

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY: 2020, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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Abstract:

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 economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement, national integration and cultural preservation and since from decades government of India is trying to provide the good education to all with various backgrounds. It has implemented many policies such as National Education Policy, 1968 and 1986 with RTE to improve the education system. The National Educational Policy: 2020 is the one of important policy which aims to bring transformation in education system. This Policy is the first education policy of the 21st century, and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of this country. This Policy also lays particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual, in all its richness and complexity

The new National Education Policy: 2020 made an attempt to make education system more equitable and inclusive in nature. It has made some recommendations for education of persons with disabilities with emphasizing on inclusive education, technology and special education for some specific disabilities. Inclusive education is very important recommendations. To achieve Equality and to avoid the attitudinal barrier of society towards persons with disabilities, inclusive education is very important. Inclusive education is the need of the hour for growth and development. To access the education to PWDs, NEPs has focused much on the inclusive education. Hence present study tries to highlights on the new National Education Policy 2020 basis of the RPwD Act 2016 for education of persons with disabilities.

Objectives of the study: The objectives of present paper are to know the National Education Policy and to understand the National Education Policy: 2020, Inclusive Education and Persons with Disabilities.

Research Methodology: The present paper was based on the published and unpublished literature concern with topic.

Introduction:

Education plays important in the individual development. Any Nation's development is dependent on the quality of education that provided to their citizens. India had implemented National Education Policy 1968 and 1986with RTE Act 2009 and all the policies emphasize the rights of the children from diverse backgrounds and abilities to access formal education but still, the disparities continued. Several attempts has made to the make education in the country however, despite all efforts still there is disparity. Education should be made accessible to each and every individual in every corner of the country and inclusive education is the need of the hour for growth and development. Over the years, the Government of India has framed various policies on inclusive education such as the RPwD Act 2016.

Government of India had implemented that National Education Policy 2020 with the diverse attempts to make education system further equity and inclusive education. It made its own recommendations for the persons with disabilities and inclusive education for them. It is also in line with the RPwD act 2016 which defines inclusive education as a "system of education wherein students with and without disabilities learn together and the

system of teaching and learning is suitably adopted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities”.

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Meaning and Types Disability:

“Disability is a condition caused by an accident, trauma, genetics or disease that may limit a person’s mobility, hearing, vision, speech or mental function”. Disability is part of the human condition. Disability also termed as “Any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in a manner or within the range considered normal for the human beings, resulting from impairment is termed as disability.” The World Health Organization defines disability as any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform in a manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. The World Health Organization defines disability as any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform in a manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. In general disability is a restriction for the movements for any individual due physical and mental infirmities. The major challenge includes understanding the concept of disability.

Types of Disability: One of the major problems, which affect any intervention on the issue of disabled, is the lack of proper data on the number of disabled in the country and the extent and magnitude of the problem Persons with Disability Act (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) of India (1995) had given seven types of disability whereas RPWD Act, 2016 had given twelve types of disabilities. According to 1995 Act types of disability are Loco-motor Disability, Visual Disability, Mental Illness, Speech and Hearing Disability, leprosy cured; Learning Disability and Multiple Disabilities.

According 2016 RPDP Act 2016 there are twenty one types of disabilities. These are as follows

Types of Disabilities

- Physical Disability
 - Locomotor Disability
 - Leprosy Cured Person
 - Cerebral Palsy
 - Dwarfism
 - Muscular Dystrophy
 - Acid Attack Victims
 - Visual Impairment
 - Blindness
 - Low Vision
 - Hearing Impairment
 - Deaf
 - Hard of Hearing
 - Speech and Language Disability

- Intellectual Disability
 - Specific Learning Disabilities
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Mental Behaviour (Mental Illness)
- Disability caused due to-
 - Chronic Neurological Conditions such as
 - Multiple Sclerosis
 - Parkinson's Disease
 - Blood Disorder
 - Haemophilia
 - Thalassemia
 - Sickle Cell Disease
- Multiple Disabilities

Statistical Profile of Disables in India:

- As per Census 2011, in India, out of the 121 Cr population, about 2.68 Cr persons are 'disabled' which is 2.21% of the total population.
- Among the disabled population 56% (1.5 Cr) are males and 44% (1.18 Cr) are females. In the total population, the male and female population are 51% and 49% respectively.
- Majority (69%) of the disabled population resided in rural areas (1.86 Cr disabled persons in rural areas and 0.81 Cr in urban areas). In the case of total population also, 69% are from rural areas while the remaining 31% resided in urban areas.
- The Census 2011 revealed that, In India, 20% of the disabled persons are having disability in movement, 19% are with disability in seeing, and another 19% are with disability in hearing. 8% has multiple disabilities. (<http://www.mospi.gov.in>)
- In India, NSSO reported that a total of 1,40,85,000 and 44,06,000 people are disabled in rural and urban areas, respectively. Overall, 1846 and 1499 per lakh population had any type of disability during the survey in rural and urban areas respectively.
- 15,21,438 students studying in 150 colleges and universities in India.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act: 2016:

According to this act the educational institutions should ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities by emphasizing admission without discrimination and with reasonable. NEP:2020 endorses completely the provisions of the RPWD Act and "endorses all its recommendations with regard to school education" and promises that the inclusion and equal participation of children with disabilities in ECCE and the schooling system will be accorded the highest priority.

