

New Education Policy 2020 and Its Impact on Higher Education: An Analysis

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Abstract

The New Education Policy announced by Government of India was a welcoming change and spanking news amidst the challenges posed by Covid19 pandemic. The announcement of NEP 2020 was unexpected by many of us. The changes that NEP 2020 has suggested were valuable that many educationists never anticipated. Though the education policy has impacted school as well as college education equally. As we know that, India needs to be ready for the future,

and the NEP 2020 paves the way ahead for many young aspiring students to be equipped with the right skill set. The new education policy has admirable vision, but its strength will depend on whether it is able to effectively integrate with the other policy initiatives of government like Digital India, Skill India and the New Industrial Policy to name a few, in order to effect a coherent structural transformation. Hence, policy linkages can ensure that education policy addresses to and learns from Skill India's experience in engaging more dynamically with the corporate sector to shape vocational education curriculum in order to make it a success. There is also a necessity for more evidence-based decision-making, to adapt to rapidly evolving transmutations and disruptions. This research paper mainly concentrated on NEP 2020 and its impact on Higher Education. This paper also outlines the salient features of NEP and analyses how they affect the existing education system and what type of infrastructural facilities shall be required.

Keywords: New Education Policy, Higher Education, admirable vision, Covid-19.

Introduction

The National Policy on Education (NPE) is a policy formulated by the Government of India to advance education amongst Indian society. The policy covers elementary education to higher education in both rural and urban India. The first National Policy on Education was promulgated by the Government of India in 1968, the second in 1986, and the third in 2020. On 29 July 2020 the National Education Policy 2020 was approved by the Union Cabinet of India, which outlines the vision of India's new education system. The new education policy is a comprehensive structure for basic education to higher education as well as professional training in both rural and urban India. The language policy in NEP is a broad guideline and advice-giving in nature; and it is up to the states, institutions, and schools to decide on the execution. The NEP 2020 enacts several changes in India's education policy. It aims to raise state expenses on education from around 4% to 6% of the GDP as soon as practicable. In January 2015, a committee under ex- Cabinet Secretary T. S. R. Subramanian started the consultation process for the New Education Policy. Based on the committee report, in June 2017, the draft NEP was submitted in 2019 by a panel led by former Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) chief K. Kasturirangan. The Draft New Education Policy 2019, was later released by Ministry of Education, followed by a number of open consultations.

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." quality higher education should aim to fabricate individuals who are brilliant, thoughtful, attractive, and innovative. It must permit a person to study one or more specialized areas of interest at an in-depth level and develop moral fiber, ethical and constitutional values, intellectual inquisitiveness, scientific temper, creativity, service spirit, and the skills of the 21st century across a range of fields, including sciences, social sciences, the arts, humanities, languages, individual, technological the vocational subjects. The new education policy brings some elemental changes to the current system, and the key highlights are multidisciplinary higher education institutions, with at least one in or near every district, revamping student curricula, pedagogy, evaluation, and support for improved student experience, establishing a National Research Foundation to support excellent peer-reviewed work and proficiently seed study at universities and colleges. Institutional restructuring and consolidation aim to end the fragmentation of higher education by transforming higher education institutions into large multidisciplinary institutions and creating well behaved and innovative individuals. Increasing the gross enrolment ratio in higher education, including vocational training, from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. Holistic and multidisciplinary education

should go all-out in an integrated way to advance all human capacities-mental, cultural, social, physical, emotional, and moral. Excellent learning environments and support for students offer a holistic approach including adequate curriculum, interactive pedagogy, consistent formative assessment, and plenty support for students.

Objectives of the study

The major objective of this study is to analyse and understand the impact of New Education Policy 2020 on higher education. The study also outlines the prominent features of NEP and analyses how they affect the existing education system.

Research methodology

This is a descriptive type of study. The necessary secondary data was collected from various sources including journals, magazines, websites, books, and other government and non government publications, etc. This available data was then analyzed and reviewed to arrive at the justified and reasonable conclusions.

