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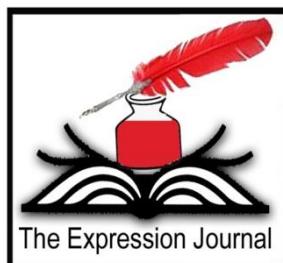
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## THE NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020: PERSPECTIVES, CHALLENGES AND IMPACTS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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### **Abstract**

According to the Article 21-A of the 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act, 2002 of Indian Constitution and Right to Education Act 2009, all the children from the age of six up to fourteen have right to get free and compulsory education. Article 45 ensures the modalities of right of education to all these children, and Indian Government has directed to all the states to ensure free education to all the children from the age of six to eighteen. Only education makes a person different from other animals; and time to time modifications and improvements are also needed in the education system. That's why the need of a futuristic, visionary and innovative education policy was always felt in India. In this context, a well-defined and ultra-modern education policy was announced in 2020 which is purely based on the skill-based learning so that students may stop cramming and get maximum output on the basis of their skill and knowledge. In fact, education can be called a key-driver of economic growth and social progress of any country. Indian Government has announced the New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) which intends to transform India sustainably in an equitable and vibrant knowledge hub by bringing some paradigmatic changes in our education system. It is imperative that this new policy will indubitably cater a new edge to the existing education system and will act as a catalyst to transform the lives of the students. It can also be expected that the impact of National Education Policy will bring India's education system also at par with that of the education system of the developed countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, Canada, Japan, Germany, etc. This education policy will be equally beneficial for the school, college and university level students. The present paper purports to analyse the issues, perspectives, challenges and impact of the New Education Policy 2020 on the students and society.

### **Keywords**

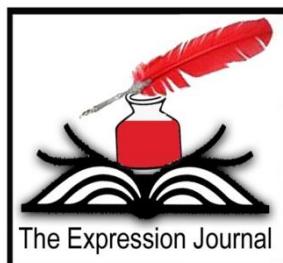
National Education Policy 2020, Equal Education, Hits and Misses, Pandemic, Covid-19, Sustainable Development, Paradigm Shift, Global Impetuous.

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Education is the primary requirement of every human being. Though it is generally stated that bread, clothes and house are three fundamental necessities of human life, yet the fact, that education is also equally important in life, cannot be ignored because we cannot even imagine about a good life without education. The need of value education is always felt in the society. There are multiple facets through which we can better understand the value of quality education. There are many benefits of value education in the society. It helps the students inculcate some essential values such as empathy, compassion, tolerance, sacrifice, etc. Students learn new skills and imbibe moral values and ethics.

A good education policy ensures the quality education keeping in view students' requirements of jobs and adopting them professions according to their interests. It also ensures a holistic approach for the all round development of students. Furthermore, it teaches them the spirit of co-operation, sacrifice and patriotism. If a country adopts a good education policy, then the students can shape their future and help them find the right purpose of their life. Good education teaches students to learn discipline in their life so that they may become successful both in their academic and social life. Human values are more important than anything else in life. Without the study and application of human values and moral obligation in human life, education is useless. A child becomes kind, emphatic and compassionate in good educational environment.

Countries keep revising their existing education policies for the betterment of education system in their countries. In India also, the National Education Policy 2020 was approved on 29 July 2020 by the Union Cabinet of India. This policy was approved after around fifty months of workshops and consultations. Dr. Rupesh G. Sawant and Dr. Umesh B. Sankpal also remark:

National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29th July, 2020, outlines the vision of India's new education system. The policy envisions an India-centred education system that contributes directly to transforming the nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all....The policy unequivocally endorses and envisions a substantial increase in public investment in education by both the Central government and all State Governments. (3457)

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The National Education Policy (NEP-2020) will play a quintessential role for the all round development and a safe future for our students. The students will know what is wrong and right for them. In this policy, the Right of Education has been extended from the age of 14 to 18 year. This policy is giving more emphasis on the infrastructure also apart from learning so that students may be kept ready for every adverse situation in their life.

An emphasis has been laid down on the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) and a three-month-preparatory-course has been planned for them so that students may have access to the digital content through energised textbooks. Further, peer-learning and community tutoring will help them prepare for 100% foundational level up to grade 3. The government is planning to fill all the teachers' vacancies in a time-bound manner so that students may get better opportunities of learning. Through this policy, an effort has been made to achieve 100% Gross Enrollment Trio (GER) for all levels of students by 2030. It has also been planned to have the collaboration with international schools and universities so that students may have exposure of international education by visiting foreign schools and universities.

