



OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES – THE NEP 2020 PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction:

The contemporary world always needs sustainable development. To fulfill the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is Sustainable development. The core of sustainable development is an approach to development that looks to balance different, and often competing, needs against an awareness of the environmental, social and economic limitations. Education is a human right and is a driving force behind every kind of development which is also true for sustainable development and peace. Education for Sustainable Development means man should acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. UNESCO's '2030 Agenda' (17 Sustainable Development Goals-SDGs) requires education to empower people with the knowledge, skills and values to live in dignity, build their lives and contribute to their societies.

Sustainable development goal 4 (SDG 4) of the "2030 Agenda" aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030. "Education 2030" is the roadmap to achieve this goal is adopted in November 2015. It provides guidance to governments and partners on how to turn commitments into action.

Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its targets:

Sustainable Development Goal 4 has 10 targets encompassing many different aspects of education. There are seven targets which are expected outcomes and three targets which are means of achieving these targets.

Universal primary and secondary education: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Early childhood development and universal pre-primary education: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Equal access to technical/vocational and higher education: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

Relevant skills for decent work: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Gender equality and inclusion: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

Universal youth literacy: By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of

peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Three means of implementation:

Effective learning environments: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

Scholarships: By 2030, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs, in developed countries and other developing countries.

Teachers and educators: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.

Lots of efforts are being taken to make education accessible to boys and girls specially at primary level. Digital technology has contributed greatly in making the education accessible le at global levels. E-learning is important and significant in spreading the knowledge everywhere.

It is quite difficult to provide equitable and quality education to every one through the traditional education system. The target may be achieved by launching an innovative education system like Open Educational Resources.

Open Educational Resources:

UNESCO defines Open Educational Resources (OER) as “teaching, learning and research materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. Open licensing is built within the existing framework of intellectual property rights as defined by relevant international conventions and respects the authorship of the work”.

The OERs are accessible to everyone freely and open for the modifications by all. These are reusable if licensed. At one time these resources were circulated to distant learners in physical form but with the development in technology, the digital form of these resources is very easily accessible by the very remote learners also. So we can say that advancements in mode of acquiring knowledge, learning methods and availability of high quality OERs at global level has brought a drastic change in the process of educating our people.

The National Education Policy 2020:

Government of India accepted National Education Policy 2020 on July 29, 2020 keeping the national development and national education requirements in accordance with the global educational perspectives as presented by UNESCO through its SDGs. The NEP 2020 provides a comprehensive framework for all levels of education, elementary, higher, and vocational training in rural and urban India also. This policy aims to transform the Indian Education System by 2040. The vision of this august document is to provide accessibility of education with equity and quality to all where as it should be affordable and accountable also. The NEP 2020 is a framework for Sustainable development of Indian society through the transformation of Indian Education System so as to go hand in hand with the contemporary world. The present research is to analyze the NEP 2020 in terms of its objectives to be achieved with digital platform for transformation of Education System in India through Open Educational Resources.

Contextual Analysis:

Transforming Indian Education through NEP – 2020

Earlier education policy was enacted in 1986 which was in force up to the year 2020. It covered almost 34 years for which the previous education policy was in action which is quite a vast period. In this huge period of time the society has gone through significant social, economical, cultural and technologically transformations. So it was the need of the time to introduce a new education policy to achieve the national educational goals and aspirations. In this scenario Government of India approved the New Education Policy (NEP) on July 29, 2020.

This New Education Policy document is comprised of four parts; the first part deals with the policy issues of school education. Higher Education issues have been discussed in second part. Other key educational issues are elaborated in third part and the fourth part explains its implementation.

In this paper we are going to analyze the NEP 2020 perspective for open educational resources. Hence the concerned part of NEP 2020 for this study is the third part of NEP which discusses the other key issues for

education. This part specially deals with the Promotion of Indian Languages and Online Education and it's working.

The policy aims to provide; access, equity, quality, and affordability. These objectives can be achieved through the improved education system reaching up to the masses of Indian society and therefore It was the necessity of time to deal with all such technological advancement which can help to achieve the objectives of the NEP 2020, including e-learning and open educational resources.

Since last decade Informal learning gradually became more familiar, but the covid pandemic made the stakeholders realize to switch completely from face-to-face education into an online mode within no time.

The whole Indian education system underwent cumbersome process during the lockdown period, for which the traditional systems were compelled to accept the innovations by the circumstances. This new policy has a reprisal element for these issues. NEP 2020 considers the following provisions to provide access, equity, and the best quality and affordable education to all students.

National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)

An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration, and so on, both for school and higher education. The aim of the NETF will be to facilitate decision making on the induction, deployment, and use of technology, by providing to the leadership of education institutions, State and Central governments, and other stakeholders, the latest knowledge and research as well as the opportunity to consult and share best practices.

Educational Software and e-content:

A rich variety of educational software will be developed and made available for students and teachers at all levels. All such software will be available in all major Indian languages and will be accessible to a wide range of users including students in remote areas and *Divyang* students.

