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The 2020 New Education Policy's Effect on Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

In light of the issues brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government of India's New Education Policy (NEP 2020) was a welcome move and piece of fresh news. For many, hearing about NEP 2020 was an absolute shock. Many educators did not foresee the changes that NEP 2020 has recommended. Although the education policy has an impact on both high school and college education, this article focuses mostly on NEP 2020 and its influence on higher education. This essay also discusses the key NEP components and examines how they impact the current educational system.

(Keywords: New Education Policy, Higher Education, Covid-19.)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian government created the National Policy on Education (NPE) to encourage education among its citizens. The policy encompasses both rural and urban India's primary and secondary education through colleges. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi issued the country's first NPE in 1968; Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi issued the second in 1986; and Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued the third in 2020.

The aim for India's future educational system is described in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which was adopted by the Indian Union Cabinet on July 29, 2020. The new policy has taken the place of the previous one, which was published in 1986. The strategy

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offers a comprehensive framework for education from early childhood through higher education in both rural and urban India. It also covers vocational training. By 2021, the strategy wants to completely overhaul India's educational system. The implementation of the language policy in NEP is up to the states, organizations, and schools; it is intended to be a broad guideline and advisory in nature. Many reforms to India's education policy are implemented by the NEP 2020. It aims to increase state expenditure on education from around 4% to 6% of the GDP as soon as possible.

In January 2015, a commission established by former Cabinet Secretary T. S. R. Subramanian started the consultation process for the New Education Policy. A group led by former Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) director Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan submitted the draught NEP in 2019 based on the committee's report from June 2017. The Draft New Education Policy (DNEP) 2019 was then created by the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the topic of extensive public discussions.. The 484-page Draft NEP was long. On creating the draft policy, the Ministry went through a thorough consultation process: "More than two lakh ideas from 676 districts, 6,600 blocks, 6,000 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), and 2.5 lakh gram panchayats were accepted. The vision of the National Education Policy is: "National Education Policy 2020 envisions an India-centric education system that directly contributes to building our country sustainably into an equal and thriving knowledge society by offering high-quality education to all."

Excellent, intellectual, all-around, and creative people must be developed through quality higher education. It must give someone the opportunity to study one or more specialized fields of interest in-depth and to develop their character, ethical and constitutional values, intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, creativity, service spirit, and 21st century skills in a variety of fields, such as the sciences, social sciences, the arts, humanities, and languages, personal, technological, and vocational subjects. The main features of the new education policy include the establishment of multidisciplinary universities and colleges, with at least one in or close to every district, the redesign of student curricula, pedagogy, evaluation, and support for an improved student experience, and the creation of a National Research Foundation to fund outstanding peer-reviewed research and efficiently launch study at universities and colleges.

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Low undergraduate education standards are a result of a number of factors, including the forced separation of qualifications, early specialisation and student influx into narrow research fields, large associated universities, a general lack of emphasis on research at universities and schools, and a lack of competitive peer-reviewed academic research funding.

Increasing the gross enrolment ratio in higher education, including vocational training, from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035 will help to end the fragmentation of higher education by making higher education institutions large and multidisciplinary, producing well-rounded and creative individuals, and transforming other countries' educational and economic systems.

The goal of holistic and multidisciplinary education should be to develop all aspects of human potential, including mental, cultural, social, physical, emotional, and moral. In the long term, all undergraduate programs, including those in the medical, technical, and vocational fields, will follow this comprehensive education model. The best learning environments and student assistance provide a holistic approach that includes an acceptable curriculum, interactive pedagogy, regular formative evaluation, and sufficient student support.

Objectives of the study

This study's main goal is to examine how New Education Policy 2020 will affect higher education. The report also describes the key NEP characteristics and examines how they affect the current educational system.

Research methodology

This study is descriptive in nature. The required secondary data was gathered from a number of websites, including those run by the Indian government, magazines, journals, and other publications. To draw inferences and draw conclusions, this data was evaluated and reviewed.

II. SALIENT FEATURES OF NEP RELATED TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The newly planned NEP's objective is to formally carry out systemic reforms from the secondary to the postsecondary levels. In view of the changing scenario, educational curriculum

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in the future will focus on important concepts, ideas, applications, and problem-solving attitudes. The National Education Policy is expected to have positive and long-lasting benefits on the nation's higher education system. It is commendable that the government has decided to allow foreign colleges to open campuses in India. This will allow students to experience local education of international caliber. All academic fields, including the arts and humanities, will receive fresh attention as a result of the establishment of interdisciplinary institutions, and this approach to education will help students' overall learning and development. As a result, students will have a more solid knowledge base.

Another constructive measure that will lessen the pressure of having to prepare for so many difficult tests is the implementation of a single universal entrance test. Additionally, it will ensure that applicants for future student positions have an even playing field. Establishing an Academic Bank of Credit is a good idea for keeping the academic credits that students get from taking classes at several respectable higher education institutions (ABC). By successfully completing a course, a student can earn scores, which are then added to their ABC account. These credits can then be transferred if a student decides to transfer to another college. If a student were to ever leave school for any reason, their credits would still be valid, allowing them to resume their studies years later.

