

New Education Policy-2020 and Major Reforms in Higher Education

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Introduction:

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” is the main objective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4), to achieve such a lofty goal and built on the foundational pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability, New Education Policy 2020 is framed. The new national education policy particularly lays emphasis on transforming India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary and bringing out the unique capabilities of each students. The new education policy is going to bring comprehensive changes in higher education. In the present study an attempt is made to focus on transformative changes in higher education in the lights of new education policy.

Institutional Restructuring and Consolidation

Present education system of the country is a severely fragmented higher educational ecosystem, which ended up by this policy with the specialized higher educational institution will be transformed into large multidisciplinary institutions/ HEI clusters, and each institution will to have 3000, or more students. In the policy, it is envisaged that every college would develop into either an Autonomous degree-granting college, or a constituent college of a university - in the latter case, it would be fully a part of the university. There are plans in the new education policy to create institutes and universities in or nearby all the district. It is expecting that this policy would help built vibrant communities of scholars and peers and enable students to become well-rounded across disciplines and increase resource efficiency. The policy seeks to bring back the ancient Indian universities' tradition of multidisciplinary. Higher educational institutions, universities and teaching faculty will have more autonomy. They will even have freedom on the academic freedom. Educational methods, exam formats and assessment parameters are to be attain international benchmark. Through the attainment of suitable accreditations, all HEIs will gradually move towards full autonomy - academic and administrative - in order to enable this vibrant culture. The gross enrolment ratio in higher education has been targeted to grow at 50 per cent by 2050. To improve GER of higher education, Open Distance Learning (ODL) and online programmes options are availed to the HEIs. The present complex of universities such as 'deemed to be university', 'affiliating university', 'affiliating technical university', 'unitary university' shall be replaced simply by 'university'. An important aim of this policy to be an integrated higher education system.

Towards a More Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education:

It is said that India has a long tradition of holistic and multidisciplinary learning from the ancient universities such as Takshshila and Nalanda. Ancient Indian *sanskrit* scholar Banabhatta described a good education as knowledge of the 64 Kalaas or arts; it includes scientific fields, vocational, professional, fine art as well as soft skills. It is tried in this policy that to bring back of the notion of a ‘knowledge of many arts’ or the ‘liberal arts’ through holistic and multidisciplinary approach. There has been a lot of emphasis on holistic and multidisciplinary education in the new education policy 2020. Earlier National Education Policies have taken steps towards holistic learning such as identification of talent in diverse fields, priority to research, vocational education, professional education, computer education and so on multidisciplinary approach are not talked there. Concerns towards multidisciplinary education was first examined in CBCS system introduced by the UGC for higher education. The holistic and multidisciplinary approach is based on flexible approach of cafeteria system and main objective is to provide the knowledge of different fields to the students of higher education. It aims at overall development individuals that possess critical capacities in across all fields in today’s competitive globalize world.

Optimal Learning Environments and Support for Students

Effective standards concerned teaching and learning are not possible if there is not optimal learning environment. It involves appropriate curriculum, engaging pedagogy, continuous formative assessment, and adequate student support. Educators must know that their students, have deep understanding of the content they teach and both have collaborate with each other. Every student can achieve high expectations is the base of optimal learning environment. The assessment methods will be scientific and help to improve learning outcomes. Curriculum, pedagogy, continuous assessment and student support are to be and important aspects of optimal learning environments. It is expected that optimal learning environments will helps to achieve global standard quality.

Internationalization

To promote India as global study center new education policy has taken various initiatives and provide greater mobility to students in India who may wish to visit, study at, transfer credits to, or carry out research at institutions abroad, and vice versa. The policy facilitated research/ teaching collaborations and faculty/student exchange with high-quality foreign institutions and relevant mutually beneficial MOUs with foreign countries will be signed. High performing the top 100 universities in the world will be facilitated to operate in India; setting up of international student office at each HEI and supporting students arriving from abroad.

Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education

India has witnessed improvement in education especially student’s enrollment in recent decades. The government has taken number of efforts towards improve gross

enrollment ratio in higher education. Though the significant improvements in crucial areas, Indian education system continue to grapple with challenges of inequity and exclusion, the new national education policy, attempts to address the growing inequality and inequity plaguing country's education system. There are certain facets of exclusion. Number of provisions are made for equity and inclusion in higher education.

Teacher Education:

The national education policy laid emphasis on teacher education. It focuses on in high quality content and pedagogy to teacher education. The policy brought new reforms for the recruitment, continuous professional development, service condition etc. By 2030, teacher education will gradually be moved towards multidisciplinary perspective and knowledge. The minimum degree qualification for teachers will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree and the 2-year B.Ed programmes will also be offered. The provision of a National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021, will be made available. Teachers will be given more autonomy in choosing aspects of pedagogy, so they may teach in effective manner. Teacher will also focus on socio-emotional learning and holistic development of students.

Regulatory System of Higher Education

It is said that current regulation system of higher education has been too heavy-handed; too much has been attempted to be regulated with too little effect. Any system related to the human interface is difficult to change. Heavy concentration of power within the few bodies, conflicts of interest among these bodies and lack accountability etc. have the basic problems of current regulatory system. To address the above problem it is considered to change the regulatory system of higher education. In the new education policy, it tried to the regulatory system will ensure that distinct functions of regulation, accreditation, funding and academic standard setting will be performed by distinct, independent, and empowered bodies. To create check-and-balances in the system this reforms has been done.

Critical Evaluation of New Education Policy 2020 & Major Reforms in Higher Education.

No doubt, changes is the essence of progress and development but it should be in proper ways. In case of education, regular updates and inclusion of current and futuristic topic, techniques and teaching methodologies are important to make education effective and holistic developmental. In NEP 2020, number of efforts have taken to integrate the traditional and modern education system. In the policy that teacher and student fraternities have shown keen interest and high expectation from the new education policy, there are some areas where need to require focused. Some of the areas here focuses where we may be seen legal and social consequences of the policy in the future. As compared to the earlier educational policies and the policies of the developed countries we try to push the country herself towards the peak but we didn't reach the expectations. Though the

NEP is very wide-ranging policy but this policy ignored number of subtle and vital issues faced by various classes and. If the new education policy will not implement properly the masses of the downtrodden will be deprived from the benefits of the education.

As per the data of the All India Survey on Higher Education 2020, there are 1043 universities in the country. Apart from these there are 522 general universities, 177 technical, 63 agricultural and allied, 66 medical, 11 languages and other specialized universities and it is very challenging to transform all these universities in multidisciplinary institutes. Considering the present status of physical and human resources, vacant posts of the teachers in colleges and universities it will be make it tough to implement this policy successfully. More than 3.5 crore students are pursuing higher education and there are more than 41 thousand institutions in the country. Out of total institution in higher education, nearly 65 percent institutions have the student strength upto only 500, and only 4 percent colleges have students more than three thousand. It means above 90 percent institution can't fulfil the new education policy' requirement of student strength. To implement the multidisciplinary approach and to provide freedom to the student to subject choice will be challenging. It will also be challenging to decide what the credit score should be while moving from specialization to multidisciplinary as envisaged in the policy.

Conclusions

No doubt, the drafting committee of New Education Policy has taken efforts to make this policy more comprehensive and fulfill global benchmarks in education, but the implementation will decide its success. It is expected from the policy to provide higher education and to transform human into a pattern of perfection through a synthetic process of the development of the body, the enrichment of mind, the sublimation of emotions and the illumination of the spirit.

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