NEP 2020: Features And Role In School And Higher Education

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Abstract

After almost five years after the first committee to draft a new National Education Policy, NEP, was constituted, on Wednesday, the Union Cabinet approved the NEP 2020.

The education policy 2020 aims to restructure both school and higher education in India. The NEP envisions a 'Light and Tight' single regulatory higher education system and a school education system that focuses more on experiential learning than rote learning. For higher education, it proposes an undergraduate programme that will last three or four years and offer multiple exits with certificate, diploma or degree qualifications. The national Education policy 2020 envisions an Indian centered Education system that contributes directly to transforming our Nation sustainably into an aquitable vibrant knowledge in education. The New Education Policy 2020 (NEP) announced by the Ministry of Human Resource Development is to bring in changes in the current, dying 34-year-old policy in schools and higher education systems in the country. The new policy is more practical in approach and is based on the ground reality of the country's education scenario that puts more emphasis on the creativity and innovation as well as personality development of the students rather than expecting them to score high and mock up the content without getting

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Introduction

Earlier today, the government also the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) Ministry of Education, as proposed in the NEP, to bring focus back on education and learning. The K. Kasturirangan Committee submitted its draft of the NEP in May, 2019.

For higher education, it proposes an undergraduate programme that will last three or four years and offer multiple exits with certificate, diploma or degree qualifications. It proposes to have a single regulator that will prescribe uniform norms for every type of institution irrespective of the nature of its management and ensure compliance through a system of voluntary disclosures. There is also a proposal to fix the fees.For school education, the emphasis is on early childhood education. The policy proposes univeralisating secondary school education and early childhood care education (for ages three to six) by 2030. The NEP also announces for formulation of a new and comprehensive National Curricular Framework for School Education, NCFSE 2020-21, which will be revisited and updated once every 5-10 years.

The policy emphasizes on the use of technology at both school and higher education levels.Union minister for HRD, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said: "Our New Education Policy will turn India into a knowledge society. The policy proposes to increase public spending on education to 6% of the country's Gross Domestic Product, or GDP -- a promise made since the 1960's but never kept."

NEP 2020: Higher education

Under the NEP, all education institutions will be held to similar standards of audit and disclosure. And the system will be governed by a single regulator, the Higher Education Commission of India.It states that all fees set by private HEIs will be transparently and fully disclosed, and there shall be no arbitrary increases. Amit Khare, secretary, higher education, also added that there will be "fee fixation" across institutions as well.Higher education institutions will be reorganised into three types of institutions -- research, teaching and autonomous degree granting ones. New multidisciplinary institutions will be established.

In fact, the NEP's main vision for higher education is one of multidisciplinary and flexible learning and it is to be achieved by 2040. Khare suggested it will be possible to study physics with fashion design because of a system of studying a combination of "major" and "minor" subjects. Rejoining courses will be eased by the recording and transfer of "credits" will be eased by the Digilocker and "academic credit bank".

The policy includes the establishment of a National Research Foundation.

As per the new Policy, the undergraduate degree will be of either three or four-year duration, with multiple exit options. It states that students will be awarded a certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field including vocational and professional areas, or a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme. The four-year multidisciplinary bachelor's programme, however, shall be the preferred option.

Internationalisation of Education

The draft NEP states that high performing Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries. Similarly the top 100 universities in the world will be facilitated to operate in India by opening their campuses.

Government will also create a legislative framework under which foreign universities will be given special dispensation regarding regulatory, governance, and content norms on par with other autonomous institutions of India.

NEP 2020: School Education

The biggest challenges the NEP 2020 sets for school education are universalising early childhood care and education for ages three to six and universalizing secondary schooling or education in Classes 9 to 12. The NEP 2020, aims to achieve 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) from pre-school to secondary levels by 2030.

The curriculum will be restructured into a 5+3+3+4 model covering ages three to 18. However, school education secretary, Anita Karwal, added that a reduction in course content is also in the offing. A National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE) for children up to the age of eight, will be developed.

