A Revolutionary Step Towards Digital India- Vision of NEP 2020

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is the long awaited policy after 1986. The policy brings a revolutionary change in all the dimensions of education and the importance given to education technology in the NEP is welcome. To develop a knowledge society we have to inculcate the required skills among the children which are our legacy. We have to develop among them the power to imagine, to explore, and create a more sustainable world. In this regard the policy has given some important recommendations in the extensive use of technology in teaching and learning process. Therefore the present paper is based on policy document (NEP2020) analysis and highlighted some important vision, mission, policy goals towards ICT & building a self reliant India by creating an Educational Digital Infrastructure and Capacity in India.

Keywords: ICT, online/ Digital learning Higher education, National education policy 2020, NEP-2020

Introduction

The recent rise in epidemic and pandemics necessitates that we are ready with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible. In this regard, the National Education Policy 2020 recognizes the importance of leveraging the advantages of technology while acknowledging its potential risks and dangers.

A dedicated unit for the purpose of orchestrating the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be created in the ministry to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education.

ICT heralded paradigm shift in education

The role of teachers shifts from knowledge transmitter, primary source of information and to a learning facilitator, collaborator, coach, knowledge navigator, and co-learner. Teacher now not only controls and directs all aspects of learning but gives students more options and responsibilities for their own learning. There is also a major shift regarding student's role shifts from passive recipient of information to active participant in the learning process producing knowledge.

Vision

The ICT policy in Education aims at preparing youth to participate creatively in the establishment, sustenance and growth of a knowledge society leading to all round socio-economic development of the nation and global competitiveness.

Mission

To device, catalyse, support and sustain ICT and ICT enabled activities and processes in order to improve access, quality and efficiency in education.

Policy Goals

The major policy goals regarding ICT policy in Education is to

- **Create**-ICT literate community
- **Promote**-universal, equitable, open and free access ICT enabled tools and resources to all students and teachers.
- **Motivate and enable**-wider participation of all sections of society in strengthening the education process through appropriate utilisation of ICT.

ICT Literacy and Competency Enhancement

Te policy defines ICT literacy in terms of levels of competence. Bases on the stage of schooling at which a student or teacher is introduced to ICT. These levels are suggestive and adaptations must be made to suit local conditions. Also these levels must be revised periodically to keep pace with changing technology. However the benefits of online/digital education cannot be leveraged unless the digital divide is eliminated through Digital India campaign and the availability of affordable computing devices equally.

Addressing the Digital Divide:

Addressing the digital divide the policy said to give educational programmes that will be made available 24/7 different languages to carter to the varying needs of the student population.

Emergence of digital technologies

ICT policy in Education suggested to conduct pilot studies for online education, development online teaching platforms and tools with existing e-learning platforms such as SWAYAM, DIKSHA, will be extended to provide teachers with a structured ,user friendly, rich set of assistive tools for monitoring progress of learners. Tools such as ,two way video and two way audio interface for holding online classes are a real necessity as the present pandemic has shown.

Content Creation, Digital repository and dissemination:

A digital repository of content including creation of course work, learning games and simulations ,Augmented reality and virtual reality will be developed with a clear public system for rating by users on effectiveness and quality. For fun bases learning student appropriate tools like apps, gamification of Indian art and culture, in multiple languages with clear operating instructions will also be created. A reliable backup mechanism for disseminating e-content to students will be provided.

Virtual Labs:

There is a need with existing e-learning platforms such as SWAYAM, DIKSHA, will also be leveraged for creating virtual labs so that all students have equal access to quality practical and hands-on experiment based learning experiences.

Online Assessment and examinations:

Blended models of Learning:

While promoting digital learning and education, the importance of face to face in person learning is fully recognized. Accordingly different effective models of blended learning will be identified for appropriate replication for different subjects.

Training and Incentives for teachers:

Teachers will undergo rigorous training in learner-centric pedagogy on how to become high quality online content creators themselves using online teaching platforms and tools. There will be emphasis on the teacher's role in facilitating active student engagement with the content and with each other.

Laying down standards:

The policy gives some important recommendation to lay down the standards .As research on online /digital education emerges, National Technology Forum (NETF) and other appropriate bodies shall setup standard of content, technology and pedagogy for online /digital teaching learning. These standards will help to formulate guidelines for e- learning by states, Boards schools and school complexes, Higher Education Institutions etc.

Conclusion

The policy is a novel and progressive document, acknowledging the invaluable role of technology in facilitating learning and teaching. There are numerous challenges to conducting online examinations at scale, including limitations on the types of questions that can be asked in online examinations, handling network problems and power disruptions and preventing unethical practices.Certain types of courses/subjects such as performing arts and science practical classes have limitations in the online /digital education mode ,which cn be overcome to a partial extent with innovative measures.

Further, unless online education is blended with experiential and activity based learning, it will tend to become a screen based education with limited focus on the social, affective and psychomotor domains of learning.

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