



New Educational Policy-2020

Dr. Anu Kumari

Asst.Prof – Lyallpur Khalsa College, Jalandhar

Political Science Department

anumoon@lkc.ac.in

ABSTRACT

The new National Education Policy was announced right in the middle of the pandemic in July and draws from the common precinct of making India's education system future ready. The NEP 2020 focused on bringing the much-needed transformational changes in the Indian education system with a global perspective.

CHALLENGES:

1. Opening universities every week was a herculean task

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

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

The National Education Policy 2020 intended to bring 2 crore children who were 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.

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

3. Funding is a big challenge in the Covid.

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.

What makes things tricky is that this policy comes into being at a time when the economy had been battered by Covid-19 related lockdowns, government tax collections was abysmally low, and the fiscal deficit was high even pre-Covid.

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

Economists had 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 were 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. 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 was a very welcome step.

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

BENEFITS:***For Students:*****Holistic Development:**

NEP 2020 focuses on the holistic development of students, addressing their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. It promotes critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, preparing students to thrive in the 21st century.

Flexible Learning Pathways:

The policy offers flexible learning pathways, allowing students to choose subjects based on their interests and career aspirations. This promotes personalized learning, enabling students to explore their passions and develop expertise in their chosen fields.

Reduced Curriculum Burden:

NEP aims to reduce the curriculum burden on students by emphasizing core concepts and essential learning outcomes. This allows for a deeper understanding of subjects and encourages a more comprehensive learning experience.

Inclusive Education:

The policy prioritizes inclusive education, ensuring equal opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities and from marginalized communities. It promotes an inclusive and supportive learning environment, fostering empathy and understanding among students.

Skill Development:

NEP 2020 emphasizes skill development, equipping students with 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, and digital literacy. This enhances their employability and prepares them for future challenges.

For Teachers:**Professional Development Opportunities:**

The new education policy recognizes the importance of continuous professional development for teachers. It provides opportunities for training, workshops, and collaborations to enhance their teaching skills, update their knowledge, and stay abreast of evolving pedagogical practices.

Enhanced Teaching Practices:

The policy encourages a shift towards learner-centric teaching practices, promoting interactive and experiential learning methods. This allows teachers to engage students actively in the learning process, fostering deeper understanding and retention of concepts.

Integration of Technology:

NEP emphasizes the integration of technology in education. Teachers can leverage digital tools, online resources, and educational apps to enhance their teaching effectiveness, create interactive learning experiences, and cater to diverse learning styles.

Recognition of Leadership and Mentorship:

It also recognizes the importance of teacher leadership and mentorship. Teachers have the opportunity to take on mentoring roles, supporting their fellow educators, and contributing to policy implementation. This fosters professional growth and collaboration among teachers.

Collaborative Learning Communities:

NEP also promotes collaborative learning communities, encouraging teachers to engage in peer learning, share best practices, and collaborate with colleagues. This creates a supportive environment for professional growth and enhances teaching effectiveness.

Empowerment as Facilitators:

The policy empowers teachers to become facilitators of learning rather than just information providers. They can guide students through their learning journey, foster critical thinking, and nurture students' interests and talents.

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