Curriculum frameworks will be drawn up for both these groups. The policy suggests the creation of a National Assessment Centre -- Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development, or PARAKH -- "setting norms, standards, and guidelines for student assessment and evaluation for all recognized school boards". This will be the first instance of central influence on the business of state education boards.

National missions for foundational literacy and numeracy will be established to achieve both by 2025.

For improving professional standards of teachers a common guiding set of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by 2022. Teacher education will gradually be moved into multidisciplinary colleges and universities by 2030, with minimum degree qualification for teaching being the four-year integrated BEd programme..

NEP 2020: Schools Quality

The National Education Policy of India 2020 (NEP 2020), approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29 July 2020, outlines the vision of the new education system of India. It replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986. The vision of the policy is to build an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India by providing high-quality education to all, thereby making India a global knowledge superpower.

Highlights of National Education Policy (NEP 2020) for school education

The Indian Government made a landmark change in the year 2020. In this year characterized by uncertainty, one of the most positive breakthroughs to the otherwise dreadful start of the decade was introducing the NEP 2020, the not only anticipated but rather necessary change to reform the Indian education paradigm.

Replacing the 34-year-old National Policy on Education, which was framed in 1986, the new NEP certainly compliments the country's vision of the 'New India'; to build a culture of innovation, and a highly skilled workforce.

Let us take a look at the key changes that the new NEP proposes to bring in ; to change not only the style and pattern of education but also the mindset that today restricts us from adopting an inclusive, participatory and holistic approach to learning.

Schooling to begin from the age of 3 years

The revised policy expands the age group of mandatory schooling from 6-14 years to 3-18 years.

The existing 10+2 structure of school curriculum will be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years, respectively.

This new system will include 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ Pre-primary.

For each of these stages, curricular and pedagogical approaches have been prescribed. For foundational stage play and theme-based approach shall be followed. For classes three to five that are currently a part of primary- will now be called the preparation stage and children will be learning largely through play and activities

For middle stage, with classes 6 to 8 , the curriculum and pedagogical approach will be experiential and interdisciplinary and for the secondary stage (classes 9 to 12) the subject offerings will now have a lot of flexibility and the approach followed shall be multi-disciplinary.

To ensure that LEAD powered schools are in sync with the NEP , we at LEAD have introduced unique approaches for different subjects to ensure students learn subjects as a skill rather than gain just theoretical knowledge. The classroom interactions, activities and routines at LEAD also make learning holistic and experiential.

Digital Education Drive

NEP lays emphasis on integration of digital technology being envisaged at all levels of learning through a dedicated unit for creating digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building. The main idea is to improve classroom processes through technological advancement so that no child is left behind.

Needless to add, we have seen a surge in the utility of online learning during the recent pandemic. The policy thus aims at achieving the objective of uninterrupted education to all sections of society.

At LEAD, apart from ensuring the classrooms are transformed using digital technologies and enabling audio-video learning, a significant focus is also laid in providing educators with the tools and technology to help their students every step of the way. Also for parents, apart from providing a wholesome and vibrant classroom experience at home through the LEAD parent app , the child will be a part of LEAD Summer Camp, Student Led Conferences (SLCs), LEAD MasterClasses and much more, all designed to ensure that not coming to school doesn't hinder holistic learning and development of the child in any way.

Integration of Essential Subjects, Skills, and Capacities

The revised policy aims at making students ready for today's rapidly changing world. Certain subjects, skills, and capacities should be learned by all students to become good, successful, innovative, adaptable, and productive.

It is recognized that mathematical thinking will be very important for India 's future and India's leadership role in the numerous upcoming fields and professions that will involve artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science, etc. Thus, mathematics and computational thinking is given increased emphasis throughout the school years, starting with the foundational stage, through a variety of innovative methods.

It also lays emphasis on competitions that may be held in schools for learning various topics and subjects through fun and indigenous games.