The new regulatory framework for higher education will make sure that various administrative, accreditation, financial, and standard-setting functions are carried out by independent, empowered entities. The Higher Education Commission of India will oversee the formation of these four organisations as four distinct verticals (HECI). The higher education industry has undergone numerous adjustments and new advancements because to NEP. Some of the salient features are:

Single regulatory body for higher education:

With the exception of legal and medical education, the Higher Education Commission of India will be the only regulatory organisation established under the NEP.

Multiple entry and exit program:

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For those who choose to abandon the course in the middle, there will be a variety of access and departure points. The Academic Bank of Credits will transfer their credits.

Technology-based options for adult education via applications and TV channels:

Apps, online courses and modules, satellite TV channels, online publications, ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centers, among other high-quality technology-based solutions for adult learning, will be developed.

E-courses to be available in regional languages:

Kannada, Odia, Bengali, and other regional languages will join the e-courses accessible in Hindi and English as the first eight main regional languages to have access to the e-content in those languages.

Foreign universities to set-up campuses in India:

"Such (foreign) universities will be allowed special dispensation respecting regulatory, governance, and content criteria on par with other autonomous institutions of India," mentioned in the HRD Ministry document.

Common entrance exam for all colleges:

National Testing Agency will conduct the uniform entrance exam for all higher education institutions (NTA). The test is optional.

Higher Education Council of India (HECI) establishment:

To govern higher education, the Higher Education Council of India (HECI) would be established. Gross enrollment ratio growth will be the council's main objective. In the HECI, there will be 4 verticals:

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a) **National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC)**, With the exception of medical and legal education, higher education is governed by the National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC).

b) **National Accreditation Council (NAC)**, the primary mechanism to enable such regulation will be accreditation. The second vertical of HECI will, therefore, be a 'meta-accrediting body', called the National Accreditation Council (NAC).

c) **Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC)**, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC), which provides funding for colleges and universities. This will take the place of the current University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education and National Council for Teacher Education.

d) **General Education Council (GEC)**, specifically, the desired learning objectives were defined by the General Education Council (GEC) as "graduate qualities". Creating a National Higher Education Qualification Framework will also fall under its purview (NHEQF). As an organisation that establishes professional standards, the GEC will include the National Council for Teacher Education (PSSB).

III.DETAILED ANALYSIS OF IMPACT OF NEP ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Regulatory System of Higher Education:-

The plan to establish the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) as an umbrella organization for higher education, excluding medical and legal education, is a key change in NEP 2020. What will happen to the current UGC and AICTE will typically be raised in response to this. The goal of HECI is to overhaul the higher education industry; the Bill will divide the sector's academic and financial facets. HECI won't have any financial authority under the new Bill. The Ministry of Education, formerly known as the Ministry of Human Resource Development, will be responsible for the financial procedures that the University Grants Commission (UGC) previously oversaw (MHRD). Yet, this modification is anticipated to clean up the regulatory muddle in India's higher education system. The National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) will oversee regulation, the General Education Council (GEC)

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will define standards, the Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) will provide money, and the National Accreditation Council (NAC) will oversee accreditation. A single umbrella body was always necessary for uniformity in educational standards and this has been the dream of many educators. This is thought to be the best course of action for streamlining educational policy. To guarantee the quality of higher education, however, institutions must be evaluated using pertinent criteria, such as research, industry connections, placements, and academic achievement, among others. The rewards to the HEI's largest stakeholder, the young of India, might be substantial if it can pull this off.

Graded Accreditation and Graded Autonomy:

A "phasing out" strategy from Affiliated Colleges to Autonomous Institutions is supported by the year 2020. There is potential for curricular enrichment because of the enhanced flexibility provided to independent institutions. Additionally, it states that autonomous degree-granting colleges might develop into research- or teaching-intensive universities if they so desired with the proper accreditations. Further hope is offered by the news that Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) will be established in the nation. These institutions will strive to provide Indian students with a multidisciplinary education that is on par with that provided by the current IITs and IIMs.

The National Testing Agency will act as a prominent, knowledgeable, independent testing institution to conduct entrance exams for undergraduate and graduate admissions and fellowships in Higher Education Institutions, according to the NEP 2020, which is another significant development. Instead of hundreds of universities creating their own entrance exams, most universities will be able to use these common entrance exams thanks to the high quality, variety, and flexibility of the NTA testing services. This will significantly lessen the burden on students, colleges and universities, and the entire educational system. It will be up to specific universities and colleges to decide whether to employ NTA exams for admissions. Also, it undoubtedly makes it easier for students to transfer their credits and degrees to universities abroad.

