



Received: 04-02-2023
Accepted: 14-03-2023

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

Excellence in Higher Education in India: A Comparative Study on Nep-2020 and National Educational Policies

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Abstract

The NEP 2020 was accepted by the Union Cabinet of India on 29 July, 2020. The Ministry of Human Resource Development formed a committee headed by former ISRO Chairman Dr. K. Kasturirangan, who outlined the vision of India's new education system. The New Education Policy addresses challenges faced by current education system such as Quality, Affordability, Equity, Access and Accountability. To become a developed society, India, not only requires a vibrant economy driven by knowledge but also a new society where justice and human values prevail. After the independence, education was largely controlled by the

central government but then became a joint effort by the central and the state governments through a constitutional amendment in 1976. India as a country is still afflicted by high percentage of illiteracy and high rate of dropouts. The previous policies on education have focused largely on issues of access and equity. In this paper an attempt has been made to enquire whether the unfinished agenda, especially of higher education, is appropriately dealt with in the National Education Policy 2020 and suggest those areas to make it more inclusive Education Policy.

Keywords: Excellence, Higher Education, NEP, Policies, Comparison

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 as mentioned in Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties. India's previous Education Policy was passed and implemented in 1986. After thirty-four years, the National Education Policy (NEP) for India has been updated, revised and approved on 29 July 2020. The policy is based on the pillars of "Access, Equity, Quality, and Affordability & Accountability" and will transform India into a vibrant knowledge hub. NEP 2020 emphasis systematic and institutional improvements to regulate govern and promote multidisciplinary academic and research in Indian HEIs. NEP 2020 has marked an epoch development in the educational landscape of India. The policy envisions an Indian centred education system compatible to transform India to a vibrant knowledge society. Remarkably, the thrust area of the new education policy is to make the system of education well-resourced and multidisciplinary by the consolidation of multiple educational institutions and disciplines which constantly strives to deliver the needs.

2. Need of the study

To provide the need for knowledge-based economy in the changing global scenario changes were needed in the current education system. New Education to enhance the quality of education, promote innovation and research. In education policy to ensure global access to Indian educational system.

3. Objectives of the study

1. To overview the highlights of NEP 2020.
2. To identify various challenges faced by educational sectors.
3. To present various policies of developmental after independence.
4. To compare NEP 2020 with national educational policies 1986 and 1968.
5. To discuss advantages and disadvantages of NEP 2020.

4. Research Methodology

The article is based on secondary data collected from various Journals, newspapers and websites. The methodology consists of a conceptual discussion on the highlights of the NEP 2020 and the focus of this article is on the comparison of NEP 2020 with the current educational policy of India.

5. Review of Literature

➤ National Education Policy (1968)

In India, the Social Work Education was commenced in the year 1936, with the establishment of Tata Institute of Social Sciences. In the post-independence reforms, education was given prominence. In the year 1966, first education policy was announced. This policy aimed at promoting the significance of education among the Indians, primary education and secondary education is given priority and the establishment of schools in both rural and urban areas.

➤ National Education Policy (1986)

This new education policy has given highest priority in solving the problem of school dropouts and adopts an array of meticulously formulated strategies based on micro planning and applied at the grass root levels of all over the country. A national mission was launched for the achievement of this NEP 1986. Based on the literature review of education policy of 1966 emphasized on equal education to all and the NEP of 1986 gave prominence to women education and promoting minority education and reducing dropouts from the schools.

➤ National Education Policy- 1992

The 1986 NPE was modified in the year 1992 & a new policy centered on the "Common Minimum Programme" was adopted. This NPE envisaged conducting common entrance exams on "All India" basis for the purpose of admission to technical & professional programs in the nation.

For admission to Architecture/Planning & Engineering programs the Indian govt laid down a 3-Exam Scheme (AIEEE & JEE at the National Level & the "State-Level Engineering" entrance exams for State-Level Institutions, with an option to join AIEEE).

This provides for different admission standards and helps to maintain professional standards. This also solves overlaps problems and decreases the physical, psychological or financial burden for parents and students because of the multiplicity of entrance exams.

