Higher Education and The New Education Policy 2020

Prof. B. L. Lakkannaver

Department of Studies in Education & Research
Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura
Email: bllakkannavar@rediffmail.com

Abstract

Amid the midst of all the negativity enveloping the world as a result of the problems given by the Covid-19 epidemic, the Government of India's New Education Policy (NEP, 2020) was a welcome shift and fresh news. Many people were taken aback by the announcement of NEP 2020. Many educators did not see the changes indicated by NEP 2020 coming. Though education policy has had an equal influence on school and college education, this article focuses mostly on NEP 2020 and its implications for higher education. This study also discusses the key aspects of NEP and how they impact the current educational system.

Keywords

New Education Policy, Higher Education, NEP 2020

Introduction

The National Policy on Education (NPE) is a government of India policy aimed toward promoting education among Indian citizens. In both rural and urban India, the policy extends from elementary school to university. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi issued the first NPE in 1968, the second in 1986, and the third in 2020 under the Prime Ministership of Narendra Modi.

The Union Cabinet of India adopted the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP, 2020) on July 29, 2020, which defines the goal for India's future education system. The 1986 National Policy on Education has been replaced with the current policy. This is a thorough policy.

In both rural and urban India, there is a framework for basic education through higher education, as well as vocational training. From 2021, the initiative promises to reform India's educational sector.

The NEP's language policy is meant to be a broad guideline and advisory in nature, with states, institutions, and schools deciding the way to apply it. Numerous reforms to India's education policy are enacted under the NEP 2020. It aspires to raise public education spending from roughly 4% to 6% of GDP as quickly as practicable.

A group led by former Cabinet Secretary T. S. R. Subramanian began the consultation process for the New Education Policy in January 2015. A panel chaired by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief KrishnaswamyKasturirangan released a draft NEP in 2019 based on the committee report from June 2017. The Ministry of Human Resource Development later announced the Draft New Education Policy (DNEP) 2019, which was followed by various public discussions. The NEP Draft was 484 pages long. "Over two lakh proposals were received from 2.5 lakh Village panchayats, 6,600 blocks, 6,000 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), and 676 districts," according to the Ministry.

The Vision of the National Education Policy is

"National Education Policy 2020 envisions an India-centric education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all."

Individuals who are exceptional, intellectual, well-rounded, and creative must be developed via quality higher education. It must allow a person to study one or more specialized areas of interest in-depth and to develop character, ethical and constitutional values, intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, creativity, service spirit,

and 21st-century skills in a variety of fields, including sciences, social sciences, the arts, humanities, languages, personal, technological, and vocational subjects.

Multidisciplinary universities and colleges, with at least one in or near every district, with revamped student curricula, pedagogy, evaluation, and support for enhanced student experience, and the establishment of a National Research Foundation to support excellent peer-reviewed work and effectively seed study at universities and colleges are some of the key highlights of the new education policy.

The main issues confronting the Indian higher education system include forced separation of qualifications, early specialization and student streaming into restricted research areas, a lack of competitive peer-reviewed academic research funding and large affiliated universities leading to low levels of undergraduate education, and a lack of focus on research at most universities and schools.

The goal of institutional restructuring and consolidation is to end higher education fragmentation by transforming higher educational institutions into large multidisciplinary institutions, creating well-rounded and innovative individuals, and transforming other countries educationally and economically, increasing the gross enrolment ratio in higher education, including vocational training, from 26.3% to 50% by 2035.

All human capacities-mental, cultural, social, physical, emotional, and moral-should be improved via holistic and interdisciplinary education. In the long run, this type of comprehensive education will be the standard for all undergraduate programs, including medical, technical, and vocational schools. A comprehensive approach to learning environments and student assistance includes a sufficient curriculum, engaged pedagogy, regular formative assessment, and enough student support.

