

# India's National Education Policy 2020: An Innovative Reform

Hemkant Vijay Dhade

*Assistant Professor, Kalwan Education Society's Arts, Commerce and Science College, Kalwan, Dist. Nashik*

**Abstract:** Education is the process of giving and getting knowledge and information. It is also a technique of giving and acquiring human values and skills. It helps to develop students' personality and their hidden skills. It is essential for changing students' behaviour and creating an ideal society. It is a powerful media for economic development, scientific progress, national integration, and cultural preservation. India has been growing into a developed country. In this techno-savvy world, the employers need skilled workers. Today's education does not fulfill this need. So, it is a badly need to give a quality skill-based education to our youngsters and to prepare them for future India. By adapting to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Government of India has decided to make changes in the present Indian education system; to provide the quality education that inculcates interest, human values and skills, and to reshape India into an ideal society. Taking this importance of education into consideration, the Cabinet approved a new National Education Policy 2020 on July 29, 2020. This study is a focus on the New Education Policy 2020 to understand the innovative changes made for reshaping India into a world knowledge superpower.

**Keywords:** Education, Human Values, Skills, Three Language Formula, Technology

Wikipedia defines education as the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs, and habits. It is the means of educating, training and making learning easier. It is both the act of giving information to others and the act of getting information from someone else. It helps us to acquire various judgment related skills required for better life. It is the key in learning how to distinguish right from wrong. In short, it helps us to change our behaviour. It is the system of getting knowledge, moral values and skills (both hard and soft skills). It is crucial for developing students' personality and their hidden skills. In research from United Nations, 'Education

helps reduce inequalities and reach gender equality and is crucial to fostering tolerance and more peaceful societies. It is essential for creating impartial, cultural and fair society. Fair society is created through the quality education and India needs quality education for economic development, scientific progress, national integration, and cultural preservation. It is today's need to provide high quality education for all round development of our country. It is investigated that poor education leads to poor development of a country. According to UNICEF:

*Poor quality education is leading to poor learning outcomes in India, ultimately pushing children out of the education system and leaving them vulnerable to child labour, abuse and violence. Many classrooms continue to be characterized by teacher-centred rote learning, corporal punishment and discrimination. ("Quality Education")*

The quality education provides favourable circumstances to young people and these opportunities decide the future of our country.

India along with the world is going through fast changes in the field of knowledge and information. Besides she (India) has been becoming a developed country as well as among the three largest economies in the world. Today machines may take over numerous unskilled jobs around the world. Therefore we need for skilled workers. So there is a growing demand for us to bridge the gap between the present status of learning outcomes and what is required through initiating significant changes that give a high quality education to our young people for building good character, empowering them to be moral, rational, merciful, and caring, while simultaneously preparing them for profitable, satisfying work (NEP 3).

The first educational policy of 1968 was based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission of 1964. In this policy, we adopted 10 + 2 + 3 education system and the trilingual formula. In this language formula, the first language was the mother tongue; the second language was the national language: Hindi and the third language was English. In 1986, the second education policy was proposed by the Rajiv Gandhi government based on the recommendations made by the same Commission i.e. the Kothari Commission. This policy mainly focuses on the eliminating inequality and equalizing educational opportunities, especially for Indian women, Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC) communities. Besides, some changes were suggested by the P. V. Narasimha Rao government in the policy in 1992. In 2015, the Union Human Resource Development Minister, Smriti Irani would like to introduce the new education policy based on the quality of education. She presented this policy in October 2016 with a view to approving new educational reforms. But this policy could not be approved.

Actually after 34 years and the first educational reform of the 21st century was made in 2020. It replaces the National Education Policy of 1986. On July 29, 2020, the Cabinet approved a new National Education Policy aimed at bringing about many changes in the existing Indian education system. The main purpose of the NEP 2020 is to provide more holistic and multidisciplinary education, and to transform India into a vibrant intellectual society and a world knowledge superpower by adapting to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Aithal P. and Aithal S. say, 'the NEP 2020 has proposals of a liberal education to support multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary education and research in under-graduation and post-graduation levels' (22).

