

National Education Policy 2020: Focus on Multidisciplinary and Research

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Abstract:

After thirty-four years' gap since 1986, new National Education Policy 2020 came into force with profound and comprehensive ideas to transform India's worn-out educational system. This policy comes with a lot of aspirations for India's development and enrichment in various fields. The policy focuses on to instill intellectual, moral, spiritual cultural, social and physical facets among the students. However, the main focus of the policy is on the implementation of multidisciplinary approaches and research inclinations in education system of India for the holistic development of the students.

Every policy tries to be perfect and aims to bring out best outcomes but the problem does not lie with the draft of the policy, the problem occurs due to its wrong and half-hearted implementation. Therefore, the NEP 2020 report contains a last chapter, entitled as *Making it Happen*, advising on how to implement the policy successfully. This chapter expresses the need of strengthening Central Advisory Board of Education and financing impeccably. The policy states that the previous policies on education concentrated mainly on the issues of access and equity. The NEP 1986 which was later modified in 1992 is appropriately incorporated in the present NEP 2020 with an inclusion of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009. This report also tries to incorporate all the indispensable fundamental values envisaged by the

constitution of India. This paper intends to throw light on the new educational policy's focus on the need of multidisciplinary approaches and establishment of qualitative research culture for the holistic development and enrichment of Indian students and consequently for the progress of India in every areas that define nation's distinction.

Key Words: Multidisciplinary, Research, NEP 2020

Introduction:

National Education Policy 2020, a comprehensive document to meet educational needs, is consented by the Government of India to be implemented from 29th July 2020. It contains 65 pages of its English version, throwing light on the four chapters or parts entitled as- I. School Education, II. Higher Education, III. Other Key Areas of Focus and IV. Making it Happen. It begins with introduction expressing the importance of education in human lives and building any nation. Education plays a vital role in achieving human potential and making the society just and equitable. This policy states, the aim must be for India to have an education system by 2040 that is second to none, with equitable access to the highest quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background.” This paper intends to throw light on the new educational policy's prominent aim of reintroducing multidisciplinary and sound research culture, which was supposed to be prevalent in ancient India.

On the ground of western education policy and India's past academic tradition, NEP 2020 wishes to revamp education system for the holistic development of students by introducing them various disciplines. The NEP report gives reference of ancient Indian universities like Takshashila and Nalanda recognized for the inclusion of multidiscipline in their syllabuses. The ancient Indian

literary work like Banabhatta's kadambari introduces 64 kalas/arts dealing with various subjects or fields such as carpentry, cloth making, medicine, engineering and debate etc. This type of inclusion of various subjects must be reintroduced in the modern Indian curriculum to meet the opportunities in the 21st century. The implementation of multidiscipline at high school level in other places has shown positive learning outcomes. Therefore, it will be used in higher education system also. In Higher Education Humanities and Arts will be linked with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). This venture can produce remarkable students having innovative, critical thinking, problem solving capacities, communication skills, social and moral awareness.

The multidisciplinary approach can prove to be beneficial for holistic development. the country needs students with intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional and moral attributes. Therefore, multidisciplinary teaching becomes indispensable. The NEP 2020 report has become verbose because of its frequent statements about the importance of multidiscipline. The report contains the word 'multidisciplinary' for 63 times. If we want India to face the odds of 21st century successfully and bring the nation on par with other developed nations, we need to have all-round students prepared with our new education system. The holistic development of the students is possible with this newly introduced education policy. The NEP 2020 expects students not to wear blinkers like horses and plod the linear single path without looking sideways. The new policy will provide adequate knowledge of all the disciplines to the students and teach them various skills. Even engineering institutes like IITs will incorporate the disciplines like Arts and Humanities. The Arts and Humanities are expected to include the learning of science and

vocational subjects.

The NEP 2020 emphasizes on the removal of the rigid boundaries among the faculties and streams and implementation of flexibility in the selection of subjects in accordance with the interest of the students. In order to remove this rigidity the syllabus-makers will have to modify the age-old syllabuses and objectives of teaching the syllabuses. The flexibility in the curriculum will enable the students to abandon any course and join new course to suit to their potentialities at given point of time. The report also expects that the departments of Language and Literature, Music, Dance, Theatre, Education, Maths, Stats, Sciences, Economics, Sports, Sociology to be strengthened. These departments will be established wherever they are necessary. There will be a facility of ODL mode of teaching-learning for those students who are incapable of attending in-class lectures.

Curriculum:

NEP 2020 throws light on the curriculum in detail. If we want holistic development of the students on intellectual and moral grounds, the curriculum should exploit various strategies and methods. The policy says that the curriculum will be Credit-based and it will include projects to make teaching-learning more student-centric. The project will develop the critical thinking of the students and engage them in community work. Such projects will sensitize the students about gender, society and environment. With the help of this curriculum students will be given environmental and value education. In Environmental education, they will be asked to study sanitation, climate change, pollution and biodiversity. They will be taught about the conservation of forest and wildlife, waste management and sustainable development. Value education will

teach the students humanistic, ethical and constitutional values. The students will be made aware of the universal human values of truth, righteous conduct, peace, love, and non-violence. The Value education will instill among the students the scientific temper and interest for social services.

