



National Education Policy 2020-Challenges and Implementation in Higher Education

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Abstract

Education helps in acquiring knowledge, skill, values, moral, beliefs, personal development. In order to overcome the inefficiency of previous education policies of the country and aligned with the aspirational goal of 21st century education including sustainable development goals Government of India has adopted a new education policy 2020 It is an attempt to reform, revamp and restructure the education system and deal with the implementation and administration related problems. In this regard several changes have been introduced at different levels of education for instance; early childhood care and education ,10+2 format has been replaced by 5+3+3+4 format, concept of multidisciplinary, credit transfers, continuous and comprehensive i.e. 360 degree assessment. NEP 2020 focuses on quality, flexibility, critical and analytical thinking, creativity and equality It is an attempt to meet the rapid growing and changing world education enhances the potential and efficiency of people and prepare them for challenges and future prospects. So, it will help India in turning its huge, young and energetic population in its resource. Needless to say that new NEP is highly progressive but ambitious as to achieve the targeted level of investment, and its implementation within the timeframe dealing with existing condition of education system, which is suffering from financial, administrative and implementation chaos, is quite challenging.

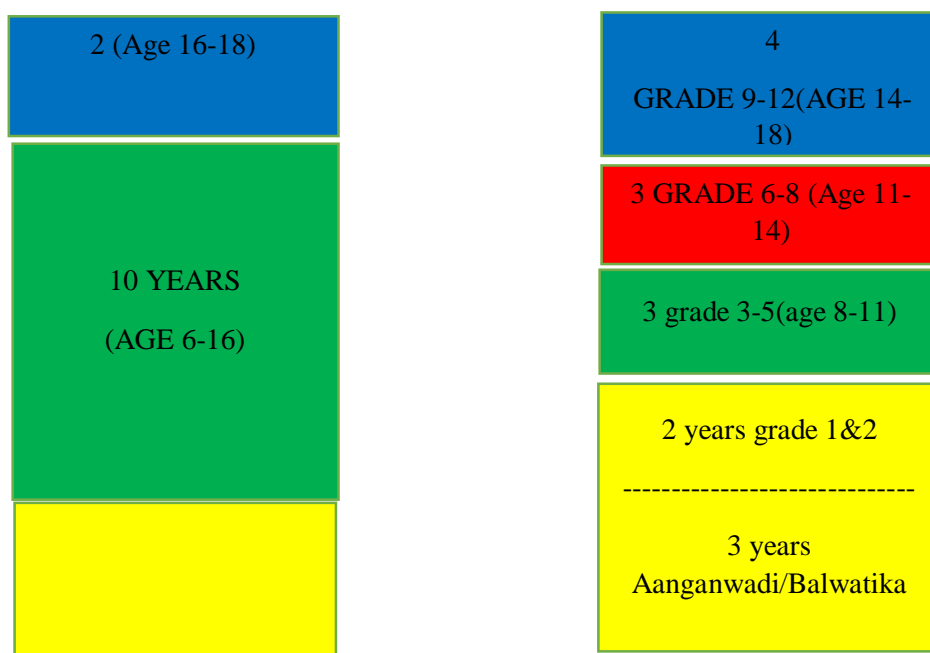
Keywords: NEP, Higher education, skill development, implementation, challenges.

Strength of any country lies in its population and the strength of the population lies in their knowledge and skill as these things determines how qualitative is the population. It is the skill and knowledge who turns people in resources and make them agents of growth and development. A quantitative population is mostly a crowd and a burden on the economy which obstruct and retards the growth of a nation So, in order to make a population more efficient and productive educating and skilling them is required. Education is a tool, a Strength in people's hands as it facilitates the acquisition of knowledge, Skills, values, morals, belief and self-development. India, in terms of population is on second position in the world and it is on the way to leave behind China very soon. It has also the young population.

As we know being a developing nation with such huge population, it has to struggle with the different socio-economic issues. One of them is unemployment. Situation of unemployment has worsened in past few years in the country. Backwardness, poverty, illiteracy and several other issues arise of this problem itself. India is blessed with the immense and variety of natural resources. It lacks only in the qualitative human resource. People are lacking professional skills, technical skills and training due to which instead of contributing in growth and development of their nation they are dependent and thus burden on the government. We have studied that prior to independence India was a self-reliant country, people were skilled and self-employed. But the present picture is quite different. Indian education system is unable to produce the desired results and it is suffering from several flaws like poor quality, exam centric or rote learning lack of infrastructure and faculties, lack of funds, poor regulation and implementation, therefore, government, in order to overcome its insufficiencies and have desired result, adopted a new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This paper is an attempt to analyse the different reforms adopted in higher education and challenges in implementation.

Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think, according to Albert Einstein. Education is the most precious gift which a person gets in his life and it stays with him forever. It influences and determines every aspect and every step of his life. Education has broad based impact that has made it the part of sustainable development goals for 2030. Seeking its importance, with the aim of universalization of quality education, Government of India has restructured its education policy after 34 years. Till 2019, India had its two national education policies. In 1968 and 1986, under the leadership of the late PM Indira Gandhi and late PM Rajiv Gandhi respectively. The first **NEP 1968** stressed on *the free and compulsory education for all children up to age 14*. The aim of this was to assess to education to all whereas the aim of **policy of 1986** was to focus on *quality, affordability equity and accountability*. In between there were several reforms and steps taken as per the requirement in education system. **NEP 2020** focuses on flexibility, multidisciplinary creativity, critical thinking, life skills with its human and constitutional values, analysis and conceptual clarity. The new NEP 2020, recommended by the committee formed under the former ISRO head K. Kasturirangan. It is a total reform in education, teaching and assessment system at almost all the level of education and learning from the pre schooling to higher education. One remarkable step is that now HRD Ministry will be known as Education Ministry. Under the policy, 10 + 2 format of schooling has been dissolved and is replaced by 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 form.

First three years of schooling will be known as foundation course which is popularly known as **Aanganbadi** in government institution, It is the *early childhood care and education centre* in which children of age three to five will learn along with the nutritional care. Class three to five will be a **preparatory course** which will include subjects like science, maths and arts. In Class 6 to 8 Subject related studies, computer coding, professional, vocational and skill development courses will be introduced. From Class 9 to 12 there will be in-depth study of the subjects and freedom to choose the subjects. Changes has been introduced in 10th and 12th board exams. Exams will be conducted twice in subjective and objective format. Till class five teaching learning process will take place in regional, local language or mother tongue.



(New format of schooling under NEP 2020)

There would be three language formula under which two languages must be Indian. Students will be able to opt for foreign language in Class 9. Assessment will not be limited to the yearly exam rather, there is a concept of 360 degree report card assessment in which overall performance throughout the year will be assessed including behavioural analysis and extracurricular activities. Teachers will not be the sole evaluator rather there will be teacher's evaluation, self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

Changes in higher education: Higher education will experience several changes under NEP 2020, it has almost been revamped with the introduction of multiple entry and exit and multidisciplinary system. Credit transfer by the proposed *Academic Bank of Credit* will make students able to switch to another course or subject in between the sessions and they will be able to opt for another course taking a break for a fixed period in the middle of the course and under system students will also be able to leave the course at any year without any academic loss. There will be a five-year combined graduate master course, for one year completion, they will be awarded a *certificate*. On completion of two years, *diploma certificate* will be awarded and at the end of third year a *degree* will be awarded to them. Students who wish to continue into research activity will get a *Bachelor of Research degree* at the end of the fourth year. After four year there will be one year Course to have a Master degree. M.Phil has been abolished. Students interested in research work can move forward after their masters.

