NEP 2020: The Impact and Possibilities Its Presents for Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Introduced in July 2020, the New Educational Policy aims to promote equity and inclusion through education. Built around the guiding principles of traditional Indian knowledge system with modern-day aspirations, NEP 2020 is set to transform the educational landscape in the country, making it more holistic and driven towards innovation. The policy presents a modern, future-oriented objective aimed at revolutionizing India's higher education system, focusing astutely on essential elements, NEP 2020 is definitely ambitious in its outlook as it aims to double the GER in higher education from 26.3 per cent (2018) to 50 per cent by 2035 while improving quality of Higher Education Institutions (HEI). It has already had a significant impact on colleges and universities across the country as they implement new strategies to raise the bar for higher education. From a flexible curriculum to interdisciplinary approach to learning, emphasis on research to promoting innovation; there are several ways in which it can drive India to be a global education hub. NEP 2020 aspires to integrate vocational training into higher education. By 2025, more than 50% learners will have some kind of vocational education. It also promotes greater institutional autonomy while making a push for multidisciplinary education. By the year 2030, all standalone professional educational institutions are set to become multidisciplinary. One of the biggest impacts will be seen on the curriculum, which becomes more flexible. With several entry and exit points, students have new dynamic opportunities to learn at their preferred pace. Research gets additional focus with the National Research Foundation coming into play. It will be at the centre of coordination of research funding to peer-reviewed projects. The present research paper will study the Impact and Possibilities Higher Education after introducing NEP 2020 in India.

Keywords: institutional autonomy, Innovation, Flexible, Institutions, Foundation, Enrolment.

Introduction

NEP 2020 is an educational reform initiative by the Government of India. The major goal of the NEP 2020 is to equip students with not just knowledge but also skills that will make them more employable. NEP 2020 also focuses on increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education. In 2019-20, the GER in higher education in India was at 27%. The target as per NEP 2020 is to increase the GER by 50% by 2035. This target is expected to be achieved with a more holistic, inclusive and flexible system of learning that NEP aims to introduce in the educational landscape of India. Major emphasis of NEP is on multidisciplinary approach. Students of management can now study IT subjects as their minor specialization or students of media can study Yoga or Cyber Security as their minor subjects. The idea behind this multidisciplinary approach is to nurture creativity and encourage critical thinking beyond traditional boundaries. Students from different fields can now collaborate with each other for projects or assignments. For example, students of sociology, public health, economics can collaborate and work on a project related to climate change. This blend of information would lead to comprehensive innovative ideas and solutions.

NEP 2020 also introduces flexible learning pathways. This allows students multiple entries and exits during the tenure of their graduation or post-graduation program. For example, a UG student can complete 2 years of the program and then choose to take a break for a great job opportunity. As per the new provisions introduced by NEP, the student can

return anytime later to complete the remaining 2 years of his/her under-graduation program.

There's also the introduction of Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) which acts as a digital repository of credits. Students can store their credits earned during their academic journey under this system. If they decide to make an exit from the program after completing a specific period, the credits will be retained by them. And if and when they decide to return to studies after a break, they can start off from where they left with the retained credits. ABC also facilitates transfer of these credits between different institutions, which means students can now switch from one institution or university to another one without losing their earned credits. ABC also aligns with the International Credit System. This helps students to carry forward their earned credits to foreign universities abroad and allows students to tailor their degree programs to fit their own requirements. This flexibility will help students discover their true potential.

Research Methodology:

This article has been brought out on the basis of evaluation of recent literature published on the internet and other relevant sources and is kind of descriptive study. it is an attempt being made to understand and evaluate the impact of NEP-2020 on present higher education.

Results and Discussion:

Introduced in July 2020, the New Educational Policy aims to promote equity and inclusion through education. Built around the guiding principles of traditional Indian knowledge system with modern-day aspirations, NEP 2020 is set to transform the educational landscape in the country, making it more holistic and driven towards innovation. "The policy presents a modern, future-oriented objective aimed at revolutionizing India's higher education system, focusing astutely on essential elements," states an article published in Firstpost.

NEP 2020 is definitely ambitious in its outlook as it aims to double the GER in higher education from 26.3 per cent (2018) to 50 per cent by 2035 while improving quality of Higher Education Institutions (HEI). It has already had a significant impact on colleges and universities across the country as they implement new strategies to raise the bar for higher education. From a flexible curriculum to interdisciplinary approach to learning, emphasis on research to promoting innovation; there are several ways in which it can drive India to be a global education hub:

● NEP 2020 aspires to integrate vocational training into higher education. By 2025, more than 50% learners will have some kind of vocational education.

● It also promotes greater institutional autonomy while making a push for multidisciplinary education. By the year 2030, all standalone professional educational institutions are set to become multidisciplinary.

