



ESSAY SERIES - ESSAY 3

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY, 2020

'Change is the only constant'

As our young nation strides towards development and advancing our capabilities globally, it becomes imperative to take inspiration from our ancient heritage and cultural values to transform the existing status quo with a modern and futuristic approach. The recently approved New Education policy is a much needed guiding light to nurture our demographic potential.

After Independence, several steps were taken by successive governments to decolonise the education system, including through the University Education Commission (1948-1949), Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), D S Kothari Commission (1964-1966) and the National Policy on Education (1968). The National Education Policy in effect until now was 34 years old. A more apt vision was needed to meet the aspirations of the New India. The new policy proposes revising the decades old educational policy of India and revamp each and every aspect of the currently prevalent educational structure including its regulating and governing procedure, and to build a structure which is rightly in tune with the aspiring goals of the 21st century education system while keeping India's traditions as well as its value systems in consideration.

Background

The first Education Policy was introduced by Indira Gandhi government in the year 1968 based on the recommendations of Kothari Commission. The second Education policy was introduced in the year 1986 by Rajiv Gandhi government. This policy aimed for providing equal education policy and removing disparities. But later on this policy got modified by P.V. Narshima Rao government in the year 1992. Now after almost three decades Narendra Modi government has introduced a new Educational Policy with a motive to revolutionize the Indian Education system.

It was not a sudden move by the government to bring in the new Education policy. Previously, in 2014 the issue relating to National Education policy was in BJP manifesto. The government started consulting with the experts and considered their opinions. In 2015, a new Committee

was formed under the Chairmanship of TSR Subramanian. Committee submitted its report on 7th May, 2016. But those recommendations didn't work. Then a new Committee was formed whose Chairman was Dr. K. Kasturirangan. Committee was made up of 9 members appointed into the panel by the Human Resource Development Ministry (HRDM). The committee submitted its report in 2019 and after undergoing several examinations finally the policy got passed in 2020.

Key changes brought in the NEP 2020

NEP 2020 is an ambitious and futuristic policy that ensures opportunities for children to hone their talents by fixing the lacunae in the education system. The emphasis on skills like analysis, critical thinking, conceptual clarity and curricular and vocational subjects will diversify their learning. It will nurture human values that make an individual a contributor to the welfare of the society. The policy focuses on:

- **Change in School structure**

Existing Academic structure includes the system of 10+2 which means-

1. 10 years – (Age 10-16)
2. 2 years – (Age 16-18)

Revised Academic structure includes the system of 5+3+3+4 which focus on a more holistic development of children. According to this system-

1. **5 years** will be a '*Foundation stage*' under which children of age 3 to 8 years will fall. Special attention is given to the children at Pre-Schooling/ Aganwadi/Balvatika and this will also be considered as Formal education as per Global Standards.
2. **3 years**- This stage is known as '*Preparatory Stage*'. Under this students of age 8 to 11 years and studying from 3rd to 5th grade will come. More importance is given to the Mother tongue and it will be made as a medium of instruction till 5th grade.
3. **3 years**- It is categorized as the '*Middle Stage*'. Children of 11 to 14 years of age will vary under this stage. It includes students from class 6th to 8th. Coding will be taught from class 6th onwards to develop critical thinking. It promotes analytical and critical development.

4. **4 years-** It is a ‘*Secondary Stage*’ which includes class 9th to 12th. Multi-Disciplinary approach is adopted in which students can pick any combination of subjects they want.

- **Holistic Under-Graduate Programme**

In this flexible curriculum, vocational subjects, inter-disciplinary combination of subjects will be there. There will be no more a strict division between streams of Science, Commerce and Arts. Students can choose any combination of subjects they want to study.

- **Academic Bank of Credits**

Credit transferability system across the Universities is adopted which will provide flexibility to students and store the credits earned by them. The multiple exit and re-entry system is provided due to which if students wants to leave their course in between then credits will be given for the same and they will be allowed to re-join their course from where they left it.

Also, the MPhil will be discontinued as a course.

- **Mandatorily Vocational Studies**

Vocational education is made compulsory and the purpose for the same is to engage oneself in cross occupational competencies. For example, working on communicational skills, personality development, self-management skills, etc.

- **Single Regulatory Body**

The HRD Ministry will now be renamed as Ministry of Education. GDP investment in education will also increase from 1.6% to 6%. By focusing on Gross enrollment ratio, it will be increased to 50% by the year 2035.

Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up for higher education but it will exclude Medical and Legal Education.

National Research Foundation will be set up as an Apex body to foster the research culture in higher education.

- **Restoring the Cultural values**

One of the aims of this policy is to restore the cultural values among children. The medium of education till 5th grade would be home language/mother tongue or any other local language. Sanskrit will also be offered including other classical languages and literatures.

- **Changes for Teachers**

The NEP 2020 also focus on teachers. By concerning with NCERT it is decided that National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE), 2021 will be made. By 2030 minimum degree qualification will be 4 years integrated B.Ed. course.

- **Setting up of Foreign University campus**

The internationalization of education will be facilitated through institutional collaborations, student and faculty exchange programmes, and allowing top-ranked international universities to open campuses in our country.

It is proposed that 3.5 crore new seats will be added to higher education institutions which will ultimately cover the gap between industry and academia and harness our demographic dividend.

Conclusion

Everything needs to be change with time and nothing can stay rigid for forever. As said by Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. So, to change the world one needs a proper education system in the country.

The National education Policy 2020 aims at Achieving Global Standards of Education and to improve the quality of education in India.