



Research Paper

## Impact Of National Education Policy 2020 On Higher Education In India

Dr. Vijayagiri Bikshapathi

Associate Professor

Department of Commerce & Business Administration

SRR Government Arts & Science College (Autonomous) Karimnagar, Telangana, India

**ABSTRACT:** National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is brought by replacing the 34-year-old National Policy on Education-1986. The aims and objectives of NEP-2020 are to transform the entire education system that meets the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century India. The NEP 2020 wanted to remove the effects of Macaulay's (1835) education system brought by British rulers in India. It proposes pragmatic reforms in NEP 2020. The study in this article offers answers to some of the concerns higher educational Institutions (HEI) are facing and going to face in the emerging NEP 2020 and offers recommendations to implement NEP 2020 in true spirit. It will help the HEIs and educators to frame policies for betterment.

**KEYWORDS:** Education, HEIs, NEP, Reforms, Universities, Colleges

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The Union Cabinet of India approved the new National Education Policy (NEP) on 29 July 2020. It replaced the 34-year-old existing National Policy on Education framed in 1986. NEP-2020 aims at the goal of transforming its system such that it meets the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century India. The Union Ministers, particularly Prakash Javedkar and Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, have played a key role in policy development. It has also changed the name of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to the Ministry of Education.

### II. HISTORY OF EDUCATION:

India became Independent in 1947, but it is still in bondage to the infamous 'Minute on Indian Education' by Macaulay (1835) known as 'Macaulay's axe' on 'the beautiful tree of (Indian) education', having an adverse influence on the indigenous knowledge system viz., the Gurukula system, 'Nai Talim' and the 'Nalanda' and 'Takshashila' model of learning. Macaulay in his 'Minute on Indian Education' mandated that English should be the medium of instruction at all levels; imposed European literature in educational institutions in India; ensured all regional and indigenous institutions should be converted into modern English educational institutions for the elite. Such institutions had limited access to the masses, and for those who had access among the masses, it forced them to imitate the elite pursuing English education.

### III. PRESENT STATUS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission, which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps coordinate between the centre and the states. University Grants Commission established 12 autonomous institutions for accreditation for higher learning. Indian higher education system expanded at a fast pace by adding nearly 20,000 colleges and more than eight million students in a decade from 2000-01 to 2010-11. As of 2011, India has 42 central universities, 275 state universities, 130 deemed universities, 90 private universities, 5 institutions established and functioning under the State Act, and 33 Institutes of National Importance. Other institutions include 33,000 colleges as Government Degree Colleges and Private Degree Colleges, including 1800 exclusive women's colleges, functioning under these universities and institutions as reported by the UGC in 2012. The emphasis on the tertiary level of education lies in science and technology, e.g. IITs, IIMs, and AIIMS. Indian educational institutions by 2004 consisted of a large number of technology institutes. Distance learning and open education are also a part of the

Indian higher education system. The Distance Education Council looks them after. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) having approximately 35 lacs students is the largest university in the world across the globe going by the number of students.

#### **IV. CHALLENGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA**

In the recent globalisation scenario, as the motives and materials are driven by market opportunities and entrepreneurial zeal, many institutions are taking advantage of the loop-holes in the regulatory environment to offer 'degrees' not approved by Indian authorities, and many institutions are functioning as pseudo-non-profit organisations, developing a sophisticated financial model to extract the 'profits'. Regulatory authorities like UGC and AICTE have no control over the private universities that run courses with no affiliation or recognition. Students from rural and semi-urban backgrounds often fall prey to these institutes and colleges. One of the fundamental weaknesses of the system is lacking transparency.

#### **V. REFORMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION –NEP 2020:**

New Education Policy 2020 is aimed at paving the road in the education system right from the school education to higher education. This paper is restricting and focusing on the higher education. The Board exams for Grades 10 and 12 will be continued but redesigned to encourage holistic development. This is by giving the students to choose between many of the subjects in which they take Board exams, depending on their individualized interests. Only to mention here, major and noteworthy reforms in the school education are that the Board exams will also be made 'easier', in the sense that they will test primarily core capacities/competencies rather than months of coaching and memorization.

##### **5.1. Key Reforms in Higher Education as per NEP 2020:**

A gigantic list of decisions have been made. The major one among that there would be a single control board for all higher educational institutions across the country. NEP-2020 focuses on maintaining the curriculum with a comparatively reduced syllabus while retaining the core essentials and stressing critical thinking and practical learning.

The National Testing Agency (NTA) will offer a common aptitude test, as well as specialized common subject exams in the sciences, humanities, languages, arts, and vocational subjects, at least twice every year for university entrance exams. Under the four-year programme proposed in the new NEP, students can exit after one year with a certificate, after two years with a diploma or after three years with a bachelor's degree. Students are given a chance to take a break rather than drop out. Mid-term dropouts are given the option to complete the degree after a break. M.Phil. degree is discontinued. There will be no rigid separation between arts and science streams in the bachelor's programmes.