Teaching-learning e-content will continue to be developed by all States in all regional languages, as well as by the NCERT, CIET, CBSE, NIOS, and other bodies/institutions, and will be uploaded onto the DIKSHA platform. This platform may also be utilized for Teacher's Professional Development through e-content.

CIET will be strengthened to promote and expand DIKSHA as well as other education technology initiatives. Suitable equipment will be made available to teachers at schools so that teachers can suitably integrate e-contents into teaching-learning practices. Technology-based education platforms, such as DIKSHA/SWAYAM, will be better integrated across school and higher education, and will include ratings/reviews by users, so as to enable content developers create user friendly and qualitative content.

Online and Digital Education: Ensuring Equitable Use of Technology:

The National Education Policy 2020 recognizes the importance of leveraging the advantages of technology while acknowledging its potential risks and dangers. It calls for carefully designed and appropriately scaled pilot studies to determine how the benefits of online/digital education can be reaped while addressing or mitigating the downsides. In the meantime, the existing digital platforms and ongoing ICT-based educational initiatives must be optimized and expanded to meet the current and future challenges in providing quality education for all.

Teachers require suitable training and development to be effective online educators. It cannot be assumed that a good teacher in a traditional classroom will automatically be a good teacher in an online classroom.

Pilot studies for online education:

Appropriate agencies, such as the NETF, CIET, NIOS, IGNOU, IITs, NITs, etc. will be identified to conduct a series of pilot studies, in parallel, to evaluate the benefits of integrating education with online education while mitigating the downsides and also to study related areas, such as, student device addiction, most preferred formats of e-content, etc. The results of these pilot studies will be publicly communicated and used for continuous improvement.

Digital infrastructure: There is a need to invest in creation of open, interoperable, evolvable, public digital infrastructure in the education sector that can be used by multiple platforms and point solutions, to solve for India's scale, diversity, complexity and device penetration. This will ensure that the technology-based solutions do not become outdated with the rapid advances in technology.

Online teaching platform and tools: Appropriate 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 coursework, Learning Games & Simulations, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality will be developed, with a clear public system for ratings by users on effectiveness and quality. For fun based 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.

Addressing the digital divide:

Given the fact that there still persists a substantial section of the population whose digital access is highly limited, the existing mass media, such as television, radio, and community radio will be extensively used for telecast and broadcasts. Such educational programmes will be made available 24/7 in different languages to cater to the varying needs of the student population. A special focus on content in all Indian languages will be emphasized and required; digital content will need to reach the teachers and students in their medium of instruction as far as possible.

Virtual Labs: Existing e-learning platforms such as DIKSHA, SWAYAM and SWAYAMPRAKASH 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. The possibility of providing adequate access to SEDG students and teachers through suitable digital devices, such as tablets with pre-loaded content, will be considered and developed.

Training and incentives for teachers: Teachers will undergo rigorous training in learner-centric pedagogy and 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.

Online assessment and examinations: Appropriate bodies, such as the proposed National Assessment Centre or PARAKH, School Boards, NTA, and other identified bodies will design and implement assessment frameworks encompassing design of competencies, portfolio, rubrics, standardized assessments, and assessment analytics. Studies will be undertaken to pilot new ways of assessment using education technologies focusing on 21st century skills.

(i) **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.

(j) **Laying down standards:** As research on online/digital education emerges, NETF and other appropriate bodies shall set up standards 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, HEIs, etc.

Creating a Dedicated Unit for Building of World Class, Digital Infrastructure, Educational Digital Content and Capacity:

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. Since technology is rapidly evolving, and needs specialists to deliver high quality e-learning, a vibrant ecosystem has to be encouraged to create solutions that not only solve India's challenges of scale, diversity, equity, but also evolve in keeping with the rapid changes in technology, whose half-life reduces with each passing year. This centre will, therefore, consist of experts drawn from the field of administration, education, educational technology, digital pedagogy and assessment, e-governance, etc.

Advantages and disadvantages of OER

- The most significant advantage of OER is its wide accessibility among users anywhere and anytime.
- These contents are open to modification, which helps design the content according to specific requirements, making searching easy and less time-consuming.
- OER contents are in digital format, so the content can also be enriched with images and videos.
- Dissemination of digital content is very fast with great ease.
- Besides all these positive things, cost-effectiveness plays a significant role in glorifying OERs.

Conclusion

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are considered to be significant revolutionary movements in the field of education. It provides a lot of scope for digital learning by providing access to ample learning materials from across the world.

Awareness among the users on OER. It is, therefore, essential to first make people understand OER and promote its awareness. If this is done, users will automatically start developing and using OER at its best.

Learners today are expected to meet the escalating standards of our global society, and for this, they need to develop international skills. Digitization of learning materials is helping everyone in this regard to a great extent. And one such significant step put forward is the OER movement.

Suppose the potential of open educational resources is utilized in the best possible ways. In that case, we will definitely be able to cope with the global standards of education and thus bring a significant transformation in the higher education system of our country.

Growing due to its advantages, like anywhere, anytime learning at the users' own pace. OERs can complement the existing education system by imparting online education and training and producing a technically qualified and skilful workforce.

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