NEP's Salient Features in Connection with Higher Education

The new NEP was created to codify systemic changes from the elementary school level to the college/university level. With the changing situation in mind, educational content will now focus on important concepts, ideas, applications, and problem-solving approaches. The National Education Policy is projected to have a good and long-term effect on the country's higher educational system. The government's decision to enable international colleges to build campuses in India is a good step. This will enable the students to experience global educational quality in their own nation. The strategy of establishing multi-disciplinary institutes will result in a revitalized focus on all fields, including arts and humanities, and this type of education will assist students in learning and growing holistically. Thus, students will be equipped with a stronger base of knowledge.

Another encouraging move is the implementation of a single standard admission exam, which will alleviate the stress of several competitive tests and the burden of studying for so many of them. It will also guarantee that all student candidates have a fair playing field in the future.

Creating an Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) is a good way to keep track of the academic credits that the students acquire by taking classes at several accredited higher education institutions. By finishing a course, a student can earn points, which will be applied to their ABC account. If a student wishes to change colleges, these credits can be transferred. If a student quits out for whatever reason, his or her credits will be preserved, allowing him or her to return years later and take up where they left off.

The following are some of the prominent features:

i. The single regulatory body for higher education:

Except for legal and medical education, the NEP proposes to create the Higher Education Commission of India as a single regulating authority.

ii. Multiple entries and exit programs:

Those who desire to abandon the route in the middle will have many entry and departure alternatives. Academic Bank of Credits will be used to transfer their credits.

iii. Tech-based option for adult learning through apps, TV channels:

Apps, Online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, among other technology-based adult learning possibilities, will be developed.

iv. E-courses to be available in regional languages:

Technology will be a part of education planning, teaching, learning, assessment, teacher, school, and student training. The e-content will be offered in several regional languages, beginning with eight main languages - Kannada, Odia, Bengali, and others to complement Hindi and English e-courses.

v. Foreign universities to set up campuses in India:

A new rule will make it easier for the top 100 international institutions in the world to operate in India. "Such (foreign) universities would be accorded special dispensation respecting regulatory, governance, and content criteria on par with other autonomous institutions of India," according to the HRD Ministry paper.

vi. The common admission exam for all colleges:

The National Testing Agency will conduct a single entrance exam for all higher education institutions (NTA). The test will be a choice.

- Higher education will be regulated by the Higher Education Council of India (HECI). The main purpose of the council will be to boost the gross enrolment ratio. The HECI will be divided into four verticals:

A. National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), regulates higher education, including teacher education, while excluding medical and legal education.

B. National Accreditation Council (NAC), a "meta-accrediting body".

C. Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC), for funding and financing of universities and colleges. This will replace the existing National Council for Teacher Education, All India Council for Technical Education and the University Grants Commission.

D. General Education Council (GEC), to frame "graduate attributes", namely the learning outcomes expected. It will also be responsible for framing a National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF). The National Council for Teacher Education will come under the GEC, as a Professional Standard Setting Body (PSSB).

An In-Depth Analysis of the Impact of NEP on Higher Education Regulatory System of Higher Education

The plan to establish the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) as an umbrella agency for higher education, excluding medical and legal education, is a key shift in NEP 2020. This generally prompts the issue of what will become of the current UGC and AICTE. The HECI Bill will separate the academic and funding parts of the higher education industry, to restructurethe goal of restructuring the system. HECI will not have any financial authority under the new Bill. The Ministry of Education, formerly known as the Ministry of Human Resource Development, will oversee the financial processes that were previously handled by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

This reform, on the other hand, is intended to help India's Higher Education sector clean up its regulatory mess. The National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) will be in charge of regulation, while the General Education Council (GEC) will be in charge of standard-setting, the Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) will be in charge of funding, and the National Accreditation Council (NAC) will be in charge of accreditation. A single umbrella authority was always required to ensure uniformity in educational standards, and this has been a vision of many educators. This is thought to be a good first step in streamlining education policy. Institutes must, however, be evaluated based on important characteristics such as research, industry connections, placements, and academic performance, among others, in order to ensure the quality of higher education.