At LEAD, in our school curriculum, we have introduced subjects such as the Coding & Computational Skills (CCS) program. Rather than simply consuming content using technology, our students become creators by using technology to build apps, games, and websites and thus become future-ready. The LEAD Championship also enables building a competitive spirit among the students and gives them a wider exposure.

Knowledge of India and Multilingualism

The NEP, 2020 aims to steer the Indian schooling system towards a culturally enriching and nationally integrating one by making use of ancient and modern Indian literature, film, and music. If nothing, it wants Indian students to understand the fact that being educated in Indian languages will not reduce their capabilities or chances of employment. It would only widen their awareness, cultural sensitivity, and tolerance, for India is a melting pot of cultures.

Among the many fundamental principles listed in the NEP, it advocates for the promotion of multilingualism and highlights the power of language in teaching and learning. In consonance with this principle, the policy has laid out multiple recommendations and it has emphasized that the proposals are only broad directions and none of it would be mandatory owing to the cultural diversity across and within states and the linguistic diversity within each classroom.

Firstly, the NEP proposes that wherever possible the medium of instruction in public and private schools until at least Grade 5 and preferably till Grade 8 and beyond shall be the home language/mother-tongue/local language/regional language. The suggestion has been made based on various studies that have established that children tend to get a better grip on concepts when they are taught in their home language/mother tongue.

It also proposes that teachers should be encouraged to use a bi-lingual approach with those students whose home language may be different from the medium of instruction.

At LEAD the curriculum is contextualized because of which students get a better understanding of knowledge of India. Also at LEAD teachers are encouraged to teach using a bilingual pattern. For example while teaching English, the teacher explains the meaning in the local language and then repeats it in English to reinforce the learning since the students will have to reproduce that in their exams in English itself.

A new age road map for teacher empowerment

The National Education Policy recognises and identifies teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process. It acknowledges the reality of the teaching profession in India and proposes to completely overhaul it to create a robust merit-based structure of tenure, salary, and promotion that incentivizes and recognizes outstanding teachers.

International pedagogical approaches will be studied by NCERT, identified, and recommended for assimilation in pedagogical practices in India. Teachers along with principals will have to undergo Continuous Professional Development modules every year in order to enhance teaching quality, leadership, and school management along with implementing competency-based learning.

At LEAD, believing in the country's vision that the young minds of tomorrow will only be strengthened when we empower our educators – we do extensive Teacher Development Workshops. These sessions up skill and reinvigorate teachers to overcome challenges. Every teacher in a LEAD-powered school is also a part of the LEAD Academy network – designed for the teachers to keep upgrading themselves with modern day technology and teaching methods.

Many children dislike going to school. They repeatedly complain saying that they get bored at school. Early childhood classrooms are filled with routine moments.

THE NEW 5+3+3+4 ACADEMIC STRUCTURE:

10+2 refers to two years of schooling post grade 10. According to India's new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, 10+2 schooling system in India is set to be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 system. Here is the age-wise breakdown of the different levels of the school education system based on the new education policy 2020

5 years of Foundational Stage: For ages: 3 to 8

For classes: Anganwadi/pre-school, class 1, class 2

This stage will focus on teaching in play-based or activity-based methods and on the development of language skills.

3 years of Preparatory Stage:

For ages: 8 to 11

For classes: 3 to 5

The focus in the preparatory stage will remain on language development and numeracy skills. Here, the method of teaching and learning would be play and activity-based, and also include classroom interactions and the element of discovery.

3 years of Middle Stage:

For ages: 11 to 14

For classes: 6 to 8

As per NEP 2020, this stage of school education will focus on critical learning objectives, which is a big shift from the rote learning methods used in our education system for years. This stage will work on experiential learning in the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences and humanities.

4 years of Secondary Stage:

For ages: 14 to 18

For classes: 9 to 12

This stage will cover two phases: Classes 9 and 10, and classes 11 and 12. Concepts will be covered in greater depth in this stage.