● One of the biggest impacts will be seen on the curriculum, which becomes more flexible. With several entry and exit points, students have new dynamic opportunities to learn at their preferred pace.

● Research gets additional focus with the National Research Foundation coming into play. It will be at the center of coordination of research funding to peer-reviewed projects.

As NEP 2020 focuses on making higher education more accessible and equitable, it is also geared towards more transparency and accountability. Importantly, it has brought several new opportunities for institutions of higher learning to restructure, consolidate, and take the educational experience for students to the next level.

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● We have also regularly updated our curriculum in keeping with industry trends, with inputs from experts in different fields. With the influence of NEP 2020 now students can benefit from adaptable syllabus and various completion pathways. Repository of academic credits is another unique opportunity for students in the future.

● HEIs will also be required to make skilled based education available to 50% of their students. DBUU has been focused on boosting credentials of students and equipping them with industry-relevant skills through Value Added Programmes and certification courses that give them the competitive edge.

● According to NEP 2020, educational institutions have to encourage diverse educational and research activities. This is another area where DBUU has a strong headstart with our Research and Development Cell, Incubation Cell, 25+ student clubs and committees, which have resulted in over 250 design patents and numerous publications so far.

proposes of NEP

The NEP has asked each state to form an independent and autonomous body, a State School Standards Authority (SSSA), by 2023. These SSSA bodies will be responsible for regulating public and private schools and monitoring that they maintain the minimum common standards.

Furthermore, according to the directives in the NEP, the State Council of Education Research and Training will work towards developing a School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework with the support of multiple stakeholders (including schools, education departments, and nonprofits) in order to implement the policy effectively. The framework they develop will focus on setting parameters of school performance—such as academia, infrastructure, finances, and teaching quality—and identify critical areas for improvement.

All the schools will be assessed on these set standards, and the self-disclosure of all essential information will be published on the SSSA website as well as on the website of each school. At the end of the assessment, all schools will be provided with a report card consisting of comprehensively analysed data and insights.

Why do schools need to be accredited in the first place?

According to a ASER Education Report in 2018, approximate 50 percent of Indian school-going children cannot read and comprehend a simple text by Standard 5 (age 10). Another education report states, in India, 30 percent of girls from economically disadvantaged groups have never been to school due to lack of accessibility and viable infrastructure. Accreditation plays a vital role in defining the infrastructural requirements and availability for schools. In fact, according to the Right to Education Act (RTE), schools must provide children with basic infrastructure, including separate toilets for boys and girls. Building on the RTE, the NEP 2020 mandates schools to disclose accreditation data on public domains—the state departments and authorities would be given a list of requirements they have to meet, and their ability to meet them will be made public; this, in turn, will help improve the accountability of the system. By introducing minimum quality standards for schools to follow, the proposed measures to accredit schools can help monitor and build an ecosystem of transparency and accountability to ensure quality education in even the most remote parts of the country. Moreover, it will aid schools, states, communities, and their respective stakeholders in determining these minimum quality standards for education.

Future pathway and implementation challenges

A successful example of accreditation is the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DISB). The DISB engages school assessors from all over the globe to evaluate their schools. As a result, Dubai's schools have a culture of transparency and accountability, which has helped improve the overall quality of education in the country.

In India the process of accreditation is being operationalised in accordance with the NEP 2020. The formation of SSSA bodies should help guarantee the maintenance of minimum quality standards based on predetermined parameters. Furthermore, the policy emphasis transparency by making all fundamental regulatory information available on a public platform.

Nonetheless, it is important for us to keep a few potential challenges in mind :

1. Resources: While accreditation will shed light on the areas where schools need support, will each state be able to provide its schools the resources (both monetary and otherwise) that they need to improve their infrastructure, curriculum, teacher quality, teacher recruitment, etc.?

Accessibility: While the NEP 2020 asks for all accreditation information to be made publicly available, we need to ensure that this is done in a way that will allow community members (especially parents) to understand and engage with it.

Potential for uptake:

Schools themselves need to be coached to understand the importance of the accreditation process, what data they need to collect and the importance of data transparency, and how they communicate their gaps to their communities.

Today, states are gearing up for the process of accreditation. And while they are faced with real concerns, the expectation is that each state will embrace the process and use it to improve the overall quality of its schools.

Conclusion:

So, how will the NEP 2020 impact higher education in the near future? While NEP 2020 brings many exciting opportunities, challenges remain. Implementing such a comprehensive policy in a vast country like India requires time and effort. Schools, colleges and universities need to adapt quickly. However, the policy offers a promising vision. It encourages creativity, flexibility, inclusive and skill-development oriented education. The NEP 2020 opens doors for students to explore their passions and develop skills for the future. It represents a shift in how we think about education. It's no longer just about degrees; it's about creating lifelong learners.

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