

## A CRITICAL STUDY OF NEP 2020 RELATED PROS AND CONS

**Anterjot Singh Dhillon**

Research Scholar

Dept. of Department of Political Science, Punjabi University, Patiala, India

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### ABSTRACT

Indian Governments have been formulating our National Education Policies from time to time since independence according to the needs and to make suitable changes. NEP 2020 is considered a very important document in this regard which attempts to identify the challenges faced by our educational system. Education has been expanding all over the world and India could not remain unaffected. The socio economic setup of India is quite distinct from other countries and we need an educational policy which is best suited to our own conditions. NEP 2020 has been drafted to meet the need for knowledge and skill and prepare the students for higher education in the area of a skill development. It also attempts to highlight the role of languages and linguistic diversity of India. This policy is primarily based on fundamentals of “Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability” and to make India a strong knowledge hub. It has the prime aim to impart holistic and multi-disciplinary education to the students to cover the subjects such as art, music and sports along with their other syllabus.

**Keywords:** NEP 2020, National Education Policy (NEP 2020), Governance, Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, Accountability.

The educational experts in India have been trying to formulate such an education policy which may resolve various problems faced by the education system and meet the requirements of the students. It may also pave the way for employability of the students who are educated up to undergraduate /graduate and post graduate level. NEP 2020 is considered necessary to bring an important shift in our education system so as to enhance the quality of education, increase accessibility and global competitiveness. It also focuses on three language formula. It is aimed at achieving national educational goals while taking care of regional diversity and maintaining the spirit of cooperative federalism in education. It also tries to encourage use of mother tongue as medium of instructions in primary education along with proficiency in English to meet the requirements of higher education and global job markets. There is quasi-federal system in India and according to 42<sup>nd</sup> Constitutional Amendment of 1976; education has been put in the concurrent list.<sup>1</sup> There by allowing Central and state governments to enact laws on educational matters. The national policy on education was first of all prepared in 1968 during the tenure of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on the recommendations made by the Kothari Commission.

It was replaced by NEP 1986 by Shri Rajiv Gandhi ,the then Prime Minister of India which had attempted to provide education to all sections of society including scheduled castes scheduled tribes and women in India and for promoting primary education and opening various Open Universities in the country. Then, a plan of action was prepared in 1992 to give special focus on early childhood care and education along with universalisation of elementary education.<sup>2</sup> But NEP 2020 have given special focus to critical thinking, discussion and analytical learning to strengthen talent of India and for integration of vocational education, technology based learning, and promoting multilingualism with the flexible and multi-disciplinary curriculum. NEP 2020 is an important policy framework which has been specifically introduced by the central government to bring about comprehensive reforms in the

Indian educational system which is going to change the educational landscape of India by fostering development among students to promote critical thinking and creativity and equip them for global challenges.

There is provision for appointment of National Implementation Committee to supervise the implementation process of the policy by the central and state governments. There is provision for state school Standard Authority or state School Education Council to implement the Policy. Under the policy, there are teachers, school administrators, parents, students, educational institutions, civil society and experts working as stake holders. The policy will be implemented in phased manner. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has given an important opportunity to shift the Indian education from “shoot and selection to human development” to enable every student to make efforts to develop his/ her maximum potential.<sup>3</sup> This policy places importance on mother-tongue based multilingual education in the early knowledge pedagogical year. The idea of multi-lingual as per the NEP 2020 has the potential to bring about the greater social integration as well as to make everyone equal in the Indian classroom. NEP 2020 also offers special status to atamanirbhar Bhashas, which include Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada Malayalam and Odia.

