

Policy National Education 2020 & Higher Education

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Abstract

It is truly said that economic development and social development of a country depends on its education system. For more economic and social development a nation depends on its skilled manpower which can be skilled by education. In this 21st century every nation has need of more knowledgeable, techno friendly, skilled, and competent man power, which can be created by effective education system of any country. Education system of any country directly depends on its education policies. Inclusive, equitable & quality education system in any country is the outcome of effectiveness of its educational policies. It has been a long cherished aim for India from many years to attain Inclusive, equitable & quality education system at all levels. Even after independence, there has been so many concerted and persistent efforts put to achieve this aim and so many policies have been initiated at centre and state level in India. But till now the aim of inclusive, equitable and quality education is far from our reach. Now Indian govt. put a step forward to achieve this aim by initiation of NEP 2020 which is revision of SDG4(2015): it stated to provide inclusive, equitable and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities to all by 2030 (GOI, 2020: 3). New Education Policy 2020 is a new revolutionary initiative by Ministry of Human Resource Development of Govt. of India to address the main challenges of access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability faced by current education system. This paper will focus on main existing issues which gave impetus to this policy. The main aim of this paper will have to throw appropriate light on recommended reforms by this policy for development of higher education system and to discuss probable challenges during implementation of NEP 2020 at higher education level in India.

Introduction

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Education is that enlightened experience which develops insight among people. It is that process by which different values, ideas, cultures and attitudes can be transferred from one generation to another generation. It contributes a lot in individual development as well as national development. By it a person can attain technological, economical, social, intellectual and physical development. It is that process by which contributes skill development of any person, because by it new technology and new knowledge can be easily acquired by a person. Education is that positive externality which increases not only the productivity of person being educated but also the productivity of his coworkers (Hanushek, 2002:2015). So it is a prerequisite for human development and human development is a prerequisite for economic development.

In this global economy, more knowledge intensity and more technological innovations are emerging day by day. To adapt new technology and to cope up with emerging knowledge economy, quality education is required at all the three levels whether it is primary, tertiary and higher level. Keeping in view this need, time to time so many education policies and provisions were initiated at national and international levels. But, still now the aim of achieving quality, equitable & inclusive education system has been a dream for India. So to achieve this aim, New Education Policy 2020 was a new revolutionary initiative by Ministry of Human Resource Development of Govt. of India after NEP 1968 & NEP 1986 (Revised in 1992). After 34 years, finally NEP was unveiled on 31 July 2020 which sets out comprehensive reforms that will affect every student from his playschool to ambitious master's degree and Ph.D program. Though draft report of NEP is submitted by Kasturirangan committee on May 2019 to address the main challenges of access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability faced by current education system (GOI, 2020: 3). The main aim of this policy was to increase public investment in education from 4.4% (2018) of India's GDP to 6% and improve education for nearly 350 million students in country. This policy purposes availability of choice to students at all stages and encourages multidisciplinary approach. This policy has recommended so many reforms at all the three levels of education but the main focus of this paper will be at higher education reforms.

Higher education in any country has the responsibility to transform it into a knowledge society and at the same time into a knowledge economy. In 21st century higher education is given paramount importance to reshape the future of society because due to more technology revolution, and emergence of knowledge economy. Higher educational institutions are considered necessary resources of a country for development. These provides professional, technological education and specialization of streams to students to make them efficient



professionals, knowledgeable person and helpful in creating more employment opportunities in society.

The main issues in Indian higher education system which affected higher education system or which gave impetus to NEP 2020

Indian higher education system has major drawbacks such as: lack of cognitive skills & learning outcomes, insufficient research infrastructure in our universities and institutions, lack of multidisciplinary approach, lack of flexibility in subject choice and assessment as well as skill gap. Though India ranks third in the higher education system in terms of size and diversity and largest in the world in terms of numbers of institutions but it lags behind from other countries in various factors such as accreditation problems, emphasis on rote learning, low GER, no equity, low quality of education, outdated and burdened curriculum, shortage of faculty, lack of infrastructure facilities, regulatory issues and insufficient funds or financial resources.

40 % of institutions of higher education in India were found of small sized and running a single programme against the expected reform to a multidisciplinary style of higher education which was essential requirement for the educational reforms in country for the 21st century. It was also found that 16.3% of colleges have annual enrolment less than 100 students and only 4% colleges enroll more than 3000 students due to regional imbalance and quality of education they were offering (GOI, 2019: I). According to the 2017-18 NSSE (National sample survey on education) it was revealed that only 8 % of all Indian households (5-24) age group have access to computer and internet. Internet penetration in India stands at only 40% and 2/3 part of this percentage covers the age group of 12-29. Total internet users just 35% of women which are very less as compare to men users 73%. It was revealed that 75 % of students found difficulty in online study because never doing before. Gross enrolment ratio in higher education in India for 18-23 age group was found 26.3% (male with 26.3% & female with 26.4%). for SC it was 23% & for ST it was 17.2% (GOI, 2019: II). Mere 73 female teachers were found per 100 male teachers. Majority of students enrolled in Arts stream as compare to other streams (GOI, 2019: III). More male students were awarded Ph.D degree as compare to males as per AISHE 2018-19. So keeping in view these main issues Indian govt. has initiated NEP 2020 policy.