Graded Accreditation and Graded Autonomy

One of the fundamental characteristics of NEP 2020 is the notion of "empowerment and autonomy to innovate," which supports a "phasing out" plan from Affiliated Colleges to Autonomous Institutions. Curriculum enrichment is also possible because of the extra freedom afforded to independent institutions. It further claims that, with the right accreditations, Autonomous degree-granting Colleges might become Research-intensive or Teaching-intensive Universities if they want. The announcement of the establishment of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) throughout the country gives the country a new lease of life. These institutes would be on par with the current IITs and IIMs and will attempt to provide Indian students with interdisciplinary education.

Another significant change suggested by the NEP 2020 is that the National Testing Agency will act as a prominent, expert, and independent testing agency for undergraduate and graduate admissions and fellowships in Higher Education Institutions. Because of the excellent quality, variety, and flexibility of NTA testing services, most institutions will be able to use these common entrance examinations instead of hundreds of universities creating their own, easing the load on students, universities and colleges, and the overall education system. It will be up to individual universities and colleges to decide whether or not to employ NTA exams in their admissions processes. It also makes it easier for students to transfer their degrees and credits to colleges in other countries.

Domestic Internationalisation

NEP 2020 encourages foreign universities and colleges to come to India, posing a challenge for domestic institutions to enhance the quality of education they deliver. The Indian higher education industry is buzzing as a potential location for international universities to establish campuses. With over 900 institutions and 40,000 colleges, India boasts one of the biggest networks of higher education systems in the world.

The government is also attempting to improve India's reputation as an educational hub, as more than 7 lakh Indian students are already studying overseas. As a result, the program hopes that permitting international colleges would make world-class education available locally at a substantially reduced cost without requiring travel and will dramatically minimize human capital migration to other nations for study and work opportunities. According to many worldwide studies, cross-border education benefits the economy by increasing global awareness, cultural perception, and competitiveness. Foreign cooperation will allow local institutes to adapt their curriculum in accordance with international pedagogy and provide students with a varied portfolio of disciplines and specialties.

More Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education

According to the NEP 2020, a holistic and multidisciplinary education would attempt to develop all human qualities – intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral – in an integrated manner. This type of education will aid in the development of well-rounded individuals with critical 21st-century capacities in the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields; an ethic of social engagement; soft skills such as communication, discussion, and debate; and rigorous specialization in a chosen field or fields. By 2030, the NEP 2020 anticipates a big interdisciplinary Higher Education Institution (HEI) in or near each district.

To achieve such a holistic and interdisciplinary education, all HEIs' flexible and creative curriculum must incorporate credit-based courses and projects in community participation and service, environmental education, and value-based education.

Climate change, pollution, waste management, sanitation, biological diversity conservation, biological resource and biodiversity management, forest and wildlife conservation, and sustainable development and living will be included in environmental education. Value-based education will include the development of humanistic, ethical, constitutional, and universal human values such as truth (Satya), righteous conduct (dharma), peace (Shanti), Love (Prema), nonviolence (ahimsa), scientific temper, citizenship values, and life skills; lessons in Seva/service and participation in community service programs will be considered an integral part of a holistic education; and participation in community service programs will be considered an integral part of a holistic education.

As the world becomes more interconnected, Global Citizenship Education (GCED) will be provided as a response to contemporary global challenges, empowering learners to become aware of and understand global issues, as well as active promoters of more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable societies. Finally, as part of a holistic education, students at all HEIs will be given opportunities for internships with local industries, businesses, artists, craftspeople, and so on, as well as research internships with faculty and researchers at their own or other HEIs/ research institutions, so that students can actively engage with the practical side of their learning and, as a result, improve their employability.

The Structure and Lengths of Degree Programs

Under the National Education Policy 2020 program, each undergraduate degree at any institution will be three or four years in length. Within this time frame, one may withdraw from the degree. Any educational institution is required

to provide a diploma degree after two years of study, a degree after three years of study, and a certificate to students who finish one year of study in any professional or vocational course of their choice. The Government of India would also assist in the establishment of an Academic Bank of Credit for the digital storage of academic results.