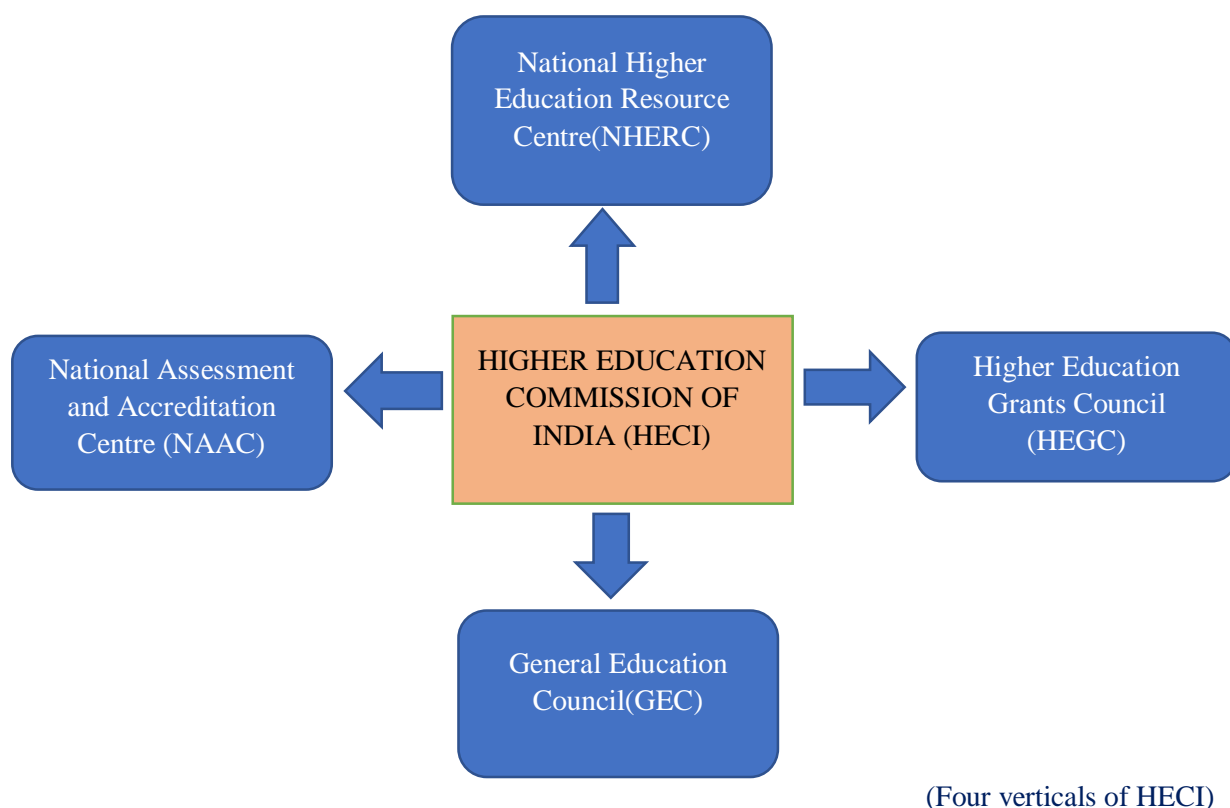
A holistic approach will be adopted by all IITs and other technical colleges except medical and law colleges Standalone higher educational institutions and professional institutions will be evolved as multidisciplinary colleges and in technical institutes 800 humanities subjects will be taught. It is aimed to have one multidisciplinary college in every district by 2030. This policy aims at broad based and flexible learning. It has been decided to provide more autonomy to colleges for this provision has been made that Colleges will attain their autonomy, dissolving their affiliation with universities after 15 years. There will be a concept of CET exam by NTA

for admission in the educational institutions. NEP proposes inviting colleges of top global ranking to establish their branches campus in India. This will facilitate Indian students to learn in these eminent colleges in their own country.

NEP stress on digitalization of education, development of virtual labs, availability of digital infrastructure and digital content wherever there is a lack of traditional medium of education. NEP 2020 recommends the use of regional language or mother tongue in higher education institution as a medium of instruction and learning. It also envisages to develop the syllabus, digital content and development of digital library in local, regional language. NEP emphasized on use of technology in teaching learning methods. It aims on making teachers, students digitally and technically efficient.

To boost the research culture and research efficiency, National Research Foundation (NRF) will be established and will be regulated by Board of Governors formed by government. There will be an Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation for Conservation, Development and revival of Indian languages like Prakrit, Pali and Persian etc.

The reforms on administration level includes setting of a HECI a single regulating body with four vertical governing body as shown in graph for accreditation, funding, and academic settings. HECI will be a single faceless regulating authority that will regulate and administer the educational institutions. This system is claimed to be more transparent and autonomous. It will replace the existing authorities like UGC, AICTE, and NCTE.



For accreditation of school education NEP 2020 recommends setting up of (SSSA) State School Standard Authority and for higher education policy advocates to have NAC as one of the regulating bodies under HECI for effective quality and accredit assurance.

In order to enhance and retain the quality of the education and improve teaching learning methods. Steps will be taken to make the studies more student's or learners centric. Capacity building among teachers and their personal development and updating them with the required knowledge and skill as per the changing needs is essential for their better performance. Forth the Government is committed to improve the quality of teacher education, in this regard recently introduced four-year integrated B.A degree would be the minimum qualification required to become a teacher by 2030. Pre-service and In-service training will be improved. There will be Operation of National mentoring program for teacher's orientation and Evolution of a *National Professional Standard for Teachers* by NCTE by end of 2022 seeking advice from NCERT, SCERT teachers and experts of relevant field.

Adoption of both multidisciplinary and multiple entry and exit system will surely discourage dropouts. There would not be watertight separation of streams. students will be able to choose the subject from available options. They will be able to switch to other courses as well and leave and join the course as per their convenience without any academic loss. NEP encourages Teaching and learning in regional or local languages and mother tongue as it will encourage critical thinking and creativity among students and a sense of pride for own language and culture. Encouragement to India's local or regional language will result in conservation and protection of these languages. NEP 2020 not just aimed at enhancing Problem solving and cognitive skills but there should be social and emotional skills which will make them more empathetic so that they will be more of a good citizen, employee or administrator.