Seth stated that NEP 2020 is a transformative and ambitious policy created by the government. He highlighted that the NEP 2020 paves the way towards less regulation and more autonomy for institutions through an effective self-regulatory framework. Over-regulation is practised in Indian educational institutes, unlike the western institutes that practise self-regulation. Gradual autonomy and accreditations are granted to all higher education institutions through NEP.

Another feature of NEP is foreign Universities are allowed to set up campuses in India. It will promote research and bring a flexible approach. The foreign universities would bring in programme and institution mobility. The idea of the internationalisation of higher education is based on the mobility of students, faculty members, programmes, and institutions across countries. The NEP-2020 aims at setting up multidisciplinary institutions offering programmes with high-quality teaching, research, and community engagement. This will benefit students with increased flexibility and choice of subjects across various streams of arts, humanities, sciences, sports, and other vocational subjects. It will not be purely academic and theoretical knowledge anymore.

The new policy focuses on online and e-learning mode. Education has always been more of brick and mortar approach rather than a technology-based. Online education will play an extensive role to bridge the gap between the students and the institutions. In education, what is complementary today will become core tomorrow. The virtual world will become more real than the real world with digital and video-centric approaches.

New Education Policy is not just about the degree. It is all about focusing on life skills and vocational courses. It will be a student-centric approach where affordability and accessibility will be there, and the students can leverage the most out of education. Increased access, equity, and inclusion through open schooling, online education and open distance learning are promoted for the benefit of learners.

## **VI. OBSERVATIONS AND STEPS TO MEET THE NEP-2020**

The effective implementation of NEP 2020 in true spirit is a hard task for the nation. The balancing act has to be done between the people of power and to be empowered. The study collected opinions from various eminent personalities and educational institutions' managements. The study suggests the following:

### **6.1. Higher Education should take up by the Government, discourage Private partnership-**

The governance of higher education will be effective if public funds are used impartially. The governments have the capacity or patience to wait to reap the financial benefits from the educational activities. The private managements have the primary goal of earning profits and the imparting education becomes secondary.

### **6.2. The Funding for higher education should be liberal and you cannot expect the Ranks/marks or quantity of students rolled out in a given period-**

The funding for higher education should not be norm-based. The PPP model, according to me is not useful in the higher education system. The government should consider the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) system if necessary. BOT helps in the creation of national assets at the end of the period of BOT. Education is not always private, but a national asset.

### **6.3. Affiliation system by State Universities be dispensed with immediately.**

The affiliation system by the university education, according to me is serving the quantity angle only. You will get massive outcomes, but in some cases, most of the time performance given is substandard education, producing just pass-outs rather than the educated or skilled students. Moreover, the affiliating university is losing its hand on the academics at their university colleges because of continuous and series of inspections, compliances, and administrative work pressures. Thus, I propose that government should create a National Affiliation Centre (a National Body) in this regard for these issues and further, there should not be any parallel university affiliations.

### **6.4. Detach the Higher education system from the Politics and Politicians.**

Academicians without any political involvement should carry out the governance of the higher educational institutions. The Vice-Chancellors can be appointed from an independent system like the judiciary. Unfortunately, the governance and policy decisions are lying pending for years together waiting for regular Vice-Chancellors. Without political intrusion, the quality of the universities certainly improves.

### **6.5. State Universities and Central Universities can have equal opportunities in drawing funds from both central and state governments.**

It is viewed that education as education without profit. It is not the business of choice. The governments, Union or State, while creating the university or the institution of importance, should provide necessary funds/ financial support besides recruiting talented Staff. Unfortunately, there are universities not having a single Academic Professor and many colleges affiliated with it. The situation is very pathetic that there were no recruitments in the universities in the last two decades in certain states.

## **VII. CONCLUSION:**

Presently in India, the higher education institutions are two types i.e. the universities and the colleges. The colleges are further classified as, the colleges affiliating to university and the colleges that are autonomous. The universities are independent bodies but the colleges are affiliated with universities and still depending upon them for academic administration. Universities, therefore, have the prime responsibility of developing the higher education system and maintaining quality within the administrative control. Whereas NEP 2020 mandates the higher educational institutions to become autonomous by 2030. It is a deathblow to the funds starving government established colleges where the targeted students are from the below poverty line. This may lead to a mad rush to kill the government-aided HEIs and will become a pure business activity. Thus managing the resources of the higher education system is a very serious concern, and it should be given utmost importance. The stakeholders need to review the governance issues for all aspects of the higher education system prevalent in India. Models of institutional governance and administration concerning autonomy and accountability should be proper. The issues to be resolved are the role and responsibility of statutory bodies interacting and dealing with the university system, and the role of State and Central Governments.

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