Employability:

NEP introduces new term Global Citizenship Education (GCED) to make the students aware about the global issues. The higher education will not give the students only theoretical knowledge but it will provide opportunities of internship to them. The students will get chance to work with the local industries to get hand-on experiences, the researchers will get internship with faculty. Such internships will raise employability. The curriculum will augment the employability skills of the learners. Thus, NEP 2020 addresses the issue of employability and provide ways to overcome this issue.

Flexibility in the Structure of Degree Programs:

There is flexibility in the structure and duration of degree programs. The undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4 years. During this degree programme students will get multiple exit options. At the time of their exit they will get certificates if they complete one year with the course. There will be 1 year certificate course, diploma of 2 years and degree will be of 3 years duration. There will be 4 years multidisciplinary bachelor's degree. There will also be facility of perusing 4 years graduate degree in Research the rules of which will be specified by HEI. In Master's degree the 2nd year will be devoted entirely for the research purpose. The students having 4 years degree in Research will have 1 year Master's programme. Ph.D will require Master's degree or 4 years' degree in Research. Another concept that

NEP2020 introduces is of ABC (*Academic Bank of Credits*). The concept implies that the academic credits obtained by the students during their course will be digitally stored and they will be awarded degree on the basis of the credits they earned throughout the programme.

Promotion of Research:

It has been observed that India lags behind as far researches in innovative fields are concerned. Therefore, NEP 2020 contains elaborative statements about the promotion and encouragement for research in India. To provide high-class education, MERU (Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities) will be established on the grounds of IITs, IIMs etc. This will enhance the qualities and standards of researches. HEI's role is to set up industry-academic linkages in order to strengthen and promote research culture throughout India. The pandemic made the people to think about the necessity of researches in infectious diseases, virology, epidemiology, vaccinology etc. The outbreak of Covid19 made us think about the necessity of adequate diagnostic labs and skilled health workers. The NEP 2020 has come up with a new idea about the foundation to promote research culture and encourage the researchers. NEP voices the need of research in various fields. It has been stated that India has to depend upon the surveys and researches in various fields done by the foreigners. It has been stated in NEP 2020 that the research investment in India at the current time is only 0.69% of the GDP whereas in USA it is 2.8%, 4.3% in Israel and 4.2 in South Korea. So it is exigent to recognize the research aptitudes of the students and encourage them to try their hands in researches in multidisciplinary areas such as science, art, languages and culture etc. NEP states that research is essential for the upliftment of

civilization, sustenance of economy and contributing to the field of knowledge.

Research proves to be beneficial not only for one country but also for the entire world. Research is essential to face societal challenges successfully, to obliterate the issues regarding sanitation, economy, environment, healthcare and education etc. Research accomplishments establish country's cerebral identity. The nation can flaunt and take pride in their achievements in the field of research. NEP argues that the best country creates conducive culture for research and the process of best learning takes place where research culture is prevalent and duly recognized. It has been noticed that the best researches abundantly carried out in the multidisciplinary university settings. NEP 2020 points out India's past tradition of doing research in the areas of science, mathematics, art and literature, medicines and agriculture etc.

This ancient Indian proclivity towards research must be introduced to the modern students. The policy endeavours to transform the quality and quantity of research in India. The quality and quantity on research will be attained with the implementation of new curriculum right from the high school level to higher education the curriculum that will enhance the critical thinking of the learners. The discovery-based style of learning and scientific approaches will be introduced through the modified curriculum.

Multidisciplinary nature of HEI will develop research mindset of the students. This new education policy advises to deploy counselors in order to identify the interests and talents of the students and encourage them in the areas where their potential lies. The primary goal of NRF is to create a research culture in universities. To accomplish this purpose, NRF will provide incentives and fund to

help develop research in multi-areas of knowledge. It is going to recognize the successful and distinctive researches with accolades. Such researches will be implemented and applied in governmental agencies, industries and organizations. The institutions like DST, DAE, DBT, ICAR, ICMR, ICHR and UGC currently fund to motivate and promote quality research. NRF will establish linkages with these institutions in order to augment and accelerate research in multidisciplines. There will be a rotational governing body to run the NRF effectively, constituted by the best researchers and innovators across fields.

Primary Functions of NRF:

1. Fund and peer review grant proposals
2. Seed, grow and facilitate research
3. Act as a mediator between researchers and governments and industries
4. Give recognition to outstanding researches.

Conclusion:

The NEP 2020 seems to be based on the manual of NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council). Whatever is expected by the NAAC that the colleges and universities are supposed to do is incorporated in the New Education Policy. In an attempt to become a bit more comprehensive, the report has become verbose. This report focuses more on the multidisciplinary approach and establishment of proper qualitative research culture. Gautam J. N. and Rajesh K. Pandey use the reference of Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) by quoting Dr. Radhakrishnan's views on the education that education needs to be transformed to relate it with life, needs and aspirations of the people thereby accomplishing the national goals. In order to meet with all these goals and objectives,

every educational policy has to become comprehensive

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