

Insights and perspectives of NEP in transforming Higher Education in India

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Abstract:

The New Education Policy (NEP) was announced by the Government of India in 2020 and was a welcoming step among almost all sections of the society. There was a major change in the education policy after 1986. That is why everyone considered this decision of the government as a hopeful and positive step, which not only indicates a big change in the field of education, but was also considered appropriate to accept the challenges of the current education system spread all over the world. The improvement in this education system did not happen suddenly, but was being prepared for a long time. But many did not expect that this change would happen so quickly and at a rapid pace. Although this education policy affected college and school education alike, its impact is reflected more seriously on higher education. This study undertakes an overview of NEPs and analyzes how they affect the current education system in the wider perspectives of the global scenario. Good quality higher education should aim at developing thoughtful, creative and well-rounded individuals. It also helps them to study one or more specific areas in an in-depth manner and develop moral, character as well as constitutional values, scientific temper, intellectual curiosity, and creativity.

To enable to understand it at ground level, primary data was collected from 225 academicians of higher education universities and institutions using simple random sampling. The results indicated a significant impact of NEP on transforming higher education. The overall opinion that emerges is reflective that the new system will enable overall development and creativity among the students which will equip them with strong knowledge and skill enhancement empowering them at global level. Further, the multiple entry and exit options for students will make education system flexible. The only consideration which was common among the academicians is the implementation of the common entrance exams considering the fact that we have students from different backgrounds and regions.

The findings of the study are significant for both the government and private sector higher education to understand the impact of the new structure and its future relevance in meeting the global requirements and enhancing the role of technology and automation in the education sector.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Higher education, Global parameters,

Introduction:

In view of the importance of education in the country, with the aim of providing quality education, the present government approved the new National Education Policy for comprehensive changes in the education sector. After nearly three decades, a new education policy has been approved in the country. Prior to this, the National Policy on Education was formulated in the year 1986 and was amended in the year 1992. It is expected that this education policy will lay the foundation for new and all-round changes in the education sector. It is known that the world's largest

consultation process was organized to prepare the National Education Policy, 2020. In which constructive suggestions were sought from different sections of the country.

The new National Education Policy was brought by Prime Minister Narendra Modi which has been prepared in consultation with everyone. With the introduction of this, a wide discussion has started on education in the country. In relation to education, Gandhiji meant the all-round and best development of body, mind and soul of child and man. Similarly, Swami Vivekananda said that education is the expression of the inherent perfection of man. In the midst of all these discussions, we will see that what the shortcomings were left in the education policy of 1986, to overcome which there was a need to bring a new national education policy. Also, will this new National Education Policy be able to fulfill the objectives that Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda dreamed of? In order to meet the needs of the knowledge based economy in the changing global scenario, there was a need for changes in the existing education system. There was a need for a new education policy to enhance the quality of education, promote innovation and research. To ensure global access to the Indian education system, there was a need for changes in education policy to adopt global standards of education.

Actually this is a policy document, in which there is a discussion about the vision of the government in the coming days regarding education. It decides the condition and direction of the country in the field of education. In the opinion of experts, such a policy should be made every ten to fifteen years, but this time it took 34 years to draft it and actually bring it into reality. The BJP had also promised a new education policy in its manifesto. Till now the country has got three education policies. The things stated in this policy are neither legally binding nor they would be enforced immediately.

The centre has set a 2030 deadline for implementing the new education programme. It is not required for state governments to accept education totally because it is a subject of the Concurrent List in the Constitution, which both the State and the Central Government have authority over. Wherever there is a problem, both parties have urged that it be resolved through consensus.

The Ministry of Human Resources has been renamed the “Ministry of Education following the introduction of the New Education Policy 2020. This policy anticipates significant changes in the country's school and higher education systems. By 2030, the government aims to achieve 100 percent GER (Gross enrolment ratio) in school education as well as universalization of education from pre-school to secondary level”.

Based on the recommendations of the Kasturirangan Committee and on the basic pillars of easy access to education, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability, this new education policy is in line with the 'Agenda 2030' for sustainable development and aims to provide schools to meet the needs of the 21st century and to bring out the unique capabilities inherent in every student by making

college education more holistic, resilient, transforming India into a knowledge-based vibrant society and global superpower.