As keeping in this view these issues so **many reforms are recommended at higher education** level in this policy such as:



To improve higher education system, this policy has proposed promotion of multidiscipline and research in higher education and vocational education institutions, online distant learning, flexibility in curriculum, which will be helpful to all higher education institutions, grown into a holistic organization to provide learning opportunities in diverse fields through various elective courses (GOI, 2020:3). In this policy that type of pedagogy is recommended which aims to make education more experimental, holistic, integrated, discovery centered, discussion based, enjoyable, learner centered, inquiry driven and flexible. The main aim of policy initiative was to change the traditional value system of India and build up a new system which aligned with the 21st century aspired educational goals and revision & revamping of all the previous educational structures suggested by previous policies so that India may be a global knowledge superpower by providing high quality education to all (Panditrao&Panditrao, 2020: 72).

- Establishment of new quality universities and colleges are proposed to increase access, equity and inclusion by revision and revamping of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment along with a development of a social commitment to break the rigid barriers of streams & specializations. National research foundation, institutional autonomy & faculty autonomy and multidisciplinary undergraduate & graduate programs with medium of instruction in local/Indian and other languages are recommended.
- Institutional restructuring and consolidation is also recommended by making all HEIs multidisciplinary by 2040 and at least a large multidisciplinary HEI in every district by 2030. An increase in GER from 26.3% to 50% by 2035, labeling of undergraduate degree colleges as Autonomous Degree Granting College, attaining the concept of affiliated by next 15 years, redefinition of research incentive and teaching incentive universities, cooperation between HEIs in their development, community engagement, online programs ODL, and change in present day complex and different nomenclature (such as deemed, technical, affiliating, and unitary universities) of universities to just “University” were main reforms which are recommended for the institutional restructuring and consolidation.
- A step toward a more holistic and multidisciplinary education is proposed by rewarding a grade certificate with multiple exit or entry options at all under graduate level course of 3 or 4 years such as for one year a certificate, for two year a diploma certificate, for 3 year bachelor degree certificate and multidisciplinary degree certificate for 4 years in which fourth year research work is to be preferred. Model of Multidisciplinary and research universities (MERU’s) was recommended for holistic development of higher education institutions.



- More autonomy to HEIs and their faculty, reinvention of CBCs with emphasis on continuous and comprehensive evaluation, high quality support centers, provision of professional academic and career counseling for all, discarding of any discrimination on the basis of gender of socio economic status, institutional plans containing special plans for SEDGs and credit bases courses in community services such as environment education & value based education are recommended to create optimal learning environment and support for students,
- For internationalization, admission of international students in Indian universities at affordable costs, international student's office at each HEI, opening of high profile Indian universities in foreign countries, and opening of top foreign universities in India are recommended.
- Financial support to students from SC, ST, OBC, disadvantaged groups and provision of quality education through comfortable, safe environment and provision of establishment of all facilities such as clubs like sports ,art, culture, eco, activity community services are proposed.
- Motivated, capable and energetic faculty is recommended in this policy so that they can design their own curriculum and pedagogical modalities with autonomy in approved framework. Transparency in faculty recruitment and their promotion process is recommended.
- To achieve equity and inclusion of higher education, provision of special education zones, gender inclusion fund, improvement in technologies, financial assistance to SEDGs by the side of Government and regulation of fee and expenditure, provision of scholarships and sponsorships, make admission process, curriculum & job opportunities more inclusive and make sure availability of facilities to differently abled and disadvantaged students by the side of HEIs are proposed.
- Four independent councils will be established such as NHERC for regulation, NAC for accreditation, HEGC for granting or funding & GEC or framing learning outcomes on the basis of specially formulated NHEQF under the umbrella of Higher Education Commission of India HECIs proposed for transformation of regulatory system of HEIs.
- Audit process of all institution at similar standards and disclosure as 'not for profit entity', complementary check by NAC, provision of disclosure of all fees and charges by all public and private HEIs is a significant reform to Curb out commercialization of education.
- For effective governance and leadership for HEIs proposal of BOG (Board of Governors) is given which will be empowered to govern the institution free of any external



interference and it will be accountable to hold all the regulatory guidelines of HECI through NHERC.

- Provision of professional education, health care education, technology in education, online and digital education are also recommended to make Indian education system more knowledge friendly, techno friendly and full of employability opportunities so that country can be achieved holistic development, sustainable and economic sufficiency so that it be counted in developed economies. NETF (a national educational technology forum) will be credited to encourage the use of technology in college education.
- Multidisciplinary institutions will conduct B.Ed program of 4 years and in department of education faculty will be Ph.D's or teacher with outstanding teaching experience. Along with this organization of NPST (National professional standards for teachers) is recommended to make the recruitment of teachers more transparent. It will be developed by NCTE by year 2022. For continuous profession development of teachers in higher education, in-service training programs, sufficient funding, capacity planning for teacher education by RUSA and central and state govt., research based teacher preparation, inter departmental collaboration for special subjects are proposed (Singh, 2019:20758).
- Some other recommendations are making to happen such as: strengthening CABE, rename of MHRD as ministry of education, financial and other infrastructural support. From which rename of MHRD as ministry of education is first significant change in implementation process.