The National Education policy (NEP) 2020 clearly States that “every student in the country will learn at least two foreign languages and one international language of his/her choice which will be offered as an elective language elective from the secondary stage.”<sup>4</sup> Educational structure Under NEP will have study structure of 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 of school education in India and it will be having four stages. There will be foundational stage (grade age 3-8), preparatory stage (grade 3-5), middle stage ( grade 6-8) and secondary stage( grade 9-12), India has the second biggest educational system in the world after China.<sup>5</sup>

### **DRAFTING PROCESS OF NEP 2020**

In the month of January 2015, an advisory group under the then cabinet secretary T. S. R. Subramanian had started the cycle of discussions for new education policy. When the board of trustees report had come in the month of June 2017 there after the draft of NEP was submitted in the year 2019 by a board headed by Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan who was chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). The draft of new education policy was delivered by him to Human Resource Development department in 2019. The HRD ministry had conducted a through counseling process in making the changes related to the draft policy. More than two lakh ideas from 2.5 lakh gram panchayats , 6600 sources,, 6000 urban local bodies (ULBC), 67 areas were received . Dr. k. Kasturirangan committee submitted the report on 31<sup>st</sup> may 2019. It was then, examined by the cabinet and the government and brought into effect thereafter.<sup>6</sup>

Target and timeless for NEP2020

The following are the policy guidelines and the targets as well as the deadline set for implementation.

1. The entire policy will be implemented by 2040.
2. 100 percent gross enrolment ratio from pre-school to secondary level by 2030.
3. Teachers to be prepared for assessment reforms by 2030.
4. Common standards of learning in public and private schools.
5. Mission to focus on foundational numeracy and literacy of all students by grade. .
6. Universalizing of early childhood care and education by 2030.

7. Vocational training for at least 50% learners by 2025.<sup>7</sup>

### **BENEFITS OF NEP 2020**

The aim of NEP 2020 is to revolutionize Indian educational system and introduce multi disciplinary approach for skill development, integration of technology with innovation. The main benefits of NEP 2020 will be as under:-

- In the NEP 2020, there is focus on early childhood care and education for the children between 3 to 6 years of age and to provide them quality education which is integrated with play based learning and cognitive activities of the children. This policy is able to develop foundational literacy and numeracy skills up to grade three by use of new teaching methods, remedial programs and regular assessment.
- It is to provide flexible education on the basis of the interests and aptitudes of the students and reduce the rigid separation of arts and science and to make it a broad based education. This policy provides the students with the ample opportunities to learn various vocational skills and to make them able to set jobs and take up entrepreneurial ventures.
- There is focus on use of technology and computer hardware with the integration of digital tools e-learning platforms and digital content. This policy aims to give importance to teacher training and professional development for improving quality of teaching .
- This policy provides for multidisciplinary institutions of education, give autonomy to universities, make flexible undergraduate programs and give more importance to research and innovation. NEP 2020 is aimed to provide equal opportunities to all students include these belonging to disadvantage groups of people.
- NEP 2020 is aimed to build a global best education system rooted in Indian culture and making India a global knowledge super power.
- This policy is going to solve wide spread problem of student drop out and lack of universal excess to quality education. This policy makes a mention of increasing the public expenditure on education to the level of goal of 6% of GDP which has not been possible till now.<sup>8</sup>
- NEP 2020 aims at thorough restructuring of college education so that the students not completing the degree course maybe able to opt for any job in between.
- The new policy gives importance to attract the best and brightest of the students to the teaching profession. NEP2020 ensures universal reach to all levels of school education from preschool level to secondary level.
- Under the new education policy 10 + 2 structure of school curriculum will be replaced by 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 structure and it has been recognised globally as a crucial stage for the development of mental faculties of child.
- The present B.ED program will be replaced by four year integrated program with the high quality content, pedagogy and particle training. NEP 2020 gives impertinence to mother tongue as a medium of instructions until grade 5 but it can go even beyond 8<sup>th</sup> standard. Sanskrit has to be offered at all levels of a school of higher education in the three language formula.<sup>9</sup>

