mid-day meal scheme has also been extended to the preschool level.

At present 0.69% of GDP of India is spent for research and innovation which needs to be increased. The goal is to make GER as 50% by 2035. The NEP should promote studies related to gender equality, women issues, marginalised section of the population etc. The enrolment of population from such sections should be increased and should be given priority.

Keywords:

New education policy; GDP; SDG; skill-based education; India

Introduction:

The fourth goal of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 set by United Nations is Quality Education. One of its targets is that by 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

The first Education Policy in India was brought in 1968 and the second one was introduced in 1986. National Policy of Education (NPE) 1968 gave a new direction to standardize education within the country. It was instrumental in creating a structure of 10+2+3 and promoted the use of the mother tongue as well. The 1986 Education Policy, under the Prime Ministership of late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, had talked about access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability related to the education sector.

After a long period, the new education policy has been introduced in the country. This policy sounds very ambitious and progressive. The New Education Policy (NEP 2020) formulated by the government of India in 2020 has to be fully implemented by 2040.

The time frame for its implementation sounds very long considering the fact that this policy itself has come after a long time. The new education policy talks about the multi-disciplinary studies.

There would be no Single Discipline University after 2030 which means that the universities have to prepare themselves to introduce new disciplines of study which may be a challenge for the those operating with a single discipline. The different sectors in many of the economies world over has taken a very significant role and therefore the knowledge and its applications are well appreciated and practised.

It will continue to be like this in future as well since this is an era of knowledge revolution. The institute or the university has to function as a universe of knowledge implying that knowledge is always an intersection of various disciplines and all knowledge finally meet in an ocean of knowledge. The knowledge produced should be an integration of the different disciplines that are taught in the university. The previous governments in India did not focus so much on the education sector.

The Art, Science and Commerce streams being incorrectly thought earlier as unrelated streams is now correctly interlinked in this policy. Students' choices have been widened. The subjects could be taken from all the streams and they can be studied together. This would give them more flexibility and would allow them to see the possible linkages that the different subjects have.

The conventional belief of assuming Art, Science and Commerce as different and separate streams had led to the confusion about the ultimate knowledge. In the last thirty years since globalisation the applicants for engineering and business management courses have increased many folds. These disciplines have dominated the education sector in India. The Liberal Art has been less focussed. The components of social and human values are not properly focused in professional education as it is focused in the streams of Liberal Arts. The students completing professional education are highly intelligent but have less morality and they do not stand for human and social values when the circumstances and the situation demand. The social science and the liberal art help the students to develop a holistic mind. It has also been said that the colleges would provide degree in the future as it is the case in USA implying more of autonomy would be given to the colleges. There are no regulators like University Grants Commission in USA. In India the higher education system is over regulated and grossly underfunded. Autonomy is not given to the lower levels or the affiliated institutions. The power is still not delegated to the lower levels in India. The regulators should trust their affiliated colleges and University and certain degree of autonomy should be provided to them so that they can function at their own pace. The present higher education system is Vice Chancellor centric. The departments and the lower levels should be empowered. Policy in itself is not a law but a loose commitment. The education comes under the concurrent list in the constitution of India. It is a state's subject as well as a centre's subject and therefore the full implementation of New

Education Policy would be a challenge. The different states have to pass legislations in their legislative assemblies. Invariably there are differences of opinion between the centre and the state and therefore the full implementation of the new education policy would be difficult and time consuming. Many commissions and councils related to the different discipline in education sectors have been passed in the Parliament and they have taken the shape of a law. The new education policy talks of having a single regulatory body to govern the higher education in the country. Statutory bodies like UGC have to be repealed in the Parliament itself and it will again be a time-consuming affair. To fully implement the NEP 2020 there has to be a broad consensus between the central government and all the state government. The institutions would be required to change their approach in this new education policy. The foreign universities would be introduced in India. There is a scope of the top 100 universities of the world entering in the Indian market. It would be interesting to see foreign universities' operation in India and its impact on the existing government and private colleges and universities from the perspectives of the educational fee, quality of education and the system that they would offer. It is a great move that the Right to Education Act has been extended and now it will be applicable for the children between 6 and 18 years. In the age of globalisation, the time to market has become very short. The concept of innovation and its importance has become very significant and every corporation and country in the world is focusing on it. On the expected lines, the new education policy also talks about the inculcating innovation and creativity among the students of schools and colleges in India. The views of different business tycoons in India reflect that the Indian graduates are not employable and the required skill set has to be developed in them so that the degree holders are ready for the industry. Similarly, the policy also talks of developing critical thinking abilities among the students.

The word value reflects the importance, worth, desirability and the respect something gets in return (Soykan, 2007). As a sociological concept, values refer to similarities and shared demands.

