

NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020

The journal talks about various aspects of New Education Policy and the policy focuses on the changes, objectives and major challenges of new policy of education in 2020. This policy purposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of structure of education including its regulation and governance to create a new system which is aligned with the aspirational goals of education system. It seeks to introduce and implement vast changes across all levels of education in India by understanding the essentials. The New Education Policy was approved by the Union Cabinet to bring major changes including top foreign universities to set it's campus in India, as it's main objective is to make greater proportion of students getting vocational education, by taking away the UGC and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), introduction of a four-year multidisciplinary undergraduate programme with multiple exit options and also to discontinue the programme of M Phil. The education policy says that students until class 5 should be taught in their regional language or mother tongue. The policy of new education system also proposes phasing out of all institutions offering single streams and that all universities and colleges must aim to become multidisciplinary by 2040.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society, and promoting national development. Providing universal access to quality education is the key to India's continued ascent, and leadership on the global stage in terms of economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement, national integration, and cultural preservation. Universal high-quality education is the best way forward for developing and maximizing our country's rich talents and resources for the good of the individual, the society, the country, and the world. India will have the highest population of young people in the world over the next decade, and our ability to provide high-quality educational opportunities to them will determine the future of our country.

The world is undergoing rapid changes in the knowledge landscape. With various dramatic scientific and technological advances, such as the rise of big data, machine learning, and artificial intelligence, many unskilled jobs worldwide may be taken over by machines, while the need for a skilled workforce, particularly involving mathematics, computer science, and data science, in conjunction with multidisciplinary abilities across the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, will be increasingly in greater demand. With climate change, increasing pollution, and depleting natural resources, there will be a sizeable shift in how we meet the world's energy, water, food, and sanitation needs, again resulting in the need for new skilled labour, particularly in biology, chemistry, physics, agriculture, climate science, and social science. The growing emergence of epidemics and pandemics will also call for collaborative research in infectious disease management and development of vaccines and the resultant social issues heightens the need for multidisciplinary learning. There will be a growing demand for humanities and art, as

India moves towards becoming a developed country as well as among the three largest economies in the world.

The National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, including SDG4, while building upon India's traditions and value systems. The National Education Policy lays particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities - both the 'foundational capacities' of literacy and numeracy and 'higher-order' cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving – but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions.

The new National Educational Policy 2020 revealed on Wednesday 29th July, seeks to introduce and implement a sea of changes across all levels of education in India, including the essential understanding of education in the country. It also seeks to implement changes in the way the facilitators of such education – schools, colleges and teachers – are trained and how they approach education.

The New Education Policy 2020 proposes sweeping changes including opening up of Indian higher education to foreign universities, dismantling of the UGC and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), introduction of a four-year multidisciplinary undergraduate programme with multiple exit options, and discontinuation of the M Phil programme.

In school education, the policy focuses on overhauling the curriculum, “easier” Board exams, a reduction in the syllabus to retain “core essentials” and thrust on “experiential learning and critical thinking”. In a significant shift from the 1986 policy, which pushed for a 10+2 structure of school education, the new NEP pitches for a “5+3+3+4” design corresponding to the age groups 3-8 years (foundational stage), 8-11 (preparatory), 11-14 (middle), and 14-18 (secondary). This brings early childhood education (also known as pre-school education for children of ages 3 to 5) under the ambit of formal schooling. The mid-day meal programme will be extended to pre-school children. The New Education Policy says students until Class 5 should be taught in their mother tongue or regional language.

The policy also proposes phasing out of all institutions offering single streams and that all universities and colleges must aim to become multidisciplinary by 2040

1.2 CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY 2020

A New Education Policy aims to facilitate an inclusive, participatory and holistic approach, which takes into consideration field experiences, empirical research, stakeholder feedback, as well as lessons learned from best practices. It is a progressive shift towards a more scientific approach to education. The prescribed structure will help to cater the ability of the child – stages

of cognitive development as well as social and physical awareness. If implemented in its true vision, the new structure can bring India at par with the leading countries of the world.

School Education:

Universalization of education from preschool to secondary level with 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030. To bring 2 crore out of school children back into the mainstream through an open schooling system. The current 10+2 system to be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively.

Class 10 and 12 board examinations to be made easier, to test core competencies rather than memorized facts, with all students allowed to take the exam twice. School governance is set to change, with a new accreditation framework and an independent authority to regulate both public and private schools. Emphasis on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, no rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular, vocational streams in schools.

Vocational Education to start from Class 6 with Internships.