Introduction of ECCE i.e. Early Childhood Care and Education and NIPUN Bharat is a good initiative for strengthening the foundation of school education. Revamping board exams and process of assessment is for better and holistic development of student. NEP focuses on all the major aspect of education system as it stresses on capacity building of student teachers and institutions as well. Integration of vocational courses in mainstream learning from class 6, which expected to be Over 50% by 2025 will result in skill development and encouragement of self-employment.it will also reduce dependency on government and private jobs. There has always been a lack of skilled worker despite educated people due to lack of vocational courses and appropriate training. Due to this vocational education people will get skilled and there will also be a sense of respect towards labour. Skill is not just a medium to earn livelihood rather it's a sense of pride and self-respect as it increases your efficiency and value. It makes you capable of something which can never be lost Condition of vocational courses compared to Academic courses is pitiable. According to Skill India report in 2018, 47% of total youth population as employable. As per the India skill report 2022, 48.7% of total youth population is employable, therefore it is a good initiative to start vocational course as this will help to remove the skill gap and increase employability among the learners. NEP commits to raise expenditure on education to 6% of GDP, which is approx. 3%. Currently. This will surely be appreciable step if implemented.

Along with immense possibilities, NEP has arrived with several challenges. First and foremost is the investment or expense on education.

- NEP has recommended to spend 6% of GDP on education. It seems highly ambitious with the fact that the very similar target was there in 1986 policy, but as we know, in 2017-18 only 2.7% of GDP was spent on education and 0.7% of GDP on research so it seems unrealistic to suddenly achieve such growth in investment.
- Gross enrolment ratio in higher education has been targeted to increase to 50% from current Gross enrolment ratio 26.3. As per Economic Survey 2017-18 number of researchers are 15 per lakh. To reach the target in higher education it has been decided to add 3.5 crore seats. It is again a tough target to achieve.
- Implementation is the major concern. Education is a subject under concurrent list, although NEP is highly progressive, several states are unable to bear the expenses and developed the basic infrastructure required for implementing NEP. Without considering the problem of the states, implementation will not be even and easier in states.
- States with a higher number of migrated children at primary level may face problem on the matters of local language as a medium of teaching and learning.
- At present scenario, school and colleges in India mostly run by government are in vulnerable condition. They lack even the basic infrastructural facilities, faculties, teachers, staff, etc. Condition is more worrisome at the lower level, that is primary and middle schools. There are lower paid contractual temporary incompetent teachers in most of the states. To implement the provision of NEP2020 and provide the quality education. It is quite difficult and without working on this level, which is the very foundation of education, changes in the upper level will not be fruitful.
- No doubt policy like RTE (with numerous achievements like increased access to education, increased Gross Enrolment Ratio and retention of children) and programme like Mid-day meal (MDM) and no detention policy etc were introduced with good intent and aim to achieve the committed SDGs but previous record clearly shows that although we succeeded in increasing the quantity, but quality somehow left behind. Focus shifted to MDM, GER, SSA, retention, etc due to which quality suffered a lot and this further impacted the higher education as well so, it is a challenge to maintain the quality while chasing for quantity.
- Autonomy to college indicates towards the financial autonomy of college. Colleges will no longer get the funds and grants from government, which will surely impact the access to education of socially and economically backward students. Education will be expensive and this may result in inequality of opportunities. This might be a challenge for government to assure equal opportunities and prevent merit from suffering. Backwards, marginalized and suppressed have education as the only tool through which they can come out of their vicious circle of poverty and unemployment, so there must be a keen eye that they should not be deprived of this opportunity due to financial problems. Autonomous Status to colleges can be challenge for equity and equality aspect of this new NEP 2020.

Conclusion

The new education policy is highly progressive and ambitious. This transformation covers almost all aspects and the level of education. If implemented successfully, it will resolve many problems

and eradicate prevailing irregularities in higher education. It assures the access, focus on research & development and quality education. This policy seems quite ambitious considering the present scenario of education system. For strengthening the position of the higher education, reforms on the foundation level need to be implemented in effective ways. The changes proposed in the syllabus, curriculum and teaching and learning methods requires development of basic infrastructure, which is highly lacking in the current position, so government needs to develop the required basic infrastructure for effective implementation of national education policy, 2020. Reinforcement of political will is required as state government may hesitate in implementing national education policy 2020 due to their financial issues. Extra effort and attention will be required to the states, which are lagging behind in terms of education, in order to achieve the desired result.

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