- Under this policy there is a proposal to set up an academic bank of a credit for digitally storing the academic credits earned by the students. Higher performing Indian universities will be motivated to setup their campus in other countries.
- This policy is aimed at integrating subjects of arts, commerce and science to make holistic understanding of the world. These policies allow the teachers to adopt interactive and new teaching methods for conceptual clarity among students with the help of project waste learning and enquiry based learning.<sup>10</sup>
- NEP 2020 provides feedback to students and teachers to support their learning and identify the learning gaps. This policy aims to reduce the burden of board examinations and the related stress on students. This policy promotes a mixture of written examination, presentations, projects, portfolios, group discussions, practical assessment and performed based assessment.<sup>11</sup>
- NEP 2020 offers multiple entries and exist options to the students and brings a new credit system for them which is seen as more beneficial by the students and teachers because it brings a wide range of subjects and skill advantages to the students.
- India had surpassed China in 2022 to become highest populated country in the world with the population of 143 crore of peoples. NEP 2020 is going to improve GER and also increase government spending on education, promote research in higher education and introduce flexible and skill oriented education in India.<sup>12</sup>

### **DEMERITS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020:-**

NEP 2020 has been approved by the central government without the passing from the parliament, central advisory board on education and ignoring the views of various state governments. It has following demerits as per the version of various experts.

- Absence of socialism and secularism :- In the entire 66 page policy document of, there is no mention of socialism and secularism, The policy talks about fundamental duties but there is no mention of fundamental rights of the people. This policy does not make a mention of SC/ST and other lower classes of people.
- Commercialisation of education: - According to the spirit of NEP 2020, it is going to encourage commercialization, corporatization and globalization of education. It also reduces state regulation of privately managed educational institutions. There is no transparency in handling of funds. Government is not spending 6% of GDP on education and it is regularly increasing the fee in the public institutions of higher education. There is wide spread shortage of permanent teachers in higher education institutions and teaching work is carried on with the help of contract staff or temporary staff.<sup>13</sup>
- Three language formula: - NEP 2020 provides for three language formula which is not acceptable to many state governments. South Indian states do not want to implement Hindi and Sanskrit under any circumstances. The students doing research do not want to study Hindi or Sanskrit.
- Centralisation of power: - According to the basic spirit of NEP 2020 , it aims to concentrate all powers in the hands of central government and also reduce the important of state governments or state councils for Education Research and Training NCERT is authorized to prepare school text books for whole country and General Education Council for education research and training. NCERT is authorized to prepare school text books for whole country and Gernal Education Council has been allowed to prepare course contents for all universities. NTA has

been allowed to conduct entrance exams for medical colleges, IITS, NITS and central universities and state universities. Thus monopoly is with the central agencies including National Research Foundation. This position has been criticized by many state governments and also the students.

- Danger to freedom of the universities: - NEP 2020 is said to be harmful for the autonomy of universities and rights of the students and teachers. HECI and NHERC have been formulated to establish Board of Governors to replace existing Executive Councils and they would be dominated by outsiders from ruling party.<sup>14</sup>
- Risk to the right to free and compulsory education: - There is right of each child to get free and compulsory education from 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. Some state governments are providing free education from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> in the government institutions, but NEP 2020 has no such provision and now full fee will be charged from 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> class in all institutions which is to the disadvantage of the students, particularly those belonging to lower classes.
- New modes of discrimination: - NEP 2020 violates right to Education Act, 2009 because now poor and socially disadvantaged children will have to undergo vocational courses and it compels the students to go through middle standard level and high standard level exams. It will force them to undergo the stress without any logic.<sup>15</sup>
- No reservations for SC/ST/OBC/ minorities students in hostels:- NEP 2020 has no provision to provide for any reservation in the school/college hostels for students belonging to SC/ST/OBC/minority communities, women, transgender and physically handicapped. It only talks about socially and educationally disadvantaged groups.
- Danger to the policy of sonority, merit and reservation: - NEP 2020 makes no mention of reservation based on sonority and merit in departments in teaching and non teaching staff in the schools/colleges and universities. Seniority is being replaced by service credentials. The vice chancellors will act in a more partisan manner. Merit and excellence will be replaced by commitment, leadership and management skills. The period of privation can be extended and regularization can be delayed. There will be scope for bribery and nepotism in appointments.<sup>16</sup>
- Development of fascist culture: - The NEP2020 is considered highly sectarian in its approach to the heritage of the country. It is said that this policy is going to impose the culture of hindutva to the educational institutions and it is interwoven with crisis ridden capitalism and market fundamentalism. It is going to impose communal literature through Sanskrit language on the students.
- Problems of dropouts: - Although NEP 2020 offers multiple exit routes but in reality the students from weaker sections and marginalized castes mostly become dropouts and it will not help them in any manner to get jobs etc.
- Mother Tongue: - Although NEP 2020 gives importance to mother tongue as medium in schools but in reality these schools are at a loss in the new eco system where English is considered very important and mother tongue is seen as inferior.
- Expenditure at 6 % of GDP: - Although new policy has highly aimed to spend 6% of GDP of India on education but it still seems to be a dream because funds are not coming to help the education system to the required extent.

