



Indian Education Policy: A Journey after Independence

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Abstract: Education is the process of supporting to the learning process, or gaining of knowledge, morals, skills, beliefs, values, and habits. After Independence, educational methods reframed as teaching, training, storytelling, discussion and directed research. But, now days, there is a need of improvising the educational methods by allowing the innovative approaches such as cooperative learning; problem based learning; competency based learning; manufacturing based learning; small modification based learning; earned based learning etc., to be impacted equally on the school and colleges education which decide the future of the nation, in terms of growth and development. Comparing the pre-independence and post-independence era of education, we observed the comprehensive changes in the framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. This paper outlines the salient features of national policy of education including (technical and non-technical) and its improvising amendment from 1968 to 2020.

Keyword - Indian Education; National Education Policies; School Education; Teacher Education; Higher Education; Covid-19.

I. INTRODUCTION:

In ancient India, aim of education was to develop a person's character, master the art of self-control, bring about social awareness, and to conserve and take forward ancient culture. The Gurukul system of imparting education is very well known to all of us. These mainly imparted through the Vedic and the Buddhist education system where, respectively the Sanskrit and Pali languages were to be used [1],[2],[3]. In the Vedic system, a child started his education at the age of five, whereas in the Buddhist system the child started his education at the age of eight. These educations were imparted and passed on orally rather than in written form and hence, as the time changes, this education system had been knock-out and English education system had been spread widely, in 18th and 19th century during the British Raj in India [4][5],[6],[7].

The first education policy, after independence was formed in 1968 there later on in 1986 with small amendment in 1992 since last 34 years the same education pattern remain continues. Now in 2020, the new education policy has been introduced by Government of India. This policy is formulated with the suggestion of students- parents, educationalist and lots of other members who are directly or indirectly involved in the education sector. National Education Policy 2020 envisions an India-centric education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all [8].

II. NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY IN THE YEAR 1968:

As per the report and recommendations of the Kothari Commission, in the year 1966, the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced the first National Policy on Education in 1968, which called for a "radical restructuring" and proposed equal educational opportunities in order to achieve national integration and greater cultural and economic development. This policy had also called for a National School System, which meant that all students, irrespective of caste, creed and sex would have access to education of a comparable quality up to the age of 14, as stipulated by the Constitution of India and specialized training and qualification of teachers. Further, it envisaged a common educational structure {10+2+3} which was accepted across the country and most of us have studied under that system.

The policy called for a focus on the learning of regional languages, outlining the "three language formula" to be implemented in secondary education - the instruction of the English language, the official language of the state where the school was based, and Hindi. Language education was seen as essential to reduce the gulf between the intelligentsia and the masses. Although the decision to adopt Hindi as the national language had proven controversial, the policy called for the use and learning of Hindi to be encouraged uniformly to promote a common language for all Indians. The policy also encouraged the teaching of the ancient Sanskrit language, which was considered an essential part of India's culture and heritage. The NPE of 1968 called for education spending to increase to six percent of the national income.

As per the Outcome of this National Education Policy-1968, this was not very successful. There were several reasons for this. Firstly, at that time, a proper programme of action was not brought out. Secondly, there was a shortage of funds, India's economy was in tatters. Thirdly, at that time, Education was in state list, so role of centre was little on how the states would implement this scheme. Despite this, the key legacies of this policy include our current 10+2+3 system of education; and three language formulas, which is followed by most schools. Science and Math were now getting more priority [9].

III. INDIAN EDUCATION POLICY IN THE YEAR 1986:

In the year, 1986, national education policy had been reframed during the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister and it was updated in 1992 when PV Narsimha Rao was prime minister. This policy focused on modernization and role of IT in education. More attention was paid on restructuring the teacher education, early childhood care, women's empowerment and adult literacy. It also accepted autonomy of universities and colleges, something which was resisted in past. The major objectives were to provide education to all sections of society, with a particular focus on scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes and women, who were deprived of educational opportunities for centuries. In order to fulfill these objectives, the provision of fellowships for the poor, imparting adult education, recruiting teachers from oppressed groups and also developing new schools and colleges.