Domestic internationalization:

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The challenge for Indian institutions is to raise the level of education they offer as a result of NEP 2020's opening up of India to global universities and colleges. The possibility of opening the door for international universities to establish campuses in the nation is causing a flurry of activity throughout the Indian higher education sector. With more than 900 institutions and 40,000 colleges, India boasts one of the largest networks of higher education systems in the entire globe. However, India's GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) in higher education is only 26.3%, which is much lower than other BRICS nations like Brazil (50%) and China (51%), as well as significantly lower than European and North American countries, where the GER would be above 80%. For India to attain sustainable economic growth, which should not be fueled by natural resources but rather by knowledge resources, the country must experience a considerable increase in the field of global higher education. The Indian government wants to encourage FDIs (Foreign Direct Investment) and open up the ECB (External Commercial Borrowing) route to strengthen capital investment for the education sector because reports indicate that India will need an additional 1,500 new higher education institutions by 2030 to accommodate a significant influx of students. Due to the fact that more than 7 Lakh Indian students are already studying overseas, the ministry is also working to improve India's reputation as a hub of education. The goal of this program is to dramatically reduce the amount of human capital that migrates outside in search of better educational and employment opportunities. This will be accomplished by allowing international colleges to operate in the country.

More multidisciplinary and holistic education:

According to the NEP 2020, a holistic and multidisciplinary education would seek to develop all human potential, including moral, intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, and emotional. In addition to developing well-rounded individuals with critical 21st century skills in the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields, such an education will also foster an ethic of social engagement, soft skills like communication and debate, as well as a rigorous specialization in one or more fields. By 2030, the NEP 2020 plans to have one sizable, multidisciplinary higher education institution (HEI) in each district or close by.

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The flexible and innovative curricula of all HEIs shall include credit-based courses and projects in the areas of community participation and service, environmental education, and value-based education in order to achieve such a holistic and multidisciplinary education. Climate change, pollution, waste management, sanitation, biological diversity conservation, management of biological resources and biodiversity, forest and wildlife conservation, and sustainable living will be covered in environmental education. Humanistic, ethical, constitutional, and universal human values such as truth (satya), righteous behaviour (dharma), peace (shanti), love (prem), nonviolence (ahimsa), scientific temper, citizenship values, and life skills will all be developed through value-based education; lessons on seva/service and participation in community service programmes will be seen as essential components of a holistic education.

As the world becomes more interconnected, Global Citizenship Education (GCED), a response to current global challenges, will be offered to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to become informed about and active supporters of more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable societies. In addition, as part of a holistic education, students at all HEIs will have the chance to complete research internships with faculty and researchers at their own or other HEIs/research institutions. This will allow students to actively engage with the practical side of their learning and, as a result, improve their employability.

The scheme and duration of degree program:

Under the National Education Policy 2020 scheme, any undergraduate degree at any institution will take three or four years to complete. Throughout this time, one may withdraw from the degree. Any educational institution will be required to award the student a diploma after two years of study, a degree after three years of study, and a certificate after one year of study in any professional or vocational course of their choosing. A digital bank of credit for academic results will be established with assistance from the Indian government. As a result, the institutions will be able to add the credit to the student's degree at the end. This will be useful for those who might need to abandon the course in the middle. Instead of starting over from scratch,

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they might pick up where they left off in the course at a later time. Even though NEP 2020 states that higher education institutions would have the freedom to launch PG program, it might be challenging to create program that last one year for students who have completed a four-year UG degree and two years for those who have done a three-year UG degree.

IV.CONCLUSION

The policy makes a wide range of modifications and generally reads as a fairly progressive text with a clear understanding of the existing socio-economic landscape and the possibility of future unpredictability. An entirely new set of skills are needed to keep up with the growing dematerialization and digitalization of economies, which is essentially what education for a new generation of students must do. With the pandemic hastening the trend towards digitization and disruptive automation, it appears to be an even more important prerequisite now. In its whole, the NEP 2020 tackles the need to train experts in a range of disciplines, from agriculture to artificial intelligence. India must be equipped for the future. Also, the NEP 2020 lays the door for many young, ambitious students to acquire the necessary skill set.

Although the new education policy has a commendable goal, its ability to bring about a meaningful structural transformation will depend on how well it can be integrated with other government policy initiatives like Digital India, Skill India, and the New Industrial Strategy, to mention a few. Hence, policy linkages can ensure that educational policy takes into account and learns from Skill India's experience in more actively collaborating with the corporate sector to create a successful vocational education curriculum. In order to respond to the transmutations and disruptions that are swiftly occurring, there is also a need for more evidence-based decision-making. NEP has comfortingly included provisions for real-time evaluation systems and a framework for collaborative monitoring and review. Instead of relying on a new education policy for a change in curriculum every ten years, this will enable the educational system to continuously reform itself. This accomplishment alone will be impressive. Higher education is at a turning point with the NEP 2020. What will make it genuinely ground-breaking is effective and timely deployment.

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