Inclusive Education and Disability:

To achieve Equality and to avoid the attitudinal barrier of society towards persons with disabilities, inclusive education is very important. When the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act defined the term with a more systems approach: "Inclusive education" means a system of education wherein students with and without disability learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities." So NEP had focused on the Inclusive Education.

UNCRPD

Article 24 of the Convention states, that "States parties must ensure the realization of the right of persons with disabilities to education through an inclusive education system at all levels."

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016)

"Inclusive education" means a system of education wherein students with and without disability learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to

meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities.” According to sec 16, “the appropriate Government and the local authorities shall endeavor that all educational institutions funded or recognized by them provide inclusive education to the children with disabilities.”

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009)

It gave children with severe and multiple disabilities the right to opt for Home Based Education. This law also referenced the 1995 Persons with Disabilities Act, thus leaving some ambiguity as to who was to take the full responsibility for the education of children with disabilities. Its silence on the status of special schools meant that education of students with disabilities continued to come under different Ministries.

National Education Policy: 2020

Education plays an important role in shaping human personality and fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society and promoting national development. The NEP: 2020 is first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental needs of our country. It caters needs of creative potential of each individual and emphasis on the development of it. It assures the employability by developing cognitive capacities, foundational capacities of literacy numeracy and higher such as critical thinking and problem solving.

It aims to transform India into a worldwide knowledge superpower with universal access to the best education with focusing on multi-disciplinary approach. The policy aims for the overall development of learners to achieve the full employability potential among the youth. It also try to necessary skills for new jobs in developing industries. The NEP:2020 had made variety of modifications in the educational system, from pre-primary years to higher education. It encourages rigorous research-based specialization and provides opportunities for interdisciplinary cooperation.

The new education policy must provide to all students, irrespective of their place of residence, a quality education system, with particular focus on historically marginalized, disadvantaged, and underrepresented groups. In the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from age 3 is also included, which is aimed at promoting better overall learning, development, and well-being.

NEP plans to create standards for the curriculum and credit structure for four-year undergraduate programmes, regulations outlining the minimum requirements and the process for awarding one-year certificates, two-year diplomas, three-year bachelor's degrees, four-year bachelor's degrees (honours), and master's degrees with multiple entry and exit options.

Provisions of NEP: 2020 For Persons With Disabilities:

NEP:2020 is a diverse policy which aims to inclusion of all sections of society ensures to address all issues of neglected dimensions in education for persons with disabilities. The emphasis on provision of a quality education system with particular focus on historically marginalized, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups is also noteworthy.

It is particularly encouraging to note that the Policy acknowledges that a number of initiatives will be required, including innovative use of technology, to ensure that learning environments are supportive, engaging and enabling.

Students with disabilities are a part of the ‘Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups’ (SEDG), a new term coined by the policy. The NEP focuses on technology based tools for students with disabilities. Assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools, as well as adequate and language-appropriate teaching-learning materials will be made available to help children with disabilities integrate more easily into classrooms and engage with teachers and peers.

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NEP:2020 and Children With Special Needs:This New Education Policy has made some important provision for children with special needs. Some of them are creating enabling mechanisms to give quality education, importance to fully participation of children with disabilities will be enabled to fully participate in the regular schooling process from the Foundational Stage to higher education, importance to inclusive education, accessible curriculum, recruitment of special educator, schools/school complexes will be provided resources for the integration of children with disabilities, barrier free environment, 8. Providing Assistive devices as well as teaching-learning materials will be made available, high quality sign language, home-based education, providing the safety and security, assessment and the awareness and knowledge of how to teach children with specific disabilities will be an integral part of all teacher education programmes.

Home based Education:

ECCE and Children with Disabilities: The NEP recognizes Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as a measure of equity and inclusiveness when it says that “Schools providing quality ECCE reap the greatest dividends for children who come from families that are economically disadvantaged. The NEP’s focus on ECCE has the potential to ensure effective inclusion but this will require effective strategies and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders.

Curriculum and Pedagogy: The NEP 2020 recognizes the “learning crisis” and attempts to make a paradigm shift both in curriculum and pedagogy as well as in teachers’ education and the conditions of their work. A particular focus is given to Indian Sign Language (ISL) which will be standardized across the country and National and State curriculum materials developed, for use by students with hearing impairment.

NEP:2020 and socio-economically Disadvantaged groups(SEDG):NEP:2020 has categorised the students with disabilities under socio-economically Disadvantaged groups(SEDG) and this is new term coined by the policy. The SEDGs are “based on identities such as gender identities (particularly female and transgender individuals), socio-cultural identities (such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, and minorities), geographical identities (such as students from villages, small towns, and aspirational districts), disabilities (including learning disabilities), and socio-economic conditions (such as migrant communities, low income households, children in vulnerable situations, victims of or children of victims of trafficking, orphans including child beggars in urban areas, and the urban poor).”