The policy focused more on providing primary education to students as well as gave more importance for the establishment of open universities such as Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) at central level as well as in state level. The policy had recommended that education be given to rural people in consonance with the Gandhian philosophy. It also set the stage for the emergence of information technology in education, besides opening up the technical education sector in a rather big way to private enterprise.

In comparison to the national education policy-1968, the Indian education policy in 1986 performed in better way with several reasons. Firstly, this policy came after 42nd amendment in 1976. In this amendment, five subjects were transferred from State to concurrent list including Education, Forests, Weights & Measures, Protection of Wild Animals and Birds; and Administration of Justice. Secondly, now centre was able to accept wider responsibility and introduced a number of programmes in line with this policy. Most of our classic government schemes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mid Day Meal Scheme, Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVS schools), Kendriya Vidyalayas (KV schools) and use of IT in education were started under the NEP- 1986 [10].

IV. MODIFIED INDIAN EDUCATION POLICY-1986 IN THE YEAR 1992:

The Modified National Education Policy-1986, has redefined and 23 task forces were constituted and assigned a specific subject and presented in 1992 to the Government of India. The various eminent educationists, experts and senior representatives of Central and State Governments were associated with these task forces under the chairmanship of Acharaya Ramamurti in 1990 and later in 1992; the final report under the leadership of N. Janadhana Reddy had been submitted and known as "National Policy on Education 1992 (NPE-1992)."

This NEP-1992, had stressed out on promotion of development and strengthening national integration by allowing the 23 task force. It emphasized the need for greater transformation of the Indian educational system, with a focus on quality enhancement [11]. This policy emphasis more on retention of children in the schools at primary level. The cause of the drop out of the children from the school should be strategically handled by making plans and hence, the education should be made compulsory up to the age of 14. More attention was given to the backward classes, physically challenged and minority child for their development in education. Importances were given on women's education to overcome the poor rate of illiteracy among female.

Special instruction and priority based compulsory provisions had made in the various educational institutes to provide the resources like infrastructure, computers, libraries and accommodations for girls

student, if needed. The Central Advisory Board of Education played an important role in reviewing educational development and its improvisation in the education. State government also established the State Advisory Board of Education to look after the state's progress in education and encouraged the non government organizations to facilitate the education in the country.

As an Outcome of this National Policy of Education-1992, this takes care of varying admission standards in these programmes, especially in Engineering and Architecture / Planning programmes by allowing three-exam scheme (JEE and AIEEE at the National Level and the State Level Engineering Entrance Examinations (SLEEE) for State Level Institutions – with an option to join AIEEE). These help in maintenance of professional standards. This also solves problems of overlaps and reduces physical, mental and financial burden on students and their parents due to multiplicity of entrance examinations. Even though, with such enough carrying policy being adopted since 1992, these policies exhumed or lag in design the practical based curriculum to enhance the essential learning, critical thinking and more holistic experiential, discussion-based and analysis-based learning. These policies implemented the compulsory education to each and every Indian, but somehow lag to optimize the learning for students based on cognitive development of children [12].

V. NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020 (NEP-2020):

On July 29, 2020, the cabinet approved a new National Education Policy with an aim to introduce several changes to the existing Indian education system. In the previous policies, some gradual changes were made with quasic-static time manner, and in new policy more focused on the practical based education, to improve primary education, more teachers from socially backward classes, and entrance exams for engineering colleges at national level to enhance the quality of the education. The old system of 10+2 education was removed and it is being replaced by 5+3+3+4 in the New Education Policy - 2020. It's a radical change which was never done in past.

National Education Policy 2020 remains in the memory of the people due to COVID-19 and its effects on the economy but also for the radical changes proposed in the Education Policy. As education system is the base for the success for any nation. Many of the western countries are successful due to the education system and brain drain from the various countries. India is not untouched from this culture many of our intelligent brains are working in world renowned organizations. India is ranked one of the largest population in the world with different cultures Indian education system is one of the world's largest education platform is going to change and going to shape the Indian future [14].