There are some radical changes made in the new education policy. In the old education policy, the nature of school education in India was 10 + 2 whereas it is 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 in the New Education Policy 2020. It indicates that the first stage is of the first five years. It is the Foundation of learning. It includes three years of *Anganwadi/Pre-school/Balvatika*, i.e. the pre-primary and two years of class I to II. The pre-primary school age group is 3-6; primary (Class 1 and 2) is 6-8. The second phase is the next three years - Class III to V. It is the Preparatory Stage. It is the pre-secondary education. It covers ages 8-11. The third

stage is the next three years - the sixth to the eighth (Middle-schooling Stage) and the age group of this middle schooling is 11-14. The fourth phase is the remaining four years - the ninth to twelfth. It is named the Secondary Schooling (ages 14-18). The board expects children to have general literacy and mathematical literacy. It has also been said that in general, education should be done in the mother tongue till the age of eight and then move towards multilingualism. The importance of board exams will be reduced and this exam will be in semester pattern in the NEP. Examinations will be conducted twice a year according to the semester pattern. Education from ninth to twelfth is divided into eight semesters. This policy expresses:

*In all stages, experiential learning will be adopted, including hands-on learning, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy within each subject, and with explorations of relations among different subjects. To close the gap in achievement of learning outcomes, classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education. The assessment tools (including assessment "as", "of", and "for" learning) will also be aligned with the learning outcomes, capabilities, and dispositions as specified for each subject of a given class. (NEP 12)*

In the National Education Policy-2020, it has been decided to emphasize on the 'Three-Language Formula' to promote multilingualism and national integration. The first language will be mother tongue or regional language. The research from Shankaran, it is found that the second language in Hindi speaking states will be other modern Indian language or English and in non-Hindi speaking states it will be Hindi or English. The third language in Hindi speaking states will be English or a modern Indian language and in a non-Hindi speaking state, it would be English or a modern Indian language. According to NEP, 'In particular, students who wish to change one or more of the three languages they are studying may do so in Grade VI or VII, as long as they are able to demonstrate basic proficiency in three languages (including one language of India at the literature level)

by the end of secondary school' (NEP 14). There is an emphasis on adopting mother tongue / local or regional language as the medium of study in education up to the fifth standard. It has also been suggested in this policy to give priority to mother tongue for the eighth standard and onwards education. The choice of Sanskrit and other ancient Indian languages will be available to the students in school and higher education but there will be no compulsion on any student to choose the language. Besides, a student can learn the foreign languages such as French, German, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese etc. in secondary school.

This policy indicates that college degree will be 3 and 4 years. The certificate will be awarded in the first year of graduation. In the second year, a diploma will be awarded and a student will get a degree in the third year. There will be a four-year degree course for students who want to pursue higher education for research, and a three-year degree course for students who want to pursue a job after graduation. There is no longer M. Phil. degree. There will be a four year degree, plus a one year master degree course for the students who want to do research. After that they can do Ph.D. directly. Meanwhile students can do other courses. It is also added if a student drops out of the course while pursuing a 4-year degree course, he will not be declared a dropout but will be given a certificate that he has studied up to the first year and can take further education in future. It suggests that 'our Indian higher education system is moving from teacher centric to student centric, information centric to knowledge centric, marks centric to skills centric, examination centric to experimental centric, learning centric to research centric, and choice centric to competency centric' (Aithal and Aithal 36).

It is mentioned that there will be a separate mechanism for the promotion of research. An autonomous body, the National Research Foundation, will be established for this purpose. It is started to provide funds for outstanding research. It is further mentioned that research work will be divided into the branches like science, technology, social sciences, arts, anthropology. There will be focused on collaborative research in such COVID 19 pandemic situation. There will be separate Research Universities which will run research related courses and postgraduate courses.