6. Highlights of New Education Policy – 2020

- This is the first education policy of the 21st century and will replace the thirty four year old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986.
- The new policy aims for universalization of education from pre-school to secondary level with 100 per cent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030 and aims to raise GER in higher education to 50 per cent by 2035.
- A National Book Promotion Policy is to be formulated
- All students will take school examinations in Grades 3, 5 and 8 which will be conducted by the appropriate authority. Board exams for Grades 10 and 12 will be continued, but redesigned with holistic development as the aim.
- A new National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of knowledge for Holistic Development), will be set up as a standard-setting body.
- NEP emphasises on setting up of Gender Inclusion Fund and also Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups.
- Every state/district will be encouraged to establish 'Bal-Bhavan' as a special daytime boarding school, to participate in age-related, cancer-related and play-related activities. Free school infrastructure can be used as Samajik Chetna Kendras.
- A common National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by the National Council for Teacher Education by 2022, in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers and expert organisations from across levels and regions.
- NEP 2020 aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3 per cent in 2018 to 50 per cent by 2035 and aims to add 3.5 crore new seats to higher education institutions.
- The policy envisages broad-based, multidisciplinary, holistic Under Graduate education with flexible curricula, creative combination of subjects, integration of vocational education and multiple entry and exit points with appropriate certification.
- Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.
- Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education.
- Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.
- Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a state-wide mechanism is to be established for granting grades autonomy to colleges.
- By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree.
- Stringent action will be taken against Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).
- A National Mission for Mentoring will be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty who would be willing to provide short and long term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.
- An autonomous body, the National Education 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 and administration.
- NEP recommends setting an Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI), National Institute (or Institutes) for Pali, Persian and Prakit, strengthening of Sanskrit and all language departments in HEIs and use mother tongue/ local language as a medium of instruction in more HEI programmes.

7. Challenges of National Policy of Education 1986 (existing policy)

- The education policies are silent on condition of those schools which are run throughout the country on commercial lines by certain persons or bodies. No education policies, so far, has suggested measures for reducing the differences in educational standards of poor children and more privileged ones.
- The education policy of 1986 has recommended for starting an All-India Educational Service. If this suggestion was implemented, the existing gulf between teachers and bureaucracy will be further widened. The All-India Educational Service was stopped during the British days. The propriety of starting it again does not understand.
- The various education policies stand for admission to university classes on the basis of capability. These features will deprive many youths of university education. According to some critics the Open University can never be a good substitute for regular university classes.
- The education policy of 1986 had recommended the institution of capitation fees for admitting students in technical institutions. This cannot be accepted as a healthy policy, as this is likely to deprive many deserving students of obtaining technical education, if they cannot pay such a fee. Engineering graduates who have obtained their technical education on the basis of capitation fees are sure to be poor and unreliable workers afterwards in their so called chosen areas.
- The National Research Foundation will be created as an apex for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.

8. The following points explain the development of education in India after independence

a) Expansion of General Education:

During the period of planning there has been expansion of general education. In 1951, the percentage of literacy was 19.3. In 2001 the literacy percentage increased to 65.4%. The enrolment ratio of children in the age group of 6-11 was 43% in 1951 and in it became 100% in 2001.

Primary education – been free and compulsory. Midday meal has been started in schools since 1995 to check drop-out rate. The number of primary schools has risen by three times from 2.10 lakh (1950-51) to 6.40 lakhs (2001-02). There were only 27 universities in 1950-51 which increased to 254 in 2000-01.

b) Development of Technical Education:

Besides general education, technical education plays important role in human capital formation. The Govt. has established several Industrial Training Institutes, Polytechnics, Engineering colleges and Medical and Dental colleges, Management institutes etc.

These are given below:

(i) Indian Institute of Technology:

For education and research in engineering and technology of international standard, seven institutes have been established at Mumbai, Delhi, Kanpur, Chennai, Khargpur, Roorkee and Gauhati, Technical education is imparted here both for graduation and post-graduation and doctorate level.

(ii) National Institute of Technology (NIT):

These institutes impart education in engineering and technology. These were called Regional College of Engineering (REC). These are 17 in number throughout the country. There are other institutes in the country to teach engineering and technical education.

(iii) Indian Institute of Management:

These institutes impart education in business management and administration. These institutes are located at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kolkata, Lucknow, Indore and Kozhikode.

(iv) Medical education:

There were only 28 medical colleges in the country in 1950-51. There were 165 medical and 40 dental colleges in the country in 1998-99.