Transforming Exams:

As per the National Education Policy 2020, Exams will also be made 'easier'. They will test primarily core competencies to eliminate the "Coaching Culture".

Students will be allowed to take Board Exams twice in any given year, to eliminate the high stakes of board exams.

In accordance with the New Education Policy 2020, board exams in certain subjects could be redesigned. Board exam questions to have two types:

Objective type with multiple-choice questions

Descriptive type

The National Testing Agency (NTA) will offer a high-quality common aptitude test, as well as specialized common subject exams in various subjects, at least a twice every year as prep for entrance examinations.

THE 3 LANGUAGE POLICY:

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) has emphasised on the use of mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction till Class 5 while recommending its continuance till Class 8 and beyond. It recommends that all students will learn three languages in their school under the formula. The three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of course the students themselves. However, at least two of the three languages should be native to India, one of which is most likely to

be the local/ regional language. The rule will apply to both private and public schools. High-quality textbooks, including science, will be made available in home languages. In cases where home-language textbook material is not available, the language between the teachers and students will still remain the home language wherever possible.

The National Education Policy 2020 encourages teachers to use a bilingual approach, including bilingual teaching-learning materials, with those students whose home language may be differentfrom the medium of instruction.

Conceptual understanding:

We have introduced unique approaches for different subjects to ensure students learn subjects as a skill rather than gain just theoretical knowledge. The classroom interactions, activities and routines at LEAD also make learning holistic and experiential.

Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) & Foundational Literacy & Numeracy (FLN):

LEAD imparts strong language learning from early pre-primary years with our English Language and General Awareness (ELGA) and Sampoorna Hindi programs. While in class, we embrace activity-based learning to ensure students can easily grasp abstract subjects like Maths. Extensive practice and situation-based questions ensure the concepts get stronger.

Integration of Essential Subjects, Skills, and Capacities

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Teacher Empowerment:

The young minds of tomorrow will only be strengthened when we empower our educators. We do this through our extensive Teacher Development Workshops (TDWs). These sessions upskill and reinvigorate teachers to overcome challenges

Regular formative assessment:

At LEAD, assessments target learning outcomes & competency. With remedial and doubt solving sessions, our teachers understand students' struggles and help them overcome their challenges.

All the states and union territories will set up an independent, state-wide, State School Standards Authority (SSSA) which will establish a minimal set of standards. "This information shall be self-disclosed and will be made available on a public website maintained by the SSSA," says the policy.

This will be instituted for all stages of education including pre-school education - private, public, and philanthropic - to ensure compliance with essential quality standards.

Public and private schools will be assessed and accredited on the same criteria, benchmarks, and processes.

Conclusion

The New Education Policy 2020 suggests creating an autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment and planning for school and higher education.

However, education technology will be employed both in school and higher education and for both teaching-learning and education administration.

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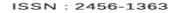
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Government will also create a legislative framework under which foreign universities will be given special dispensation regarding regulatory, governance, and content norms on par with other autonomous institutions of India.

Conclusion:
The shortcomings in the education system vary from generation to generation. Some of the common complaints in the system are that degrees do not fetch you jobs, India's study pattern is more of rote learning and less of practical knowledge, most of the study is irrelevant in real lives, the system is exam- centric and so on.

The new policy definitely makes clear the government's vision to usher in some landmark changes to the education sector and aims at making India a global knowledge superpower. LEAD curriculum has been more progressive than NEP since inception. K-5 has been benchmarked to international standards on outcomes across all subjects, with international pedagogical practices used for deep conceptual understanding. Class 6-10 outcomes are benchmarked to the Boards, however international pedagogical approaches and best practices have been used to develop deep conceptual understanding & building thinking, communication and collaboration skills. Innovative programs like ELGA and CCS build strong foundational skills. With NEP guidelines coming in, adoption of LEAD curriculum will get a boost since all schools need to move away from traditional textbooks to NEP aligned curriculums like LEAD.

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