Teaching up to at least Grade 5 to be in mother tongue/regional language. No language will be imposed on any student. Assessment reforms with 360 degree Holistic Progress Card, tracking Student Progress for achieving Learning Outcomes

A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2021 will be formulated by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in consultation with National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree.

1.3 HIGHER EDUCATION:

be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges. Over a period of time, every college is expected to develop into either an autonomous degree-granting College, or a constituent college of a university.

Other Changes

An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration.

- National Assessment Centre- 'PARAKH' has been created to assess the students.
- It also paves the way for foreign universities to set up campuses in India.
- It emphasizes setting up of Gender Inclusion Fund, Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups.

- National Institute for Pali, Persian and Prakrit, Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation to be set up.
- It also aims to increase the public investment in the Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

Currently, India spends around 4.6 % of its total GDP on education.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF NEP 2020

The New Education Policy (NEP) policy was approved by the Union Cabinet to bring a slew of major changes including allowing top foreign universities to set up campuses to India, to make greater proportion of students getting vocational education and a move towards institutes including IITs turning multi-disciplinary. The policy aims at making “India a global knowledge superpower”. One of the stated aims of the policy is to instil a “deep-rooted pride” in being Indian, not only in thought, but also in spirit, intellect, and deeds, as well as to develop knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions that support responsible commitment to human rights, sustainable development and living, and global well-being.

Objectives of New Education Policy

The policy also aims at “light but tight” regulation by a single regulator for higher education as well as o increased access, equity, and inclusion. The NEP lays down that by 2040, all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) shall aim to become multidisciplinary institutions, each of which will aim to have 3,000 or more students. There shall, by 2030, be at least one large multidisciplinary institution in or near every district.

The aim will be to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3% to 50% by 2035. Single-stream higher education institutions will be phased out over time, and all will move towards becoming multidisciplinary. The system of ‘affiliated colleges’ will be gradually phased out in 15 years. The present complex nomenclature of HEIs in the country such as ‘deemed to be university’, ‘affiliating university’, ‘affiliating technical university’, ‘unitary university’ shall be replaced simply by ‘university’.

A university will mean a multidisciplinary institution that offers undergraduate and graduate programmes, with high quality teaching, research, and community engagement. The definition will allow a spectrum of institutions ranging from those that place equal emphasis on teaching and research i.e., Research-intensive Universities to teaching-intensive Universities.

The present nomenclature such as ‘deemed to be university’, ‘affiliating university’, ‘affiliating technical university’, ‘unitary university’ will be done away with.

Even engineering institutions, such as IITs, will move towards more holistic and multidisciplinary education with more arts and humanities. Students of arts and humanities will aim to learn more science.

1.5 REFORMS OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY

- Departments in Languages, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Indology, Art, Dance, Theatre, Education, Mathematics, Statistics, Pure and Applied Sciences, Sociology, Economics, Sports, Translation and Interpretation, etc. will be established and strengthened at all HEIs.
- The undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration, with multiple exit options. For instance a certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field including vocational and professional areas, or a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme. The 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's programme, however, shall be the preferred option.

An Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) shall be established which would digitally store the academic credits earned.

- The 4-year programme may also lead to a degree 'with Research' if the student completes a rigorous research project.

Model public universities for holistic and multidisciplinary education, at par with IITs, IIMs, etc., called MERUs (Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities) will be set up

Higher education institutions shall move away from high-stakes examinations towards continuous and comprehensive evaluation.

- India will be promoted as a global study destination providing premium education at affordable costs. An International Students Office at each institution hosting foreign students will be set up.
- High performing Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries. Selected universities like those from among the top 100 universities in the world will be facilitated to operate in India.
- A legislative framework facilitating such entry will be put in place, and such universities will be given special dispensation regarding regulatory, governance, and content norms on par with other autonomous institutions of India.
- In every education institution, there shall be counselling systems for handling stress and emotional adjustments.
- Efforts will be made to incentivize the merit of students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, and other SEDGs..
- Vocational education will be integrated into all school and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next decade. By 2025, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education.

- The B.Voc. degrees introduced in 2013 will continue to exist, but vocational courses will also be available to students enrolled in all other Bachelor's degree programmes, including the 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's programmes.
- 'Lok Vidya', i.e., important vocational knowledge developed in India, will be made accessible to students. The HRD ministry, which could be renamed education ministry, would constitute a National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE)
- The policy also speaks for creating a National Research Foundation (NRF).
- The policy also mentions the creation of a Higher Education Commission of India (HECI).