(v) Agricultural education:

Agricultural Universities have been started in almost all States to improve production and productivity of agriculture. These universities impart education and research in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and veterinary sciences etc.

c). Women education:

In India, literacy among women was quite low. It was 52% according to 2001 census. While the literacy among men was 75.8%. Women education was given top priority in National Policy on Education. Many State Governments have exempted the tuition fee of girl's up to university level. Separate schools and colleges have been established to raise level of literacy among women.

d) Vocational education:

National Policy of Education, 1986, aims at vocationalisation of secondary education. Central Govt. has been giving grants to State Governments to implement the programme since 1988. Agriculture, Pisciculture, diary, poultry, typing, electronics, mechanical and carpentry etc. had been included in higher secondary curriculum.

e) Growth of higher education:

In 1951, there were 27 universities. Their number increased to 254 in 2001. In Orissa state, there was only one university in 1951. Now there are 9 universities.

f) Non-formal education:

This scheme was launched on an experimental basis from the Sixth plan and on regular basis from Seventh plan. The aim was to achieve universal elementary education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years. The scheme was meant for those children who cannot attend schools regularly and for full time due to poverty and pre-occupation with other works.

The Central Govt. is providing assistance to State Govt. and voluntary organisation to implement the scheme. Non-formal education centres have been set up in remote rural areas, hilly and tribal areas and in slums. These impart education to children of 6-14 age group.

g) Encouragement to Indian Language and Culture:

After the adoption of National Policy of Education 1968, regional language became the medium of instruction in higher education. Syllabus on science and technology, dictionaries, books, and Question Papers are translated into regional languages. Indian history and culture have been

included in school and college curriculum.

h) Adult education:

Simply speaking adult education refers to the education for the illiterate people belonging to the age group of 15-35 years. The National Board of Adult Education was established in the First Five Year Plan. The village level workers were assigned the job of providing adult education. The progress remained not too good.

The National Adult Education Programme was started in 1978. The programme is considered as a part of primary education. National Literary Mission was also started in 1988 to eradicate adult illiteracy particularly in rural areas.

The Centre gives assistance to states, voluntary organisations and some selected universities to implement this programme. There were 2.7 lakh adult education centres working in the country in 1990-91. This programme helped to raise the literacy rate to 65.38% in 2001.

i) Improvement of Science education:

Central Govt. started a scheme for the improvement of science education in schools in 1988. Financial assistance is

given to provide science kits, up gradation of science laboratories, development of teaching material, and training of science and mathematics teachers. A Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) was set up in NCERT to purchase equipment for State Institutes of Educational Technology.

j) Education for all:

According to 93rd Amendment, education for all has been made compulsory. The elementary education is a fundamental right of all children in the age group of 6-14 years. It is also free. To fulfill this obligation Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has been launched.

The above discussion makes it clear that a lot of development in education has been made in India after Independence. There is wide growth in general education and higher education. Efforts have been made to spread education among all sections and all regions of the country. Still our education system is ridden with problems.

9. Comparison between New Education Policy 2020 and National Policy of Education 1986

Table 1: Comparison between New Education Policy 2020 and National Policy of Education 1986

S. No	New Education Policy 2020	National Policy of Education 1986
1	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Human Resource Development
2	Gross Enrolment Ratio -50% (2035)	Gross Enrolment Ratio -26.3% (2018)
3	5+3+3+4 format	10+2 format
4	Break-up of age: 3-8, 8-4, 11-14, 14-18	Break-up of age: 6-16, 16-18
5	Exam- class 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	Exam- Each year upto class 12
6	Board exam- objective and description, Twice a year	Board exam- Descriptive, Once a year
7	No hard separation of Art, Commerce, Science. All will be mixed with curriculum	Hard separation- Art, Commerce, Science
8	Curriculum content will be reduced to its core essentials	No such policy
9	One vocational subject is must- class 6 to 8	Not mandatory in existing format
10	Bag- less days encouraged	No such policy
11	Health card and check-up will be done	Health card and supplements programs are already running
12	360 degree holistic report card for students including skills	No such policy
13	Coding to be taught from class 6 onwards	Not mandatory in existing format
14	3 language- by state, region and choice of student	3 language- Hindi, English and the regional
15	Indian Sign Language students with hearing impairment to be developed by NIOs	No such policy
16	Pre- school to be added in KVS	Starts from class 1
17	Preparatory class Balvatika for children below the age of 5- by ECCE qualified teacher	Not mandatory in existing format
18	Report card to have reviewed from teachers, peers and students as well	Report card to have reviewed from teachers
19	NCC wings- secondary and higher secondary schools	NCC wings- secondary and higher education schools
20	Free boarding schools like JNVs for poor Students	Free boarding schools like JNVs for poor students
21	National scholarship Portal for SC, ST, OBC and SEDG	National scholarship portal for SC, ST, OBC and SEDG
22	Education sector to get 6% of GDP	Education sector to get 4.5% of GDP
23	Minimum qualification for teaching- 4 year integrated B.Ed. degree by 2030	No such policy
24	IITs will include multidisciplinary like arts, humanities etc.	No such policy
25	National Testing Agency (NTA)- It will conduct aptitude test and exams in the science, humanities, languages, arts and vocational subjects, at least twice every year for university entrance exams	No such policy
26	E-content in total 8 languages	Lack of regional language e-content
27	Multiple entry and exit options for incomplete courses. Their credits will be transferred through Academic Bank of Credits	This is the main difference between both the policies with credit storing for higher studies
28	For Higher studies, 4 options are given: 1- year diploma, 2- year Advanced diploma, 3- year Graduation, 4- year Graduation with research	For Higher studies, 4 options were already there: 1/2- year Diploma, 3- year