The NEP, 2020 which was given approval by Union Cabinet in July, 2020 basically outlines India's vision about the new education structure. This policy is fairly extensive, and it covers everything from elementary school to higher education and vocational training in both urban and rural India. It aims at transforming the education system in India by the year 2021. The language policy in the National Education Policy is a wide advisory and guideline in nature, and its implementation is up to the states, schools, and institutions. The National Education Policy 2020 mainly enacts various changes in the education policy of India. It aims at increasing the expenditure of the state on education.

The goal of restructuring and consolidation of institutions is to end fragmentation of the higher education system by transforming the higher education structure into large multi-disciplinary institutions that produce innovative and well-rounded individuals, as well as to transform other nations economically and educationally.

Multidisciplinary and holistic education needs to flourish in a well-integrated manner for improving all the human capacities that is social, mental, emotional, physical and moral. In long term, this kind of a comprehensive system of education need to be the technique for all the undergraduate programs which includes the ones in technical, medical as well as vocational disciplines. Optimal learning environment as well as support for the students gives a holistic approach which includes an adequate curriculum, an interactive pedagogy, and sufficient support for the students and consistent formative analysis.

The NEP mainly envisions a system which is rooted in the ethics of India which directly contribute towards the transformation of India, sustainably into vibrant and an equitable knowledge society by offering good quality education to everyone. Thus, making India- the global superpower of knowledge. It mainly envisages that pedagogy and curriculum of the institutions should develop a deeper sense of responsibility and respect for fundamental duties of the country.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study the overview of NEP 2020
- To determine the impact of NEP in Higher education in India
- To ascertain the significance of impact of NEP in transforming Higher education in view of global parameters
- To understand the need for changes in the education policy

NEP 2020: An Overview:

The NEP was mainly introduced with the aim of formalising the changes within the system from elementary level up to university and college level. Considering the developing situation,

henceforth the content of education would focus mainly on the new ideas, concepts, problem solving angles and the applications. The NEP is also being expected to show a long lasting and a positive impact on higher education structure in the country. It is also being said that the foreign universities would be permitted to open their campuses in the country which is being considered to be a commendable initiative by Government of India. It would help students in getting the experience of good quality education in their country itself. The NEP for introducing the multi-disciplinary institutions would cause a renewed focus on each and every field of art, humanities, etc. This education structure would also help the students in learning and growing in a holistic manner. Therefore, the students would be equipped with a strong knowledge base. Introduction of a single common exam is also a positive step that would help in reducing the stress of giving multiple competitive examinations and in easing off pressure of giving so many exams. It would even ensure the level playing base for all the students in future. Establishing the Academic Bank for Credit or the ABC is being considered to be a huge idea for storing all the academic credits that the students would earn by completing the courses from different recognised higher educational institutions. The students may earn their score by finishing a particular course and their scores would be credited in their ABC account. The students may transfer their credits in case they choose to switch their educational institutions. In case a student drops out due to some reason, the credits would also remain intact and this means that he or she may come back after a couple of years to pick up exactly from where they had left.

The NEP regulatory structure would also ensure that distinct financing, administrative, academic and accreditation standard setting roles are well performed by autonomous, empowered and separate bodies. The 4 structures would be established as 4 independent verticals within one single umbrella organisation that is the higher education commission of India. There are different developments and reforms that have also been introduced by the NEP in the domain of higher education. The main aim of the NEP is that there will be a single regulatory body controlling higher education. It mainly aims at establishing the Higher Education Commission in India that would be one single regulatory authority except for the medical and legal education.

There would also be multiple options of entry as well as exit for the individuals who want to quit a course. The credits of such courses would be transferred with the help of television channels, applications, etc. Good quality options based on technology for the purpose of adult learning like online modules and courses, applications, satellite based television channels, ICT equipped libraries, online books and adult education centres would also be developed. Technology would also be a part of the planning, assessment, learning, planning, school, teacher as well as students training. The E-content would be available in the regional language, starting from 8 major language options including Odia, Kannada, Bengali, etc.