Silent features of New Education Policy related to Higher Education

The National Education Policy is expected to bring constructive and long-lasting impact on the higher education system of the nation. It is estimable initiative that foreign universities will be allowed to open campuses in India, which will help the students experience the global quality of education in their very own country. The policy of introducing multi-disciplinary institutes will lead to a transformed focus on every discipline such as arts, humanities, social sciences and this form of education will help students to learn and grow holistically. Thus, students will be ready with stronger knowledge base. The beginning of single common entrance test is another encouraging step which will reduce the stress of multiple competitive exams and ease off the stress of preparing for so many of them. Establishing Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) is certainly a strong idea to store the academic

credits that students earn by taking courses from various recognized higher education institutions. A student can earn scores by completing a course and these will be credited to the ABC account. One can then transfer these credits if he/she decides to switch colleges/institutions. If a student ever drops out for some reasons, these credits will remain intact which means he/she can come back years later and pick up from where the student had left. The new higher education regulatory structure will ensure that distinct administrative, accreditation, financing, and academic standard-setting roles are performed by separate, autonomous, and empowered bodies. These four structures will be established as four independent verticals within a single umbrella institution, India's Higher Education Commission (HECI). Some of the salient features of NEP are:

- Establishing Higher Education Commission of India as a single regulatory body for higher education.
- Provision of Multiple entry and exit.
- Online Courses: Tech-based option for adult learning through apps, TV

channels: Quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centers will be developed.

- E-courses will be available in regional languages: starting with 8 major languages – Kannada, Odia, Bengali among others to join the e-courses available in Hindi and English.
- Top foreign universities to set-up campuses in India.
- Common entrance exam for all colleges: The common Entrance exam for all higher education institutes to be held by National Testing Agency (NTA).
- A Higher Education Council of India (HECI) will be set up to regulate higher education. The council's goal will be to increase gross enrollment ratio. The HECI will have 4 verticals: a) National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), to regulate 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 in 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).

Impact Of Nep On Higher Education

(i) Regulatory System of Higher Education:

A significant change in NEP 2020 is the suggestion to set up the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI), as an umbrella body for higher education. This will usually bring out a question that what will happen to the present UGC and AICTE? HECI is aiming at reforming the higher education sector; this provision will separate the Academic and Funding aspects of the sector. According to the new provision I, HECI will not have any financial powers. The funding processes which were handled by the University Grants Commission (UGC) will be taken care by the Ministry of Education. This change however is expected to clear the regulatory mess in India's Higher Education system.

HECI is expected to have four independent verticals - National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC) for standard-setting, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding, and National Accreditation Council (NAC) for accreditation. To have uniformity in education standards, a single umbrella body was always a necessity and this has been a vision of numerous educationists. This is considered as the right step in restructuring education policy. However, to ensure quality of higher education, institutes must be measured based on relevant parameters like research, industry linkages, placements and academic excellence, etc. If the HECI can manage this, the benefits to its biggest stakeholder, the youth of India, might be significant.

Graded Accreditation and Graded Autonomy: The concept of "empowerment and autonomy to innovate" is one of

the key features in NEP 2020 which supports a “phasing out” strategy from Affiliated Colleges to Autonomous Institutions. The increased flexibility offered to autonomous institutions also gives hope in curriculum improvement. It also says that with appropriate accreditations, Autonomous degree granting Colleges could evolve into Research-intensive or Teaching-intensive Universities, if they so aspire. The announcement of setting up Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) in the country gives more hope. These institutions will be at par with the existing IITs and IIMs and will aim to showcase multidisciplinary education for the Indian students. Another important change the NEP 2020 suggests that the National Testing Agency will serve as a leading, expert, autonomous testing organization to conduct entrance examinations for undergraduate and graduate admissions and fellowships in Higher Education Institutions. The high quality, range, and flexibility of the NTA testing services will enable most universities to use these common entrance exams - rather than having hundreds of universities each devising their own entrance exams - thereby drastically reducing the burden on students, universities and colleges, and the entire education system. It will be left up to individual universities and colleges to use NTA assessments for their admissions. It also surely helps the students to easily transfer their degrees and credits to universities abroad.