1.6 MAJOR CHALLENGES OF THE NEW EDUCATION SYSTEM:

1. Opening universities every week is a herculean task

India today has around 1,000 universities across the country. Doubling the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education by 2035 which is one of the stated goals of the policy will mean that we must open one new university every week, for the next 15 years.

Opening one University every week on an ongoing basis is an undoubtedly massive challenge.

2. The numbers are no less daunting in reforms to our school system

The National Education Policy 2020 intends to bring 2 crore children who are currently not in schools, back into the school system. Whichever way you look at it, accomplishing this over 15 years requires the setting up of around 50 schools every week.

This certainly requires a substantial amount of investment in classrooms and campuses.

But it also means appointing at least 50 headmasters every single week, and at least 200-300 teachers every single week on an ongoing basis.

Given that many teaching positions are going unfilled even in existing schools, this becomes a particularly interesting challenge.

3. Funding is a big challenge in the Covid era

From a funding standpoint, this is not a challenge for the faint-hearted. The National Education Policy 2020 envisages an increase in education spending from 4.6% to 6% of GDP, which amounts to around INR 2.5 lakh crores per year.

This money will be well-spent building schools and colleges across the country, appointing teachers and professors, and for operational expenses such as providing free breakfast to school children.

4. Current focus on healthcare and economic recovery to lower the execution speed

Economists have been calling for large stimulus packages amounting to double-digit percentages of GDP, despite the strain on the exchequer.

While the National Education Policy is a 20-year journey, one worries that we may be off to a stumbling start over the next 2-3 years, when government and budgetary priorities are claimed by the more urgent but equally important needs of healthcare and economic recovery.

5. Need to create a large pool of trained teachers

In school education, the policy envisages a sweeping structural re-design of the curriculum a very welcome step.

But in order to deliver this curriculum effectively, we need teachers who are trained in and understand the pedagogical needs.

Many of the curricular changes require substantial mindset shifts on the part of teachers, as well as parents.

6. Inter-disciplinary higher education demands for a cultural shift

In higher education, the National Education Policy 2020's focus on inter-disciplinary learning is a very welcome step. Universities, especially in India, have for decades been very silo-ed and departmentalized.

This culture of disciplinary mooring runs very deep among scholars and professors alike, with few exceptions.

For the entire higher education system to be composed of "exceptions" professors who are curious about, respect and lean into other disciplines while being experts in their own is no easy task. This requires a cultural shift in the entire higher education ecosystem, over the next 15-20 years.

In summary, the National Education Policy 2020 is in many ways just what India needs, as it blossoms into the world's largest workforce in coming years.

To realize the dreams it contains, we must overcome substantial execution challenges in a sustained manner for years and decades to come.

7. Technology at Scale:

Digital infrastructure of similar scale will be needed using digital classrooms, remote expertise-driven teaching models, AR/VR tools to bridge gaps in physical teaching and laboratory infrastructure, uniform assessments across school even in remote villages, career counselling and teacher training aids.

8. Curriculum and Context:

The NEP calls for curriculum and pedagogical changes. The board which conduct examinations will need to re-think how they assess students and what the learning content rubric should be. School textbooks will need realignment too. Given that 87 percent of K12 learners in India are in the schools with annual tuition fees of less than Rs. 12,000 these changes will need to be easily cascaded across tiers of school.

9. Evaluation Infrastructure:

Under the NEP, examinations are being advised to transform towards a culture of assessment with continuous tracking of learning outcomes, a focus on higher order and foundational skills, and AI-based software progress tracking to enable students to make optimal career choices. Continuous assessment requires schools and teachers to innovate on evaluation approaches and assignments that are thought provoking and requires students to apply themselves.

Compared to theory-based-examinations that have unilateral questions and answers that are easier to administer and score, holistic assessments would require educational boards and institutions to invest significantly in creating these assessments and practice assignments.

10. Vernacular content:

There are bigger problems to solve. Adapting to online education is easier for English medium students and teachers due to the ready availability of tools or content. The situation is opposite in vernacular languages that dominate the Indian school education scene. Only a few ed-tech firms provide vernacular content.

11. Quality of content:

The quality of content is a bigger issue. Providing quality content is a major take for Ed-tech firms. There is no check on the quality of content provided by the platforms to students.

12. The great digital divide:

There is a huge digital divide in urban and rural schools. In a recent survey, over 75 pc of students are impacted due to the lockdown as they found hard to study online, over 80 pc students said they need hand holding to shift from offline to online and over 25 pc said they need proper training to pursue education through online.