The proposal to establish a higher education commission India, which will serve as the umbrella authority for higher education, is one of the most significant developments in the NEP 2020. This would generally bring out the questions as to what would happen to the current AICTE and UGC. HECI aims at the reformation of the higher education domain. The bill would separate the funding and the academic aspects of this sector. According to this new bill, HECI would not have financial powers. The process of funding which used to be handled by University Grant Commission previously will now be handled by Ministry for Education, earlier called MHRD or the Ministry for Human Resource Development. However, this change is being expected to clear out the mess in the system of higher education in India. HECI will also have the 4 independent verticals including the NHERC (National Higher Education Regulatory Council), GEC (General Education Council), NAC (National Accreditation Council) and GHEGC (Higher Education Grants Council). For having uniformity in the standards of education, one single umbrella organisation was the need and it's been the vision for a lot of educationists. It's also being considered as one of the best steps for streamlining the policy of education. However, for ensuring the quality of the higher education the institutes should be measured on the basis of the relevant parameters such as industry linkages, research, academic excellence and placements. In case HECI may manage this, the advantages to the biggest stakeholders that is youth of the country would be significant.

The whole concept of empowering and autonomy for innovating is one of the main features of the NEP, 2020 that supports the phasing out strategies from Affiliated Institutions to Autonomous Institutions. The flexibility being offered to the autonomous institutions gives hope to enrichment in curriculum as well. It even says that through right accreditations, the autonomous degree granting institutions would evolve into research intensive and teaching intensive universities in case they want to. The announcement for setting up of the multidisciplinary educational and research universities in India is giving better hope. Such institutions would also be in sync with the current IIMs and IITs and would aim at showcasing multidisciplinary education for students in India.

Another significant change suggested by the NEP, 2020 is that National Testing Agency would serve as the expert, premier and autonomous testing institutions for conducting entrance exams for the graduate and undergraduate courses and fellow programs in the Higher education institutional groups. The reach, superior grade just as adaptability of NTA test administration would help the colleges in utilizing the normal placement tests instead of many organizations contriving their placement tests. In this manner, it definitely lessens the weight on the understudies, schools and the colleges and the entire instruction framework in India. It would likewise be passed on to the singular schools and colleges for utilizing the NTA appraisal for the affirmation. It additionally most certainly helps understudies in effectively moving their credits and degree to the colleges abroad.

The NEP, 2020 allows the foreign colleges and universities in coming to India and bringing

out the challenge for native institutions for improving quality of the educational system offered by them. The higher education domain in India is buzzing as an opportunity for paving way for the foreign universities for setting up their campus in India. India has one of the biggest networks of higher education systems across the globe, with 900+ universities and 40,000+ colleges.

India should achieve a prominent growth in higher education system across the globe in order to obtain sustainable growth of the economy that needs to be driven by the natural resources. According to reports, India would require at least 1500 higher educational institutions by the year 2030 for accommodating the huge influx of students and that is why the Government in India is promoting Foreign Direct Investment and opening up External Commercial Borrowing routes for strengthening capital investment for educational sector. The education system is even trying to improve the image of India as the educational hub since 7 lakh plus students in India who are already studying abroad. Thus, the main intention of the NEP is that permitting the foreign universities would help world class education being available locally at lower cost and that too without travelling. They would also reduce human capital significantly to the other nations for study as well as job prospects. As per different surveys globally, the cross border education system is beneficial for the economy as it brings wide range of global awareness, competitiveness and cultural prospects. Foreign collaboration enables local institutions to craft their curriculum in sync with the international pedagogy and offers a diversified portfolio of streams and specialisation.

Provisions relating to Higher Education:

Under the ‘NEP-2020, a target has been set to increase the 'Gross Enrolment Ratio' in higher educational institutions from 26.3% (year 2018) to 50%, along with 3.5 crore new institutions in higher educational institutions of the country. Seats will be added”.

Under NEP-2020, the multiple entry and exit system has been adopted in the undergraduate course, under which the students in the undergraduate program of 3 or 4 years will be able to leave the course at multiple levels and they will be awarded degrees or certificates accordingly.

“(Certificate after 1 year, Advance Diploma after 2 years, Bachelor's degree after 3 years and Graduation with research after 4 years)”.