NEP 2020 lays emphasis on making the evaluation process regular, constructive and competency. It is

intended for enhancing the learning instincts of the students and developing aptitude and high level of skills (analysis, critical thinking and conceptual clarity and such others) of the students. In short, NEP 2020 aims to change the traditional culture of assessment. It proposes a shift from summative assessment to regular and constructive assessment that is more competency-based. Board examinations for 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standards will continue but will be restructured for the purpose of overall development of students. A new National Assessment Center will be established as a quality assurance body. It is named as PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development).

It is also expressed in NEP, 2020 that a student will no longer have to choose any one wing. Now he/she can study science wing along with arts wing, arts wing along with science wing. There will be no separation of vocational and academic streams so that students get a chance to develop both the abilities. It shows that there will be main focus on multidisciplinary education. So there is an emphasis on multidisciplinary universities and institutions.

New National Education Policy expresses that students will be provided value and skill based inclusive education, their scientific temper will be developed and skill training will be provided to them. There will be a provision to establish National Education Technology (NETF) to use technology for imparting education and to develop online courses. Through this Education Policy, now the students of India will also be able to compete at the global level.

It is emphasized in the NEP that there is a need to build a competent team of teachers for imparting education to the students. Teachers are being prepared from basic education to higher education. They are being made to practice along with the need for multi-disciplinary approach and knowledge. Apart from this, it will also be ensured that the teacher is aware of the Indian values, language, knowledge ethos, traditions, tribal traditions etc. along with the teaching processes. Those institutions which will provide teacher education will also ensure the availability of experts in the subjects related to teaching as well as in the particular subject. Besides a four-year integrated degree course will be started by canceling the old structure of independent B.Ed. This course can be taken directly after 12th standard. Those who have not done Integrated B. Ed. can get admission for one year

B. Ed. in the same college which has Integrated B Ed after graduation.

All through the latest decade, India has been changing herself into a new techno-savvy society and becoming a world leader in the field of ICT. In this present covid-19 pandemic situation, almost all schools and colleges have been locked up. This critical situation has interrupted teaching and learning process across the world. Teachers and students have been forced to use technology in teaching learning process and reconsider traditional classroom system. We have witnessed our traditional education system has been replacing with e- learning. So it is important of the present moment to announce the new education policy which will focus on the future generation and build a new independent India. There is a crucial need to accept the usage of innovative technology in the field of education. In such way, the NEP compels to use of technology in teaching and learning. The NEP indicates:

*'India is a global leader in information and communication technology and in other cutting-edge domains, such as space. The Digital India Campaign is helping to transform the entire nation into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. While education will play a critical role in this transformation, technology itself will play an important role in the improvement of educational processes and outcomes; thus, the relationship between technology and education at all levels is bi-directional' (NEP 56).*

This New Education Policy is an innovative and unique policy. It explains the most important role of technology in making learning and teaching easier.

In conclude, the National Education Policy, 2020 is very new and different in every sense. It is a step towards preparing the next generation for a self-reliant India, ready for innovation. It aims to produce great changes in nearest future and bring a new learning style to encourage actual learning. It centers on different perspectives, including the need for early childhood care, inclusive education and revamping of the current curriculum, a natural thread that goes through the Policy is the interplay between education and technology.

It mainly focuses on the future quality educational that will be based on the five pillars: easy access to

education, accountability of each component, affordable education, educational equality and quality of education. It is for making education available to all by changing the prevailing education system. It is said that the best quality manpower in any country is created in the classrooms. Therefore, the role of education is the most important in shaping the future of the country. According to Swami Vivekananda, education is the expression of perfection which is already in men. It should help a person to stand on his own feet, teach him self-confidence and self-respect. It is not only collection of information, but something more meaningful. It should be man-making, life giving and character-building (Wikipedia contributors). Therefore, this new policy should be fulfilled the dreams of Swami Vivekananda.

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