- Vocational education: - The new education policy may lead to institutionalizations of teenage labour and caste based division of labour and it is going to benefit the rich and powerful but poor and other classes are condemned to caste based slavery.<sup>17</sup>
- Not beneficial for women :- This policy is also not for benefits of women because there are still many problems with them like early marriage, safety concerns and lack of separate sanitation facilities in schools which just contribute to lower enrollment and higher dropout rates among girls .
- Under focus on mother tongue: - NEP 2020 gives much importance to mother tongue in primary classes whereas English has to be taught at the later stage. Unlike other nations such as Germany, Russia, Japan, China, France, etc. which have one common mother tongue, India is diverse nation with 22 major languages and large number of dialects.<sup>18</sup>

## CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS RELATED TO LANGUAGE

Article 29 protects the rights of citizens to conserve their language and culture.

Article 347 declares Hindi in Devanagari script as the official language of the union and also allows continued use of English for official purposes for 15 years from 1950, later on extended by legislation.

Article 346 mentions Hindi as the official language for communication between states and with the union.

Article 34 allows the president to recognize any legal or official language of state or part thereof, if a substantial section of the population demands it.

It has been said that three language policy is a step of language imposition and creating politics of regional identity and putting burden on the students and the schools.

It has been expressed by the critics that NEP 2020 tries to open the door for further extensive privatisation by opening schools run by the so called true philanthropic institutions which are mostly the sangh privars or their related organizations. This will go to undermine the public education system and corruption will also enter in the educational institutions.<sup>19</sup>

NEP 2020 is not going to improve education of children of migratory workers and society, economically disadvantaged and disabled children getting education from open schools leading to their discrimination. Many teachers may lose jobs and village students will have to travel longer distances. It is going to ignore Dravidian, Adivasi and others language groups in North East India.

NEP2020 does not offer any solution to the problem of shortage of qualified and trained teachers in the tribal and remote areas. There is condition of qualifying teacher eligibility test which is not possible for all teachers to pass.

## CHALLENGES FOR NEP 2020

There are many road blocks or challenges in the way of properly implementing NEP2020 which are given as under:-

- There are very much complicated financial constraints due to shortage of financial resources or budgetary problems for implementing of the policy.
- There is a challenge of capacity building among teachers, administrations and educational professionals and to make them aware of new pedagogical methods, assessment practices and curriculum reforms.