They can resume the course from where they left off rather than starting from scratch. Even though NEP 2020 states that higher education institutions would be given the authority to launch PG programs, developing a One Year PG Degree for students who have finished a Four Year UG Degree and a Two Year PG Degree for students who have completed a Three Year UG Degree may be problematic.

Conclusion

The policy implements a wide range of adjustments and appears to be a very progressive text, with a strong grip on the existing socio-economic situation and the potential of future unpredictability. To keep up with the rapid dematerialization and digitization of economies, education for a new generation of learners must fundamentally interact with an entirely new set of competencies. This appears to be an even more critical requirement now, with the epidemic hastening the trend toward digitalization and disruptive automation. Overall, the NEP 2020 addresses the need for professional development in a wide range of disciplines, from agriculture to artificial intelligence. India must be prepared for the future. And the NEP 2020 lays the path for many young aspiring students to be prepared with the necessary abilities.

The new education strategy has a commendable aim, but its strength will be determined by how well it integrates with the government's other policy efforts, such as Digital India, Skill India, and the New Industrial Policy, to accomplish a cohesive structural transformation. Hence, policy links can guarantee that education policy responds and learn from Skill India's experience in engaging more dynamically with the corporate sector to build a vocational education curriculum to make it a success. More evidence-based decision-making is also required to react to quickly developing transmutations and disruptions.

NEP has provided comforting real-time evaluation systems as well as a consultative monitoring and review structure. Instead of anticipating a new education policy every decade for a change in curriculum, this will enable the school system to continually improve itself. This will be a tremendous accomplishment in and of itself. The NEP 2020 is a watershed event in higher education. It will be genuinely ground-breaking if it is implemented well and on schedule.

Reference

1. Jebaraj, Priscilla., Hebbar, Nistula. (2020). "Rigorous consultations done before framing new National Education Policy, says Ramesh PokhriyalNishank". The Hindu. 31 July, ISSN 0971-751X.

2. (2020). National Education Policy 2020, Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India https://niepid.nic.in/nep_2020.pdf.

3. (2020). NEP 2020 Document, Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf.

4. Jain, S. (2020). The National Education Policy 2020: A policy for the times. ORF. 3 September, https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/national-education-policy-2020-policy-times/.

5. Aithal, P. S., & Aithal, S. (2019). Analysis of Higher Education in Indian National Education Policy Proposal 2019 and Its Implementation Challenges. SSRN Electronic Journal. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3417517.

6. Sahoo, N. (2021). Five challenges that would shape the outcome of NEP 2020. ORF. 30 November, https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/five-challenges-that-would-shape-the-outcome-of-nep-2020/.

7. Chopra, R. (2021). Explained: India's National Education Policy, 2020. The Indian Express. 13 August, https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/reading-new-education-policy-india-schools-colleges-6531603/#:%7E:text=In%20a%20significant%20shift%20from,14%2D18%20(secondary).

8. Rohatgi, Anubha. (Edi.) (2020). Highlights|NEP will play role in reducing the gap between research and education in India: PM Modi. 7 August, Hindustan Times. hindustantimes.com, https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/pm-modi-s-address-at-conclave-on-transformational-reforms-in-higher-education-under-national-education-policy-highlights/story-dehOW8q8ZRrONbbFSRjg0H.html.

9. Pandey, Vivek. (@theaitics) (2020). 13:29 IST. (2020, August 18). Implications of the National Education Policy 2020 on higher education in India. 18 Aug., Times of India Blog. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/theaitics/implications-of-the-national-education-policy-2020-on-higher-education-in-india-2-24729/.

10. Admin, W. (2020). National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: MHRD Education policy PDF Download. SarkariYojana Latest News. 1 August, Retrieved January 7, 2022, from https://pmil.in/central-government-scheme/national-education-policy/.