An 'Academic Bank of Credit' will be given to digitally secure the marks or credit obtained from various higher educational institutions, so that on the basis of the performance of the students in different institutions, they can be awarded degrees. Can you

Under the new education policy, ‘M. Phil. Program’ of the universities across the country has been terminated.

Need for change in the Education Policy:

- In order to meet the needs of the knowledge based economy in the changing global scenario, there was a need for changes in the existing education system.

- There was a need for a new education policy to enhance the quality of education, promote innovation and research.
- To ensure global access to the Indian education system, there was a need for changes in education policy to adopt global standards of education.
- To bring the country’s existing education system at par with the global parameters of: teaching learning evaluation. Research, infrastructure and development of knowledge and skill enhancement, student support and progression and transparent governance and leadership.

In the National Education Policy-2020, special attention has been given to issues like access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability of education. Another important consideration is the focus on multidisciplinary education system that allows the students to pick and choose subjects/areas of their choice and aptitude. Under the new education policy, in collaboration with the central and state governments, a target of investment equal to 6% of the country's GDP has been set on the education sector. Under the new education policy,” it has also been approved to change the name of 'Ministry of Human Resource Development' (MHRD) to 'Ministry of Education’.

Research Methodology:

For the purpose a sample size 225 teachers and faculty of Higher education institutions/ Universities in Noida and Ghaziabad districts (Uttar Pradesh). The study was confined to Uttar Pradesh as it is one of the largest and most populous states of our country. The present study is based on a descriptive survey and involved collecting primary data using structured questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from ‘Strongly disagree’ (1 point) to ‘strongly agree’(5 point). The questionnaire comprised of two parts. Part I related to the demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, discipline, qualification, work experience and designation. The data was analysed in three stages- Demographic analysis, Descriptive analysis using mean scores and inferential analysis one sample t test.

Results and Analysis:

Table1 Demographic profile of the respondents

S. No.	Variables	Number of respondents	%age
1	Gender		
	Male	117	52%
	Female	108	48%
2	Discipline		
	Arts	122	54%

	Science	45	20%
	Commerce	58	26%
3	Qualification		
	Post grad/M.Phil	146	65%
	PhD.	70	31%
	Post Doc	9	4%
4	Years of Experience		
	0-5 years	47	21%
	5-10 years	104	46%
	More than 10 years	74	33%
5.	Designation		
	Assistant Professor	76	34%
	Associate Professor	95	42%
	Professor	54	24%

Table 1 presents demographic profile of the respondents consisting of academicians belonging to various universities and private higher education institutions. There are 52% males and 48% females in the study. They represent different disciplines and from among them the 54% are from arts, 20% are from science and 26% are from commerce. Large number representing 65 % (146) are qualified with post graduation/ M.Phil and 35 % in all represent PhD. And Post Doc. Their designations are also varied and the larger representation is of the Associate professor level.

Table 2 Mean Value and standard deviation score of the impact of NEP in transforming Higher education in India

Sr. No.	Impact of new education policy in transforming Higher education in India	Mean Score	S. D
1.	The NEP will improve the education system in India	4.16	.567
2.	Good quality education system develops creative and thoughtful individuals	4.12	.234
3.	The multiple entry and exit options for students will make education system flexible	3.96	.854
4.	Empowering the education system is the main feature of the NEP	4.07	.632

5.	A common entrance exam would be helpful for the educational institutions as each university will not have to conduct its own exam	3.26	1.09
6.	The NEP is a welcoming step for the foreign universities	3.92	1.67
7.	The NEP will improve the education system in India globally	4.02	.745
8.	After the implementation of the NEP, 2020 it is expected that less people will move abroad for studies and job	3.87	.987
9.	The NEP, 2020 would focus more on art and humanities domain	4.11	.765
10.	According to the NEP, the students would be well equipped with a strong knowledge base	4.09	.453