(ii) Internationalization at home:

NEP 2020 also allows foreign universities and colleges to come to India and this brings out a challenge for the native institutions to improve the quality of education provided by them. The Indian higher education sector is buzzing all around as the opportunity of paving the way for foreign universities to set up campuses in the country. India has one of the largest networks of higher education systems in the world, with more than 900 universities and 40,000 colleges. But GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) of India in higher education is 26.3%, which is significantly low when compared to other BRICS countries like Brazil (50%) or China (51%), and very much lower when compared with European and North American nations which would be more than 80%. India must achieve a significant growth in the area of global higher education for obtaining a sustainable

economic growth, which should not be driven by natural resources, but by knowledge resources. According to the different global surveys, cross-border education is beneficial for the economy and brings a wider level of global awareness, culturally perceptive, and competitiveness. Foreign collaborations enable local institutes to design their curriculum in alignment with international pedagogy and offer a diverse portfolio of subjects and specialization to students.

(iii) Holistic & Multi disciplinary Education:

The NEP 2020 claims that, a holistic & multi disciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings -intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral in an integrated manner. Such an education will help develop well-rounded individuals that possess critical 21st century capacities in fields across 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. The NEP 2020 envisions one large multidisciplinary Higher Education Institution (HEI) in or near every district, by 2030. Towards the attainment of such a holistic and multidisciplinary education, the flexible and innovative curricula of all HEIs shall include credit-based courses and projects in the areas of community engagement and service, environmental education, and value-based education. Value-based education will include the development of humanistic, ethical, Constitutional, and universal human values of truth (satya), righteous conduct (dharma), peace (shanti), love (prem), nonviolence (ahimsa), scientific temper, citizenship values, and also life skills; lessons in seva/service and participation in community service programmes will be considered an integral part of a holistic education. As the world is becoming increasingly interconnected, Global Citizenship Education (GCED), a response to contemporary global challenges, will be provided to empower learners to become aware of and understand global issues and to become active promoters of more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable societies.

Finally, as part of a holistic education, students at all HEIs will be provided with opportunities for internships with local industry, businesses, artists, crafts persons, etc., as well as research internships with faculty and researchers at their own or other HEIs/research institutions, so that students may actively engage with the practical side of their learning and, as a by-product, further improve their employability.

(iv)The structure and lengths of degree programmes

Undergraduate degree in any institution will be of duration of three or four years. One can leave the degree within this period. Any educational institution will have to give to the student a certificate after the student completes one year of study, diploma after the student completes two years of study and a degree after the student completes three years of study in any professional or vocational course of their choice. The Government of India will also help in establishing an Academic Bank of Credit for storing the academic scores digitally. This will enable the institutions to count the credit at the end and put it in the degree of the student. This will be helpful for those individuals who might have to leave the course mid-way. They can start the course later on from where they left off and not start from the beginning once again. Even though NEP 2020 says that Higher education institutions will be given the freedom to start PG courses there may be some difficulty in designing One Year PG Degree for students who have completed 4 Year UG Degree and a Two Year PG Degree for students who have completed 3 Year UG Degree.

Conclusion

The policy introduces a full scope of changes and reads largely as a very progressive document, with a firm grip on the current socio-economic landscape and the prospect of future uncertainty. Education for a new generation of learners has to essentially engage with the increasing dematerialization and digitalization of economies, which requires a completely new set of capabilities in order to be able to keep up. This seems to be an even more essential prerequisite now, with the trend towards digitalization

and disruptive automation being quickened by the pandemic. Overall, the NEP 2020 addresses the need to develop professionals in a variety of fields ranging from Agriculture to Artificial Intelligence. India needs to be ready for the future. And the NEP 2020 paves the way ahead for many young aspiring students to be equipped with the right skill set. The new education policy has a admirable vision, but its strength will depend on whether it is able to effectively integrate with the other policy initiatives of government like Skill India, Digital India and the New Industrial Policy to name a few, in order to effect a coherent structural transformation. Hence, policy linkages can ensure that education policy addresses to and learns from Skill India's experience in engaging more dynamically with the corporate sector to shape vocational education curriculum in order to make it a success. NEP has reassuringly provisioned for real-time evaluation systems and a consultative monitoring and review framework. This shall empower the education system to constantly reform itself, instead of expecting for a new education policy every decade for a shift in curriculum. This, in itself, will be a significant achievement.

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