National Education Policy 2020: Opportunities and Challenges for Higher and Management Education

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Abstract
This conceptual and descriptive research paper mainly deals with the new policy on Education (NEP 2020) and its concern for Higher Education (HE). The authors intend to discuss about the policy with respect to the emergence, vision, and thrust areas; the concern for higher education along with key highlights, key impact areas and opportunities to the stakeholders. The Authors are also interested to know about new provisions under education policy for Management education. The study attempts to identify the key concern areas of NEP 2020 in higher education and Management education in India. The Secondary data is used to organize the information for the same. The outcome of this paper deals with the concern for implementing the NEP 2020 and the challenges to design road map. according to situation, will decide that to makes benefiter industry and future ready youth in Indian higher education and management education also.
***Keywords**:- National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), the Quality Education and Education System, the Higher Education, Concern for Higher Education and Management Education.*

Introduction

In the present situation, the entire world is changing rapidly in the knowledge landscape. The availability in dramatic scientifically and technologically advances, actually need for a skilled work with multidisciplinary abilities across sciences, social sciences, humanities and art, will be highly in greater demand in India is moving towards developed nation as well as among the three largest economies in the world. Indeed, with the quickly changing employment landscape the need for suitable manpower with great creativity and innovativeness is ever increasing. It is to be specifically noted that actual gap between current state of learning outcomes (benefits) and what is required in future must be bridged through undertaking major changes required that brings about high quality, equity, and integrity into the system, from Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) to Higher Education (HE). The main objectives must be for our country to have an education system with equitable access to the high quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background. Such a dreamy goal will require the entire education system to be reconfigured and restructured to support and foster learning, so that all of the most critical targets and goals of the 2028 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be achieved. It is rightly predicted that India will be the third largest economy in the world by the end of next decade with estimated GDP of ten trillion dollars. And it is evident that the ten trillion economies will be driven by knowledge resources and not by the natural resources of the country.

In this context our country has adopted the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). The new policy envisions an India centered education system that contributes directly to transforming the nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all. In fact, it is the first education policy of the 21st century, which aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, while building upon India's traditions and value systems. The policy lays an emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities, both the foundational capacities of literacy and numeracy and higher-order cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving, but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions. It is to be noted that the rich heritage of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge and thoughts has remained a guiding light for this policy. The pursuit of knowledge (Jnan), wisdom (Pragyaa), and truth (Satya) was always considered in Indian thoughts and philosophy as the highest human goal. The aim of education in ancient India was not just the acquisition of knowledge as preparation for life in this world, or life beyond schooling, but for the complete realization and liberation of the self.

Built on the foundational pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability, NEP 2020 is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD) and aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each learner. Basically, quality education is of fundamental importance for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society and promoting national development. And universal high quality education is the key to India's continued ascent and leadership on the global platform in terms of economic growth, social justice and equality; scientific and technological advancement; national integration and preservation of culture as well.The new policy is designed keeping all this in mindand is the right stepping in this regard.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of writing this research paper on National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) are:

1. To discuss the emergence of NEP 2020.
2. To state the vision, thrust areas of the policy.
3. To bring out its concern for higher education and management education.
4. To highlight the key impact areas and opportunities to the stakeholders.

Methodology of the Study

The work is of desk research based on reliable and relevant secondary data. The methodology consists of a conceptual discussion on to the emergence of the policy; highlighting the vision, thrust areas, and key highlights; bringing out its concern for higher education; and highlighting the impact areas and opportunities for the stakeholders. The government documents, reports, press releases as well as research papers and articles have been referred and reviewed thoroughly in order to get better insight into the subject matter.

Emergence of The Policy

Our country's - India's first Education Policy was introduced in the year 1986. After thirty-four years, the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) for India has been updated, revised, approved and finally introduced on 29th July, 2020. NEP 2020 thus replaces the National Policy on Education of 1986. The policy signifies a huge milestone for India's Education system, which will certainly make India an attractive destination for higher education world-wide. It aims to transform education system, keeping the learner at the centre. It is built on the recommendations of Education Commission (1964-66) and justice J. S. Verma Commission (2012) as well as the previous versions of the policy i.e. National Policy on Education 1986, modified in 1992, Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

Basically, in January 2015, the committee headed by former Cabinet Secretary Shri. T. S. R. Subramanian started consultation process for the New Education Policy. Based on the committee report, in June 2017, the draft NEP was submitted in 2019 by a panel led by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman Dr. Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan. The Draft New Education Policy (DNEP) 2019 was later released by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), followed by a number of public consultations. Thereafter, the Ministry undertook a rigorous consultation process in formulating the draft policy, and over two lakh suggestions were received during the formal consultation process..