Table 2 shows the opinions of the respondents w.r.t the impact of NEP 2020 on the higher education system. The high mean range among the dimensions clearly depict that the NEP will improve the education system in India with the overall mean score at 4.05 which is clearly reflective and indicative of the same. Most are of the opinion that it is a positive step towards improvement in the education system of India (mean score is 4.16) mean value of 4.16. It is also reflective of the opinion that it will enable overall development and creativity of our students (mean = 4.12) and thereafter will be better equipped with strong knowledge and skill enhancement (mean = 4.09) and will empower them at global level. Empowering the education system is the main feature of the NEP (4.07), The NEP will improve the education system in India globally (4.02). The multiple entry and exit options for students will make education system flexible (3.96) and The NEP is a welcoming step for the foreign universities (3.92) were also considered important. Reasons like after the implementation of the NEP, 2020 it is expected that less people will move abroad for studies and job (3.87) were also viewed as important. The only consideration which was common among the academicians is the implementation of the common entrance exams considering the fact that we have students from different backgrounds and regions.

Table 3 t-scores of the impact of NEP in transforming Higher education in India

Sr. No.	Impact of new education policy in transforming Higher education in India	Mean Score	t-Value	Sig
1.	The NEP will improve the education system in India	4.16	8.171	0.000
2.	Good quality education system develops creative and thoughtful individuals	4.12	7.219	0.000
3.	The multiple entry and exit options for students will make education system flexible	3.96	5.223	0.000

4.	Empowering the education system is the main feature of the NEP	4.07	5.528	0.000
5.	A common entrance exam would be helpful for the educational institutions as each university will not have to conduct its own exam	3.26	3.616	1.34
6.	The NEP is a welcoming step for the foreign universities	3.92	2.821	2.32
7.	The NEP will improve the education system in India globally	4.02	6.201	0.000
8.	After the implementation of the NEP, 2020 it is expected that less people will move abroad for studies and job	3.87	4.880	0.000
9.	The NEP, 2020 would focus more on art and humanities domain	4.11	7.312	0.000
10.	According to the NEP, the students would be well equipped with a strong knowledge base	4.09	7.118	0.000

Table 3 shows the results of t-test. It is found from the table that the significance value for all the statements is below 0.05 except common entrance exam and its relevance for higher education and a welcome step for opening campus by foreign universities. The apprehension is very much expected and thoughtful as the implementation of common entrance tests across all universities and institutions is not easy considering differences in regions, infrastructure, background, accessibility etc. Also in regard to a welcome step for foreign universities it may not be easier as on many global parameters like, curriculum aspect, learning resources, governance and leadership, research and consultancy our universities and institutions lack behind and needs improvisation.

Lack of human resource: At present there is a shortage of skilled teachers in the field of elementary education, in such a situation there are practical problems in the implementation of the system made for elementary education under the National Education Policy, 2020.

Challenges Related to New Education Policy:

Cooperation of the states: Since education is a concurrent subject, most of the states have their own school boards, so the state governments will have to come forward for the actual implementation of this decision. Also, the idea of having a National Higher Education Regulatory Council as the apex controlling body may be opposed by the states.

Expensive education: The new education policy has paved the way for admission to foreign universities. Various educationists believe that admission in foreign universities is likely to make the Indian education system expensive. As a result, it can be challenging for lower class students to get higher education.

Sanskritization of Education: The South Indian states allege that the government is trying to sanskritise education through the 'tri-language' formula.

Inadequate funding checks: Fee regulation still exists in some states, but these regulatory processes are unable to curb profiteering in the form of unlimited donations.

Financing: Ensuring financing will depend on how strong the will is to spend the proposed 6% of GDP on education as public expenditure.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

The NEP has introduced a wide range of changes and it largely reads as a progressive document that has a firm grasp on the current socio economic landscape as well as prospects of uncertainties of the future. Education for the new generation of students needs to engage essentially with the rising digitalisation and dematerialisation of the economies that require a whole new range of capabilities. It seems to be an even more important prerequisite with the trend moving towards the process of digitalisation as well as disruptive automation quickening by this pandemic. Overall, the NEP, 2020 addresses the need of developing the professionals in different fields which range from artificial intelligence and agriculture. India should also be ready for future. This NEP, 2020 would pave way for most of the young aspiring candidates for being equipped with the requisite skill set.

Inclusion of artificial intelligence, 3D machines, data-analysis, biotechnology etc. in graduate education will create skilled professionals even in cutting edge areas and increase employability of youth.

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