The language policy in NEP is a broad guideline and advisory in nature; and it is up to the states, institutions, and schools to decide on the implementation. The NEP 2020 enacts numerous changes in India's education policy. It aims to increase state expenditure on education from around 4% to 6% of the GDP as soon as possible [15]. NEP-2020, majorly focus on School Education that includes pre- school education too and practical based higher education. It talks about how it is going to implement and establishing of new bodies to regulate the structure. This new education policy addresses or focused on the challenges such as Quality; Affordability; Equity; Access; and Accountability, all those are facing in the existing education system [16]. The vision of the National Education Policy is: "National Education Policy 2020 envisions an India-centric education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all."

VI. SAILENT FEATURES OF NEP-2020:

(i) HIGHER EDUCATION:

Education aims to develop individuals who are excellent, thoughtful, well-rounded, and creative. It's necessary to build well developed and progressive society which in turn leads to the developed nation. The new education policy brings some fundamental changes to the current system, and the key highlights are multidisciplinary universities and colleges, with at least one in or near every district, revamping student curricula, pedagogy, evaluation, and support for enhanced student experience, establishing a National Research Foundation to support excellent peer-reviewed work and effectively seed study at universities and colleges. Education in terms of startup gives more employment opportunity to the job seekers, imagine how many people are directly or indirectly associated to the "Flip-kart"; "Snap-deal", "Amazon", etc to the e-commerce platform. Due to such new e-commerce platform, the money is rotating in the Indian economy although some part of it is going back to the investors too.

The new higher education regulatory structure will ensure that distinct administrative, accreditation, financing, and academic standard-setting roles are performed by separate, autonomous, and empowered bodies. Some of the salient features are:

- Single regulatory body for higher education: aims to establish Higher Education Commission of India which will be the single regulatory body except for legal and medical education.
- Multiple entry and exit programme: multiple entry and exit options for those who wish to leave the course in the middle. Their credits will be transferred through Academic Bank of Credits.
- Tech- based option for adult learning through apps, TV channels: Quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, etc. will be developed.
- E-courses to be available in regional languages: e-content to be made available in regional languages, starting with 8 major languages – Kannada, Odia, Bengali among others to join the e-courses available in Hindi and English.
- Foreign universities to set-up campuses in India: World's top 100 foreign universities will be facilitated to operate in India through a new law.

(ii) SELF EMPLOYMENT/ ENTREPRENEURS:

Education from schooling to higher education students regularly makes an effort to sharpen the skill set and after completing the studies joins the bandwagon of people who are working for the organizations in India or abroad and make a successful life. But, now in the NEP-2020, "Employment", could be most important thing for which any person enrolls himself into any course to study the basics and move on to the advanced stages furthermore, after gaining experience in the particular sector enjoy growth and development in his career. This is a normal scenario, but in today's competitive world there are more options and more challenges companies/ organizations want best of the best people to enroll and achieve the heights of success. From the view point of the students who wish to get success in their future life need to have specific skill set that industry wants.

The New Education Policy 2020 proposes all the tools like choosing the right subject combination to study, introduction of vocational courses at early stages, changing the exam/ marking pattern, focus on learning according to the talent and many more. From this effort the industry will have the right people to fill the right position. This policy definitely seeks to turn India into a global knowledge superpower, but until and unless fresh-out-school 18-year-olds are employable, the expectation of increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio will not necessarily translate to an increase in the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). India needs of employment opportunities, and hence, NEP-2020 plays a huge role in the creation of opportunities, in many ways, such as an importance to the vocational training will definitely increases its significance. For example, in Germany, vocational jobs are given the same respect as any other job. Once the condition of Indian economy improves, and parents stop telling their children "if you don't study, you will become an electrician/carpenter/cleaner" the demand for skilled vocational jobs will also increase.

Further, children will now have ample opportunity during their schooling to pursue their own areas of interest and develop their skills accordingly. The con to this lies in the fact that once their schooling is done, employment would become a huge issue, until and unless these non-STEM industries are developed and the demand for jobs is created. Finally, the objectives that the NEP 2020 consists of can rationally be achieved only by increasing the value and quality of teachers, along with looking at e-learning as a primary mode of learning, and this in itself can be addressed by the creation of more employment opportunities.