Social values are moral beliefs and principles that are accepted by the majority so as to ensure the continuity of a society (Ergil, 1984). What sociologists call collective consciousness are called by philosophers' objective soul are the domain of common values (Ulken, 2001). Values are belief-based narratives that shape our approach to stuff and events

(Ulgener, 1991). Societies without ideals cannot be happy (Kanad, 1942). Values are the common thoughts about what is socially right or not, and directly affect human behavior (Kornblum 1994; Özgüven, 1994; Halstead and Taylor 2000; Carr and Skinner 2009). Value education constitutes a solid basis for a better human being, society and world. (Mimar 2014). Values education and character education are among the concepts that define a successful education in terms of student success and academic acquisitions (Lovat, 2011). Value education should be included in the curriculum and there is the need of a comprehensive programme of value education which can enable students to meet new situations in the world of values, not only as they are now, but also in any new situation that may arise in future. The importance of value-oriented education is to understand and bring highly commendable values and wisdom in the students. It is an integral part of intellectual development. (Reyaz 2018). Study of the comparisons of national curricula on citizenship education and globalization raises more questions than answers. It appears clear that striking a balance between aligning with universal commitments and responsibilities and enduring centrality of the nation state as the primary citizen agency for belonging and identity is a major challenge (Kymlicka, 2000; Pashby, K. 2008; Reid, A., Gill J. and Sears, A. 2010) and that only some national curricula are starting to address this challenge. (Cox, 2016). An article in UNESCO's journal, *Prospects*, stated that 'globalization is one of the most important changes taking place in societies around the world today and yet it is unclear that schools have realigned their purposes to prepare their students to be competent citizens in an age of globalization' (Reimers, 2006, p. 277). UNESCO defines Global Citizenship Education (GCED) as '...a framing paradigm which encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and sustainable' (UNESCO, 2015, p. 9). The concept includes 'civic and citizenship education' but expands it beyond its national 'boundedness', transforming its traditional content (which referred to living together in local and national contexts, and relationships with the national political system), through a new perspective and framing, which are defined by the GCED's global reach. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is a concept that lies at the heart of UNESCO's vision for education in the 21st Century (UNESCO, 2015a), and is a pillar for the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Education Agenda (UN, 2015; UNESCO, 2015b).

GCED supersedes earlier education initiatives, integrating prior definitions on 'education for international understanding, cooperation and peace, and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms' (UNESCO, 1974), 'education for peace, human rights and democracy' (UNESCO, 1995), and education for 'learning to live together, learning to be, learning to know and learning to do' (Delors et al., 1996). Furthermore, the new concept of GCED embraces all key dimensions of educational transmission: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation, principles and practices, as well as teaching and learning. (Cox, 2016). Since India is a signatory to the sustainable development goals of united nations therefore the new education policy 2020 includes provisions of value education at different levels.

It also includes direction to impart constitutional studies. The policy also talks of admitting students from diverse background and practising the principle of inclusivity in education which is also a guideline from UNESCO.

The fact of the matter is seventy percent of the education sector in India has gone in private hands over a period of time. Privatization is directly or indirectly encouraged in education. The continuous increment in the privatization of schools and colleges in India and its impact on the society has also been addressed in the policy where the government has talked about increasing the expenditure on education sector up to 6% of the GDP. The investment done by the government in their institutions can be easily observed. The policy also talks about the primary education to be imparted in the mother tongue but it would be a big challenge to practically implement this idea in the private schools. This policy also talks about the multiple entry and multiple exit options to be given to the students of Higher Education. It means at the completion of each year of the graduation program the students will have option to change the college or university. Further the students can get a certificate, diploma, bachelor's degree or research with bachelor's degree at the end of first, second, third or fourth year respectively. The students can also drop for some years and can continue later with previously earned credits. The credits will be deposited in Academic Bank of Credit. The mid-day meal scheme has also been extended to the preschool level but it has to be closely monitored because the cases of wrong and adulterated food offered under this scheme are reported in the media. The policy also favours the reduction in the curriculum.

We have already seen the tussle related to the NEET medical entrance examination in India that is conducted for the entire country. The research conducted in the west related to the countrywide common test infers that the common test is exclusionary. Therefore, single entrance test for all the colleges and universities in India may not be very bright idea considering the limitations and variations of the country's geography. Research is always required to be upgraded and in this direction the NEP talks of emphasis on research and innovation. When the government talks about the 'Make in India' programme or making India as an export hub then it has to boost the competitiveness of the industries. Therefore, the research and innovation are something that should be made important right from the school and college level up to the industry level. The governments of Japan and South Korea spends a good percentage of their GDP on research. Similarly, the corporations of these countries also spend a high amount on research and development. At present 0.69% of GDP of India is spent for Research and Innovation. For USA this data is 2.8%. China spends 2 percent. For Israel and South Korea this data is 4.3% and 4.2% respectively. The MPhil degree will no more be offered by the higher education institutes. The Gross enrolment ratio has always been poor for different reasons and its effect on the macro environment has also been very pathetic. At present the gross enrolment ratio is 23% and the goal is to make it 50% by 2035. The NEP should promote studies related to gender equality, women issues, marginalised section of the population etc. The enrolment of population from such sections should be increased and should be given priority.

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