

## **National Education Policy 2020 :Towards Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education**

**Dr.Megha Atul Dixit**, Arts and Commerce College, Kasegaon

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### **Introduction**

National Education Policy 2020 has laid out the framework for a radical transformation in higher education. It has created new opportunities for those involved in the field of education and guaranteed that every Indian student should have access to and receives a high-quality, equitable education. India has a long tradition of holistic and multidisciplinary learning, from universities such as Takshashila and Nalanda. Ancient Indian literary works such as Banabhatta's *Kadambari* described a good education with knowledge of the 64 Kalaas.

### **A holistic and multidisciplinary education**

A holistic and multidisciplinary 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. Such a holistic education shall be in the long term, the approach of all undergraduate programmes, including those in professional, technical, and vocational disciplines. National Education Policy 2020 aims at the holistic and multidisciplinary education. Flexible curricular credit framework will enable creative combinations of disciplines for study and would offer multiple entry and exit points. It will remove the current rigid boundaries and create new opportunities for life-long learning. It will also provide opportunities for multidisciplinary work, including in academia, government, and industry. Flexibility in curriculum will be on offer to students instead of rigorous specialization in a subject or subjects. This will be encouraged by increased faculty and institutional autonomy in setting curricula. Increased emphasis will be on communication, discussion, debate, research, and opportunities for cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary thinking.

Credits will be given in all Bachelor's Degree programmes for the subjects if they are done either from departments or through ODL mode. 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. Environment education will include areas such as climate change, pollution, waste management, sanitation, conservation of biological diversity, management of biological resources and biodiversity, and sustainable development and living.

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. 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 students will be made 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. Research internships with faculty and researchers at their own or other HEIs/research institutions will enable the students to actively engage with the practical side of their learning and as a by-product, further improve their employability.

### **Implementation of NEP for holistic and multidisciplinary Education**

- An Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) shall be established which would digitally store the academic credits earned from various recognized HEIs.
- Effective learning requires a comprehensive approach that involves appropriate curriculum, engaging pedagogy, continuous formative assessment, and adequate student support.
- The curriculum must be interesting and relevant, and updated regularly to align with the latest knowledge requirements and to meet specified learning outcomes.
- High-quality pedagogy is then necessary to successfully impart the curricular material to students; pedagogical practices determine the learning experiences that are provided to students, thus directly influencing learning outcomes.
- The assessment methods must be scientific, designed to continuously improve learning and test the application of knowledge.
- The development of capacities that promote student wellness such as fitness, good health, psycho-social well-being, and sound ethical grounding are also critical for high-quality learning.

#### **Conclusion**

Curriculum, pedagogy, continuous assessment, and student support are the cornerstones for quality learning. Providing suitable resources and infrastructure, such as quality libraries, classrooms, labs, technology, sports/recreation areas, student discussion spaces, and dining areas, a number of initiatives will be required to ensure that learning environments are engaging and supportive, and enable all students to succeed. Faculty should be given the freedom to design their own curricular and pedagogical approaches within the approved framework, including textbook and reading material selections, assignments, and assessments. Excellence will be further incentivized through appropriate rewards, promotions etc.

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