- The first is addressed in the policy itself, making B.Ed., which is a four-year course, focus on the holistic development of teachers, encouraging more individuals to take on teaching as a career to help shape the future of India's youth. This would hopefully increase the number of opportunities for teachers to have growth-oriented and successful careers.
- The second creates a huge opportunity for the ed-tech industry in India, as this would help education reach students across the country, especially in the several locations where physical educational institutions are not able to help.

(iii) ACADEMIA AND INDUSTRIES:

NEP-2020 proposed to get the right skill at the right time like vocational courses along with the regular studies, if the students opt the right course or subject combination according to the inborn talent, then the NEP-2020 allows such students to start their own business and helps to increase the economical growth of himself as well as of the country and hence the gap between industry and academia will be bridged in near future. Students with proper skill set are very successful and useful for industry, for their personal growth and development as well as for the growth of the industry. To understand the view and reviews the author has designed series of questions which would be floated on various social platforms and further analyzed.

The New Education Policy has the potential of revamping the way the youth of our country are skilled to take up global roles and maintained a delicate balance between the traditions and the interdisciplinary approach, which is the need of the day. NEP-2020 focused to enhance the GER by allowing the momentous effort, but it would bring a large but young chunk of the Indian population into the mainstream. This shall help our students leave a global footprint. The rationalization of the school education from 10+2 to 5+3+3+4 will ensure complete accountability and a structured education ecosystem at par with the world. The most exciting change occurs due to NEP-2020 is the ability to choose subjects in grade 11. This is revolutionary and is in line with the now successfully acknowledged liberal studies framework. I strongly feel that this shall ensure that students pick and study what they like, and the unnecessary pressure of following science, humanities or commerce is done away with. It is very frustrating today to see students develop a phobia of Mathematics and accept streams where they get deeper into trouble. This will bring about an interdisciplinary approach and enable holistic development of the students.

The introduction of skill-based subjects at the school level is a welcome step and absolutely in line with the Skill India initiative. The introduction of graded qualifications at the college level shall also ensure that there is availability of industry ready professionals at short notice. This flexibility of entering and exiting as per the student's will shall also ensure seriousness in studies, and the market forces will drive the skills and the courses. The initiative of setting up a framework for teachers' training will revolutionize the way a talented pool of teachers is available to develop young talent. The abolition of multiple agencies for accreditation shall enable investment in the sector and hence will bring about the required up gradation. Overall a very balanced policy which shall go a long way in developing the Indian talent and equip them to take up a leadership position at the global level.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In every country, education policy sets the framework from courses to curriculum to pedagogical practices, within which an educational system takes shape and effectively reframed the economical growth. Here, in India, since pre-independence days, education policy has played an immensely important role in the development of an educational system. Since education policies reflect the approaches of those in power towards education, they have a close bearing on the goals and strategies of the education system that is in existence at that point of time. In the nearly seven decades after the country gained independence, a number of education commissions have been set up by the Government of India from time to time. The reports of the commissions have no doubt had an effect on education policy. But there have been gaps between recommendations and implementation due to social and political pressures, and also administrative lapses. Policies have also often been influenced by contemporary political agendas and in this process many lacunae in our educational system have still persisted.

In India the thrust of educational policies has been changing from time-to-time in response to the emerging socio-economic needs of the country, but in very slow manner. There has the need for a big change after 34 years of education system so that the gap between industry and academia must be minimized and hence their interaction turns the results into the production of the skilled. The educated students that won't find their place in industries or corporate results into unemployment scenario or if employed they are under paid. In both the situation a person gets frustrated and leads towards depression and similar other things. New Education policy is still a proposal may be there could be some corrections needed that could be done either before implementing or after seeing the outcomes of the policy in practical. Mostly all the proposals that have been proposed in NEP 2020 are having great potential to give success to both the industries and the academic students, in return results the economically strong India.

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