On the basis of these above recommendations, NEP 2020 is appearing a complete proposal and significant effort to rejuvenate the higher education system to overcome existing challenges in providing quality higher education with equity, inclusion and better access. The vision of policy is to find holistic development of individuals so that more cooperative, cohesive, productive, creative, innovative, socially engaged, more vibrant, more dynamic, adaptive, knowledgeable nation can be achieved. But the success of this policy is depends on its effective implementation.

No doubt, in implementation process of any new policy, there are some challenges in pathway. So for India **many probable challenges are visualized due to lack of infrastructural facilities, lack of financial resources and lack of competent and skilled human resources and people's traditional outlook. In adopting this new policy many challenges will be exist for Indian peoples because they have old conception.** From which the some are explained below.



1. To double the GER in higher education system by 2035 there would be need to open a new university every week for the next 15 years which would be great challenge for country. To overcome this challenge government should allow more digital and online skills and universities should have to focus on these skills.
2. Though this policy multiple exit or entry is permitted in higher education and certification is decided on the basis of years of course to reducing the dropout. But Indian people have a common mentality that high degree qualification is closely associated with job acquirement. This would be a major challenge to dismantle this type of thinking so that those people can be saved from this dangerous paradigm and innate talents of them can be encouraged.
3. To establish multidisciplinary institutions on the place of single disciplinary institutions in higher education, more trained, pedagogy oriented educators would have required to design curriculum, higher order thinking skills and skill inculcation at different levels of education. It would be a major challenge.
4. With limited resources at hand, it would be very difficult to implement NEP 2020 for higher education. Actually to increase admission there is a great need of offering more scholarships to students from low income starta, but NEP 2020 has failed to explain how this can achieved. It indicated a dire need of public funding in higher education but by mere increase in education budget from 4.4% (2018-19) to 6 % of GDP, implementation needs cannot be fulfilled & more dependency would be increase on private institutions.
5. To attain Digital connectivity in India there is a massive need of high internet penetration in remote areas, trained teaching and non teaching staff, AR/VR technologies, expertise driven online teaching models, digital classrooms, uniform assessment schemes, overcome gap in physical teaching and lab infrastructure by virtual learning. This would have been a major challenge for Indian education system.
6. As per its recommendation it permitted to allow grant autonomy to colleges and system of affiliations to a university in 15 years which would be a reason to open the door for privatizing. It would lead to privatization of higher education which is against social justice. It is also criticized by calling “National Exclusion Policy” & “Blue print for Privatization” of education by some teachers and students federations of central universities due to this feature.
7. It recommended introduction of mother tongue in academic institutions for each subject at that time when already India has disturbing teacher student ratio. It would create a major challenge to find competent teachers who can provide study material to students in mother language.



8. Another recommendation such as the students in government schools will be taught in local or regional language whereas in private schools English will be from earlier years so there would be difference between different sections of society. And that type of students will be increased in society who will not be comfortable with English as compare to those who studied in private schools.
9. Certification at different grades on the basis of years of course in higher education such as undergraduate level or graduate level would also be a reason of high dropouts in higher education.

Conclusion

However so many challenges are visualized at this time which may be faced by Indian education system during this policy implementation but its higher education system going to under process to change by this policy proposal such as higher education in India would be teacher centric to student centric, choice centric to competency centric, information to knowledge centric, from learning centric to research centric, marks centric to skills centric and examination to experimental centric (Aithal&Aithal 2020:36).

Along with it, in Covid-19 period, online teaching and learning is proved an effective step which is proposed by NEP 2020. Digital learning would be an effective measure in upcoming difficult situations. So at last, it would be pertinent to point out that this policy has proposed so many positive provisions for holistic development of higher education system of country and it would really be revolutionary if there would not be any difference found between its proposal and its implementation.

Definitely, India would really be a super knowledge power among world if all the recommended provisions for development of education system of country be applied in real sense in upcoming months. It is expected that outcomes of this policy will be proved very beneficial for all stakeholders including students, teachers & parents and whole society & academia industry. To find students inner talents and qualities, a process of Dermatography helps them. Knowledge about anyone's talents and abilities leads to progress in particular area. As in NEP 2020, introduction of vocational courses preferred from class sixth. If a student came



to know about his interests, his talents & his abilities from early stages then he will definitely be succeed in his potential area (Kalyani, 2020:5).

The final words to conclude, it is just a proposal this time. Effectiveness of this proposal will be depend upon its implementation & execution in real ground. It will also be clear in the upcoming months that whether nation will has to face any type of challenges which are imagined at this time. So just wait to watch outcomes of this new education policy.

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