NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY-2020: A PROGRESSIVE POLICY WITH DIVERSE CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Education is one of the key factors for the development of the country. Substantial investment in human capital contributes to the sustainable development of the economy. It increases human capital and enhances entrepreneurship and advances in technology. In due course it plays a vital role in ensuring both social and economic progress as well ameliorates income distribution. Hence, a well defined and futuristic education policy is essential for country at all educational levels.

History of Education Policy in India

Since the country's independence in 1947, the Indian government has sponsored a variety of programmes to address the problems of illiteracy in both urban and rural India. The Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's earliest minister of education, envisaged strong central government control over education throughout the country, with a standardized educational system. The first National Education Policy was promulgated by the Government of India by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1968, second by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986. On 29 July 2020, outlined the vision of a new education system of India third education policy brought by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Need for New Education Policy

1. The policy aims to provide quality education that promotes holistic development, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills among students.
2. The policy focuses on ensuring universal access to quality education from preschool to secondary level for all children aged 3 to 18 years.
3. Emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach by allowing students to choose subjects of their interest from various disciplines.
4. Flexibility and choice to students in selecting subjects according to their interests and aptitudes. It intends to reduce the rigid separation of streams such as arts, commerce, and science and promotes a more integrated approach to education.
5. Focus on the continuous professional development of teachers to enhance their skills and knowledge. It emphasizes the need for high-quality teacher education programs, regular training, and mentoring to ensure a competent and motivated teaching workforce.

Changes in School System

1. The NEP 2020 aims at making "India a global knowledge superpower."
2. Universalization of education from preschool to secondary

level with 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030.

3. Bring 2 crore out of school children back into the mainstream through an open schooling system.

4. 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.

5. Emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy, no rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular, vocational streams in schools.

6. 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.

Transforming Curricular & Pedagogical Structure

New pedagogical and curricular structure of school education (5+3+3+4): 3 years in Anganwadi/pre-school and 12 years in school.

↑ Secondary Stage (4) multidisciplinary study, greater critical thinking, flexibility and student choice of subjects.

↑ Middle Stage (3) experiential learning in the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, and humanities.

↑ Preparatory Stage (3) play, discovery, and activity-based and interactive classroom learning.

↑ Foundational stage (5) multilevel, play/activity-based learning.

7. Vocational Education to start from Class 6 with Internships.

8. Teaching up to at least Grade 5 to be in mother tongue/regional language. No language will be imposed on any student.

9. Assessment reforms with 360 degree Holistic Progress Card, tracking Student Progress for achieving Learning Outcomes

10. 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 NCERT

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

Changes in Higher Education

1. Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education to be raised to 50% by 2035. Besides, 3.5 crore seats to be added in higher education.

2. Holistic Undergraduate education with a flexible curriculum can be of 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period.

3. Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.

4. The National Research Foundation will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.

5. Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single umbrella body for the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education.

6. Affiliation of Colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.

7. 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.

DIGITAL DRIVE

The new education policy has emphasized the integration of technology in all levels of learning. Some features of the policy:

Technology in education

An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created for the exchange of ideas on use of technology to enhance learning, assessment,

planning and administration. A devoted unit for the purpose of creating digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be set up in the ministry. Integration of technology will be done to improve classroom processes.

Financial support

Meritorious students belonging to scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, or other backward class and other socially and economically disadvantaged groups will be given incentives. Private institutions will been courage to offer scholarships to their students

Professional education

Standalone technical universities, health science universities, legal and agricultural universities will aim at becoming multi-disciplinary institutions.

SUMMARY

Learning plan

A look at the key features of the new education policy:

- Public spending on education by States, Centre to be raised to 6% of GDP.
- Ministry of Human Resource Development to be renamed Ministry of Education.
- Separate technology unit to develop digital education resources.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Universalisation from age 3 to Class 10 by 2030.
- Mission to ensure literacy and numeracy skills by 2025.
- Mother tongue as medium of instruction till Class 5 wherever possible.
- New curriculum to include 21st century skills like coding and vocational integration from Class 6
- Board exams to be easier, redesigned.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- New umbrella regulator for higher education except medical, legal courses.
- Flexible, holistic, multi-disciplinary UGdegrees of 3-4 years' duration.
- 1 to 2 year PG programmes, No M.Phil

- College affiliation system to be phased out in 15 years.

Conclusion

It is necessary to retain all our major courses along with adding new subjects which already exist. Regarding, syllabus quality to take consider for the competence level of the students as well as the subjects. To make all the changes from the department centric approach. Apart from allocating more funds for the higher education sector in the country, the education policy should also set up new colleges and universities besides establishing research centres. Albeit there are shortcomings to the new education policy, the merits are more in number. It is believed by many that by implementing these changes, India's education system will be taken a step higher.

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