Use of technology and Assistive technology: Technology is boon for the persons with disabilities. Assistive technology gave comfortable life and enhanced their participation in education. So this NEW Education Policy has given importance to technology for

persons with disabilities. The NEP focuses on technology based tools for students with disabilities. Assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools, as well as adequate and language-appropriate teaching-learning materials will be made available to help children with disabilities integrate more easily into classrooms and engage with teachers and peers.

Budgetary allocations: The decline in share of investment by the Central government has increased the financial burden of the states. Lack of transparency of the State budgets towards allocation and utilization of funds towards education remains a major challenge which needs to be addressed urgently. Over the years major portion of funds is diverted towards school education and hence higher education remains highly unfunded. The inclusive education component has been impacted due to low budgetary allocation.

NEP:2020 and Regional/ Home Languages: NEP:2020 has given much importance learning in local languages which enable a significant number of students with disabilities. Deaf students will largely use sign language, deaf blind students will use tactile sign language.

Individualised Tracking of Students: Opening Possibilities for Reasonable Accommodation and Individual Support: The promise of the 2020 policy for individualised tracking and individual choices for students can provide an opportunity for the planning of reasonable accommodations and individualised supports to be built into the education system for students with disabilities and others in need.

Sports and the Arts: This new policy has given importance to sports and arts which will be made that the participation of students with disabilities is ensured. This is will be helpful for overall development of students with disabilities.

Teachers and Teachers Training: It gives more importance to the trainings of the teachers. Shorter post B.Ed. certification courses will also be made widely available, at multi-disciplinary colleges and universities to the teachers who may wish to move into more specialized areas of teaching, such as teaching of students with disabilities. It also addresses the issue of shortage of special educators.

The Promise of the Policy for Good Governance: The 2020 NEP promises good governance and efficient use of resources. It sets up new standard setting, quality assessment and regulatory bodies. It also brings forth a re-organization of administration of schools in the form of school complexes with ensuring the Resource Centre and the School Complex particularly for students with disabilities.

National Education Policy: 2020 and Inclusive Education:

The UNCRPD grounded children and persons with disabilities as holders of equal rights within society. Every institution of society must be designed in a way that this equal participation is possible. The person with disability is no longer seen as just a person with a disabling medical condition but as equal with others in a society, and whose participation in all aspects of life is affected by all kinds of barriers social, economic, political and others.

Article 24 of the Convention states that “States parties must ensure the realization of the right of persons with disabilities to education through an inclusive education system at all levels.

Inclusive Education “requires an in-depth transformation of education systems in legislation, policy, and the mechanisms for financing, administration, design, delivery and monitoring of education.

Inclusive Education in RPWD Act

In India the term ‘Inclusive education’ has till recently been used only in relation to the education of children with disabilities, and seen as a separate element/ program of the larger education scheme – the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme, and then the Samagraha

Shiksha Abhiyan scheme. The term has been used without clear definition until 2016, when the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act defined the term with a more systems approach:

“Inclusive education” means a system of education wherein students with and without disability learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities.” Students with disabilities are a part of the ‘Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups’ (SEDG), a new term coined by the policy.

The NEP recommends that regions of the country with large populations from educationally-disadvantaged SEDGs should be declared Special Education Zones (SEZs), where all the schemes and policies are implemented to the maximum through additional concerted efforts, in order to truly change their educational landscape.

Technology-Based Tools for Students with Disabilities

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The New Curricular Stages

The policy changes the earlier organization of education and therefore curriculum planning and details regarding different curricular stages of education starting from ECCE.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

Safety and Security

The NEP mandates adequate attention to the safety and security of children with disabilities.

Teachers and Other Personnel

Inclusion and equity will become a key aspect of teacher education (and training for all leadership, administrative, and other positions in schools).

Taking the School Complex as the Unit of Governance

Curricular Frameworks and a Mission for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

The Participation of Students with Disabilities in Different Sites of Education

Transforming Assessment for Student Development

A Focus on Health and Nutrition

Continuous Professional Development for Teachers

National Initiative for School Heads’ Teachers’ Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA)

Challenges of Disability Inclusive Education:

- Persistently Low Enrolment
- Sharp Drop in Enrolment of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education
- Persistent Gender Disparity in Enrollment of Girls with Disabilities.
- Home Based Education
- Children with Disabilities across Vulnerabilities.
- An Outcome Centred Education and Exams.
- Infrastructure
- Dilution of Standards
- Budgetary allocations

Conclusion:

NEP:2020 is the milestone and pathbreaking policy for persons with disabilities because it is framed in the line of the RPWD Act. The above reforms/changes can help children with disabilities get increased access to quality education, employment, health and other services, and develop a better awareness of their rights, thereby improving their quality of

life, subject to a well planned implementation of the policy. Attitudinal change and improving access for Divyang students is very important for the proper implementation of NEP:2020.

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