This is still a dream for the majority of students in India. Most of the parents in India cannot afford OTT platforms for their wards to study. However, a concerted effort can mitigate many problems.

Until now, most ed-tech products catered to tier 1 cities and children from the high-income segment, ignoring the majority of students who come from tier 2, 3 cities and rural areas. With more students enrolling from tier 2 and 3 cities, the crisis presents a perfect playground for various companies to modify products, adapt and contextualise them as per the needs of different

customers. Firms should therefore utilise this crisis to build the best possible evidence around learning outcomes.

Bharat net is connecting all the villages with high-speed broadband network. Part of the project connecting remote areas in North-East India is already complete. Ensuring digital connectivity, therefore, may be easier.

The 2011 project to distribute cheap 'Akash' tablets to promote e-learning in villages was unsuccessful due to quality and procurement issues. The scheme can be revived in rural areas by the state governments. States like Tamil Nadu have started distributing tabs to students for studies.

1.7 ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES OF NEP 2020

Advantages of NEP

New pedagogical and curricular structure of school education (5+3+3+4)

The education system currently follows the 10+2 structure. This will soon be replaced by the 5+3+3+4 curricular structure. The new structure can be better understood when it corresponds with a child's age i.e. 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively. The first stage includes time spent in Anganwadi and preschools

Earlier, schooling was mandatory for children aged between six and 14 years. Now education will be compulsory for children aged between the three and 18 years.

This move would allow those aged from 14-18 years to also demand the same Right to Education (RTE) that was earlier present only up till 14years. Now children above the age of 14 too can demand this. Meaning they can get educated up to 12th grade free of charges at any government educational establishment.

Mother tongue as the medium of instruction

It is obvious that the mother tongue is the first language that a child understands. Hence understanding newer concepts will be much easier when if done in the mother tongue itself. In order to implement this the medium of instruction in schools will change too.

Bag less days and informal internship

According to this, students will participate in a 10-day bag less period. During this period students from Grades 6-8 will intern with local vocational experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc.

This was another move, that was hugely appreciated as necessary professionals that are looked down upon by society will finally be viewed with newer outlooks in the coming generations. This move will also enable children to pick up at least one skill during the period.

Coding for Children

Children will now be able to learn to code from class 6 as coding will be included as a part of their curriculum. This move will put students at par with the Chinese where similar policies with regards to coding have already been implemented in their education system.

Multi-Stream Flexibility

Once the NEP is imposed, the compartmentalization of student's post 10th into Arts, Science and Commerce will be blurred. Now students will be allowed to take up courses from varied streams depending on their interests.

DISADVANTAGES OF NEP:

Language

There are many viewpoints directly addressed at languages i.e. medium through which students will be taught in schools, and the options available to them. First comes the problem of even introducing mother tongues into schools. India already faces a huge shortage of teachers leading to the skyrocketing teacher: student ratio in the country.

The increasing disparity between sections of society

The policy shows how students in government schools will be taught in the regional languages up to 5th standard if not 8th. The private schools, however, will not take a step back in introducing English from the early stages. If a student only begins to learn English 7 years later to that of students in private schools the difference will only add to those of learning a language in an environment that is not conducive to speaking, writing, and reading English.

Four-year graduation program

The four-year graduation program, unfortunately, lets go of most of the benefits after approving dropouts in the first year in order to change streams. What is the purpose of allowing dropouts in the later stages? Why should a student even wait to complete 4 years if he receives a diploma in two? If he leaves immediately he may have added 2 years of work experience instead of classwork.

1.8 CLOSING THOUGHTS

Although there may be a few minor loopholes the new National Educational Policy, nevertheless is revolutionary. Hopefully, these are further addressed in the parliament sessions to come. The next question that pops up is – By when will the policy be implemented? The implementation,

however, will start immediately with the first change being the Ministry of Human Resource Development getting renamed as the Ministry of Education.

Other implementations are to be done in phases from July. Meaning many significant changes of the over 100 action points being noticed. The complete policy, however, is meant to transform the education system by 2040. Final judgment on the extent of its success can only be made on its execution. Hopefully, it doesn't take till 2040.

CONCLUSION

The new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, is a good policy as it aims at making the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned to the needs of the 21st century and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The intent of policy seems to be ideal in many ways but it is the implementation where lies the key to success.

The National Education Policy, 2020 aims to shift towards more scientific approach to education. It will help to cater ability of the child in different stages of development. This includes cognitive development, social and physical development. When implemented, the policy will bring India at par² with leading countries of the world.