The policy is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. It aims to gradually transforming India's education system by 2021. Shortly after the release of the policy, the government clarified that no one will be forced to study any particular language and that the medium of instruction will not be shifted from English to any regional language. The language policy in NEP 2020 provides a broad guideline and is advisory in nature; and it is up to the states, institutions, and schools to decide on the implementation. The policy unequivocally endorses and envisions a substantial increase in public investment in education by both the Central government and all

State Governments. It is expected that the Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest(Sawant, R. G. and Sankpal, U. B., 2021)

What is A NEP 2020?

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) will bring in ambitious and dramatic change that could transform education system in the country. It will bring about revolutionary changes in the education system of India.

Vision of the Policy:

NEP 2020 aims at building a global best education system based on Indian thoughts, rooted in Indian ethos, and aligned with certain principles, and thereby transforming our country - India into a global knowledge superpower.

Thrust Areas of the Policy:

NEP 2020 is necessarily addressing the crippling challenges that have affected the Indian Education System for over last few decades, which seems to be somewhat outdated in the existing scenario. Certain thrust areas of the policy are:

In Primary Education, poor literacy and numeracy outcomes:

Several reports shows that 50% children lack basic numeracy i.e. the ability to understand and work with numbers and literacy despites spending five years in school. So, the policy basically looks at this foundational learning as a core area and aims at developing multiple skills and abilities among the students.

In Middle and Secondary Education, high dropout levels, curriculum inconsistency:

Dropout rates at the secondary level in several states have increased over the past three years according to the ministry's data. There are multiple reasons behind drop out such as poverty, poor health and distance from school. Moreover, large variations in dropout rates exist across states, gender, ethnicity and class. Even the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is also decreasing considerably as the data indicates that a significant proportion of enrolled students are dropping out after Grade 5 and especially after Grade 8. Therefore, minimising dropout rate and increasing GER, particularly at middle and secondary education level is also a thrust area of the policy.

In Higher Education, a lack of multi-disciplinary approach and flexibility with regards to subject choice, assessment as well as a skill-gap:

Dropout rate is also increasing in higher education institutions. At the same time Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is decreasing and remained about less than half of that is in middle and secondary education. It means many students are not enrolling in higher education. Hence, the policy mainly focuses on to minimising dropout rate and increasing GER in higher education institutions.

Concern For Higher Education:

Along with concern for Primary Education, Middle and Secondary Education, the policy puts much emphasis on Higher Education (HE). According to the policy the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) will be called as Ministry of Education. The policy is more of learners' centric, giving flexibility to students to pursue their passion at the same time enhancing their skills enabling them to become more employable. The policy advocates around improving the governance standards in HEIs with change in the name of existing bodies and authorities as well as introduction of some new authorities and bodies such as Board of Governors (BoG), National Higher Education Regulatory Authority (NHERA), National Accreditation Authority (NAA), National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF), Higher Education Grants Commission (HEGC), Professional Standard Setting Bodies (PSSBs), National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), and National Research Foundation (NRF) (MHRD, 2020).Moreover, the policy brings about some creative and innovation changes as follows:

• **New architecture:** A new vision and architecture for higher education has been envisaged with large, well-resourced, vibrant multidisciplinary institutions. The current 800 universities and 40,000 colleges will be consolidated into about 15,000 excellent institutions.

• **Liberal education:** A broad-based liberal arts education at the undergraduate level for integrated, rigorous exposure to science, arts, humanities, mathematics and professional fields will be put in place. This would have imaginative and flexible curricular structures, creative combinations of study, integration of vocational education and multiple entry/exit points.
• Governance: Institutional governance will be based on autonomy - academic, administrative and financial. Each higher education institution will be governed by an Independent Board. The policy strives to create a fine balance ensuring 'minimal government and maximum governance' in the HEIs.
• Regulation: Regulation will be 'light but tight' to ensure financial probity and public-spiritedness - standard setting, funding, accreditation, and regulation will be conducted by independent bodies to eliminate conflicts of interest (Aithal, P. S. And Aithal, S., 2020).