		Graduation, 4- year Graduation with research
29	After graduation, Master's degree of 1 year and 2 year with research options are given	After graduation, Master's degree of ½ year were already there
30	M.Phil. is discontinued. Doctorate can be pursued after Master's	First M.Phil., then Doctorate could be pursued
31	Best Indian universities to set up campuses in other countries and best 100 foreign universities may come to set up in India	No such policy
32	Atleast one large multidisciplinary institution in or near every district by the year 2030	No such policy
33	Controlling Authority- HECI (Higher Education Commission of India) except Medical and Legal. Divided into 4 parts: National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC) for standard setting, Higher Education Grant's Council (HEGC) for funding and National Accreditation Council (NAC) for accreditation	Controlling Authority- UGC, AICTE (Technical), ICAR (Agriculture), BCI (Legal), CCIM (Medical), ICAI, ICSI, CBSE, NCERT, etc.
34	Adult learning- Tech based option through apps, TV etc.	Adult learning- several programs are already running

10. How the New Education Policy -2020 will be implemented?

- The new education policy in 2020 came after 30 years and is all set to change the existing academic system of India with the purpose of making it at par with the international standard of academic.
- The Government of India aims to set up the NEP by the year 2040. Till the targeted year, the key point of the plan is to be implemented one by one.
- The proposed reform by NEP 2020 will come into effect by the collaboration of the Central and the State Government.
- Subject wise committees will be set up with the Government of India both central and state-level ministries for discussing the implementation strategy.

11. Advantages and Disadvantages of New Education Policy-2020

➤ Advantages of New Education Policy-2020

- The Government aims to make schooling available to everyone with the help of NEP 2020.
- Approximately two crore school students will be able to come back to educational institutes through this new approach.
- According to the NEP 2020, the Education Ministry is to set up a National Mission on Foundation Literacy and Numeracy. The responsibility for successful implementation for achieving the foundation numeracy and literacy for all students till class three falls upon the states of India. This implementation is scheduled to be done by 2025.
- One of the merits of NEP 2020 is the formation of National Book Promotion Policy in India.
- This new plan focuses on setting up a Gender Inclusion Fund. Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups is also in the focused list.

➤ Disadvantages of New Education Policy -2020

- In the New Education Policy 2020, language is a negative factor as there is a problematic teacher to student ratio in India, thus introducing mother languages for each subject in academic institutes is a problem. Sometimes, finding a competent teacher becomes a problem and now another challenge comes with the introduction of the NEP 2020, that is bringing study material in mother languages.
- According to the NEP 2020, students willing to

complete their graduation have to study for four years while one can easily complete his/her diploma degree in two years. This might encourage the pupil to leave the course midway.

- According to the National Education Policy 2020, students of the private schools will be introduced with English at a much earlier age than the students of the Government schools. The academic syllabus will be taught in the respective regional languages of the government school students. This is one of the major new education policy drawbacks as this will increase the number of students uncomfortable in communicating in English thus widening the gap between sections of the society.

12. Conclusion

The observations and recommendations of NEP 2020 are indeed progressive in nature. It gives a fresh look to the educational system which is inbuilt with flexibility and mark of quality that is capable of moulding India to a vibrant society which matches our rich cultural heritage. The NPE 1986, which created a pool of educational system and trained human resources who contributed to the value chain of development but NEP 2020 aspires of creating human resources who will generate value propositions. With the implementation of the new NEP 2020, the Indian education system is poised to become closer to international standards. In an online survey conducted across 1103 students in India, nearly 96.4% were optimistic about the results that come out of the implementation of new policy. The NEP, which is designed to ease the burden of classroom teaching and examination on students, will play an important role in creating the future of the country. Its success, however, lies in uniform and transparent implementation at all levels, with an equitable distribution of resources. This mamothic task can be realized only when there is 100% co-operation and collaboration between all the stakeholders backed by institutional mechanisms.

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