- NEP 2020 is likely to bring large scale changes which may be difficult to be overcome by the students, teachers and administrations.
- Although Central Government wants to implement this policy but many state government have expressed their stiff resistance to it on different grounds.
- Our educational system lacks proper infrastructure to implement NEP2020 in the true manner, more so, in remote and economically backward areas which have limited resources and infrastructure.
- Implementation of this policy requires robust monitoring and evaluation framework which is lacking with many state agencies.
- There is a need for suitable changes in policies to adjust different languages, cultures and needs for proper implementation of the policy which may pose some challenges.
- This policy fails to make proper alignment with existing educational systems, educational boards and other regulatory bodies which is a different task.
- Addressing the inclusivity and equality in education for proper implementation and benefitting the people from marginalized and economically backward people may pose a problem for NEP 2020.<sup>20</sup>

### **WHAT WAS THE NEED FOR NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020?**

This policy was needed because earlier policy made in 1986 had become very much old and outdated. Since then, there were large scale changes in demography of India and employment scenerio in the country and the world. India also needed to compete with the foreign countries and meet the global challenges. The new educational reforms in the education sector needed critical thinking creativity and problem solving and fundamental skills by the students. This policy emphasis upon foundational literacy. Changes in the education policy were required because the old curriculum based on the 1986 policy had become rigid and old fashioned. The exam now focuses on rote learning of books, which is based on memorization of concepts. There were skill gaps, lack of global combination, decreased learning levels in the old policy of 1986. NEP 2020 has introduced multidisciplinary studies with competency based assessments and it has provision for early childhood care, multilingual instruction system, fundamental literacy, and Universal exees to education, adult education and lifelong learning system.<sup>21</sup>

### **DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL STAGES AS PER NEP2020**

It has following stages:-

- Foundational stage: - This stage is for five years and education in this state is going to be flexible, discovery-based, activity based, play-based and multi-level.
- Preparatory stage: - This stage is for a period of three years and it is activities based, play based and discovery based and the children are gradually linked up with normal classroom learning.
- Middle school stage: - This stage is for three years and it focuses on the abstract concepts of all subjects such as Mathematics, Arts, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Secondary stage: - It has tenure of four years in which there is focus on greater critical thinking, greater depth and greater flexibility.

- Under -graduation stage: - The period of this stage is either three years or four years. The major or minor research projects are done basically in four year undergraduate degree programme.
- Post-graduate stage: - This stage has term of four years for doing degree or one year post graduate degree with the multidisciplinary subjects.
- Research stage: - The minimum period of PhD for a full time and part time student is three of four years. In this stage the students are able to prepare high quality research with any multidisciplinary subject.
- Lifelong learning: - The new policy NEP2020 provides for lifelong learning so that all human beings are not deprived of having some experience, skills and knowledge in society and have a comfortable life.<sup>22</sup>

### CONCLUSION: -

It has been held by the critics that NEP 2020 is a landmark educational reform which is entirely aimed at revolutionising the educational system of India. It has introduced large scale changes in India's Educational policy with a view to enhance quality of education and make the policy more programatic to modernise the education system by making it more holistic, skill oriented and globally competitive. It also aims to bring linguistic diversity and multilingual proficiency. So, it is an attempt to bring transformative shift in the education system of India. The subject of education being on the concurrent list, the dicord on this policy is bound to take place between the central government and some of the State governments and where non NDA governments are in power. This policy attempt to stream line education system but there is a risk of diminishing the state autonomy by reducing their ability to change the education policies to the regional needs. This policy proposes to increase education expenditure to at least 6% of GDP but there is no suitable clarification as to the resource allocation or where from the finance will come. Several non-Hindi speaking States have expressed their restatement against the three language formula of the policy. Therefore, it is advised that the government should adopt flexible and States inclusive approach to achieve national goals for education by giving regard to the regional diversity and maintaining to spirit of cooperative federalism in education in India. NEP2020 is meant to prepare a fleet of students for the labour market and government has strong faith in the capacity of higher Education in meeting the new economic challenges. There will be a crowded graduate labour market ready to pick up the jobs available in the market. There are significant implementation challenges to NEP 2020 and opposition parties are blaming the policy as a tool to implement a conservative religious agenda on the part of the government. There are certainly new global trends and challenges to higher education in India. There is a need for doing collaborative work by all bodies to work with clear planning and synergy, which is not going to be so easy in the cultural, political, economic, geographical and educational environmental of India.

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