Key Highlights of the Policy

NEP 2020 is a positive re-imagination of India's existing education regime. It has some very impressive and appreciable propositions. The policy envisions a model of holistic learning that is integrated, engaging and immersive. Scientific temper and evidence-based thinking will be inculcated alongside aesthetics and art.
1. The NEP brings about a range of changes in the system of higher education aiming to improve it with the goal of creation of greater opportunities for individual employment. The key highlights from the new policy aim at:
• Creating a Higher Education System (HES) consisting large, multidisciplinary universities and colleges, with at least one in or near every district, and more Higher Education Institutions across India which offer their programmes in local/Indian languages.
• Shifting from a rigid Higher Education curriculum to multidisciplinary undergraduate education.
• Offering faculty and institutional autonomy.
• Revamping the curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and student support for enhanced student experiences.
2. A goal of the NEP is to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education, including vocational education to 50% by 2035 from 26.3% as of 2018.
3. NEP will replace the fragmented nature of India's existing higher education system and instead bring together Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) into large multidisciplinary universities, colleges, and HEIs clusters/knowledge hubs. The policy states that over time, single-stream HEIs will be phased out over time.
4. For now, while the NEP states that a system of granting graded autonomy based on accreditation will be adopted for colleges, eventually, the aim is to transform them into an autonomous degree-granting college, or a constituent college of a university.

Key Impact Areas and Opportunities

In fact, National Education Policy (NEP 2020) is a huge stride in the right education. It mainly focuses on to the holistic development of students by ensuring access, relevance, equity, quality and strong foundational learning. The policy offers numerous benefits for education sector stakeholders. It envisages creating synergies in the curriculum across childhood care and education to school and the higher education segments. Major focus area of the policy is quality improvement in the learning outcomes. Another focus area is bringing assessment reforms, which remained much awaited change. Most importantly, the policy is expected to put India on the track to attain goals of 2030 agenda for sustainable development by promoting lifelong learning opportunity for all in the next decade to come. It is rightly said that, "Higher Education (HE) is an important aspect of Education System (ES) in deciding the economy, social status, technology adoption, and healthy human behaviour in every country". The policy essentially aims at quality of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and positioning India as a global education hub. The focus is on providing flexible curriculum through an inter-disciplinary approach, creating multiple exit points in what would be a four year undergraduate programme catalyzing research, improving faculty support and increasing internationalization. It has some key impact areas and also offers some opportunities.

Thus, in the light of the above, certain key points of NEP 2020 in respect to higher education can be derived as follows:

• The policy envisages for a new vision and architecture for higher education with large, well-resourced, vibrant multi-disciplinary institutions leading towards excellence.

• The policy provides for a broad-based liberal education through comprehensive but flexible curricular structures, creative combinations of study, integration of vocational education and multiple entry as well as exit points.

• The policy facilitates for voluntary and self-directed governance as institutional governance will be based on autonomy in terms of academic, administrative and financial.

• The policy seeks to ensure good regulation, as regulation will be light but tight, as the regulation will be in the hands of independent bodies to eliminate conflicts of interest.

Although, the policy document consists of and provides for certain guiding principles for its smooth implementation, there are some obstacles such as acceptance to the flexible model of higher education, acceptance to concept of multi-disciplinary institutions, need for greater public funding, need for rich digital infrastructure and the like, which cannot be neglected. Successful execution of the policy calls for adopting the principle guidelines given in the policy document, dramatic simplification of decision-making structures, re-prioritization of budgetary resources, automation and mechanization in the system, change in the view point, and planned as well as systematic implementation of the new policy in months and years to come.

Conclusion

The NEP 2020, almost three decades after the last major revision was made to the policy in considering the global and Indian scenario, National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is a welcome step and ambitious reimagination of India's education system into a modern, progressive and equitable one. Built on the foundational pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability, NEP 2020 is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD). It wants to transform our country - India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multi-disciplinary, suited to 21st century needs. The policy calls for a large-scale implementation of a magnitude never before attempted anywhere in the world. The actual transformations will start from the academic year 2021-22 and will continue until the year 2030, where the first level of transformation is expected to visible. The mission is aspirational but the successful implementation depends upon how would implementers understand the challenges and try to overcome it. It requires great deal of acceptance, commitment, optimism, change in attitude, and mind-set. No doubt, the Government of India took a giant leap forward by announcing its new education policy i.e. the National Education Policy 2020 1986. Even, the drafting committee of NEP 2020 has made a great attempt to design the policy that considers diverse viewpoints, global best practices in education, field experiences and stakeholders' feedback. The task is challenging but the implementation roadmap will decide if this will truly foster an all-inclusive education that makes learners industry and future ready. The authors want to convey a message that the policy has come at the right time and the objective is very noble. But, there lies a world of difference between laying down a policy on paper and following it in spirit. The success of NEP 2020 and the pace of its implementation depend on how successfully the government, universities and schools etc. can overcome the practical challenges, which arise from time to time. Besides the actions undertaken by various authorities and bodies, there is a need of time lines and a plan for review, the policy is required to be implemented in its spirit and intent, through coherence in planning and synergy across all authorities and bodies involved in education (MHRD, 2020).

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