The new policy encourages students to use local language up to Grade 5 along with English. The students may continue it up to Grade 8 and beyond also if they wish. Students can learn any three languages under this formula out of which two must be Indian languages. The bilingual system can give them better opportunities to learn maximum. In the new education policy, 5+3+3+4 class system will be very beneficial for the students. Before it, the previous policies have emphasised on the issues of equity, quality and access. The National Policy on Education (1986) was unfinished and it was modified in 1992. P. S. Aithal and Shubhrajyotsna Aithal postulate in this context:

In India, the first national education policy was promulgated in the year 1968 and the second improved version in the year 1986. The 1968 national education policy (NEP -I) had called for a National School System, which meant that all students, irrespective of caste, creed, and sex would have access to education. (Aithals 5)

The fact cannot be ignored that higher education plays an important role in reshaping students' life. In 21th century, the quality higher education must aim to develop thoughtful, creative and well-rounded individuals. The higher education is very important in a student's life as it makes people knowledgeable, skilled and humane. It engages students to get greater opportunities and makes a nation cohesive, progressive and innovative. The National Education Policy aims to lay emphasis on the development of cognitive skills and learning outcomes.

Though the students in colleges and universities have to face various challenges in their lives, yet this new policy overhauls and reenergises the existing higher education so that students may overcome all these challenges to deliver high-quality higher education. The new policy aims to move towards a higher educational system consisting of large, multidisciplinary universities and colleges, with at least one in or near every district, and with more HEIs across India that offer medium of instruction or programmes in local/Indian languages. The existing graduate programme will be tried to do more multidisciplinary. The autonomy of the faculty and institutions is being emphasised. Under this policy, National Research Foundation has been established to promote research in peer-reviewed journals.

Higher Educational Institutional will be transformed into multidisciplinary universities. Indian Government is planning to build universities like Nalanda, Takshashila, Vikramshila and Vallabhi so that thousands students from India and abroad may study many subjects in them.

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The aim of the universities will be to offer graduate, post-graduate level and research oriented programmes so that Indian students may have rich experience of research.

There are many higher education institutions in India. Among them 54 central universities, 438 state universities, 126 deemed universities and 395 private universities are offering different educational, vocational, management and IT related programmes in India. Apart from these, there are 15 All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), 31 NIITs, 22 National Law Universities (NLUs), 23 IITs, 19 IIMs, 22 Indian Institutes of Information Technology, 3 Schools of Planning and Architecture, 7 Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERS) and 95 Institutes of National Importance (INIs).

After the implementation of NEP 2020, all the Higher Education Institutions will be tried to convert into multidisciplinary insinuations so that maximum enrollments may be done. The target is to make these institutions multidisciplinary by 2030 and then the next target will be to increase the strength of the students. The number of both the public and private universities will be increased. These universities will start Open and Distance Learning (ODL) centres and online learning programmes. These open and distance learning programmes or online degree programmes will be of good standards and high quality.

Integrated education programmes will be offered to bring out experts in the field and the professional and vocational education will be promoted. Different types of universities will be opened to give opportunities for students to get admission in the field of Science, Technology, Management, Accountancy, Business Studies, Languages, Literature, Dance, Theatre, Education, Philosophy, Sociology, Economics, Sports, Translation Studies and many more.

According to the new education policy, the undergraduate programme will be of four years with multiple exit options. A certificate will be issued after one year, diploma after two years, and degree after three years and a multidisciplinary bachelor's degree will be given after four years. M.Phil. degree has been discontinued. National Higher Education Regulatory Council has been framed to regulate higher education and Higher Education Grants Council will issue grants to colleges and universities. International universities will be allowed to open their campuses in India and the fee of both public and private universities will be fixed.

However, there are some challenges in the implementation of this education policy because it is quite impossible to enrol mass level students by 2035 because this target can be achieved if one university is opened every week for around next fifteen months. Around two cores more students are to be brought into school and it will be possible only when 50 schools will be opened every week. Amidst the Covid Pandemic, it will be quite difficult to fund around 2.5 lakh cores per year.

There are some advantages as well as disadvantages of the National Education Policy 2020. Mother tongue may become a stumbling block in understanding some topics and concepts. The students will go to school without bags for ten days and during this period, the students will intern with the vocational experts such as potters, artists, carpenters, artists and gardeners. Further, students will get coding classes beginning from Grade 6. There will not be three streams arts, commerce and science; instead students will be given a wide variety of subjects depending on their choice. The biggest disadvantage of this policy will be that the students in government schools will not be able to learn English due to emphasis on mother tongue for a long time while the students of the private school will learn it in a better way from their first year of entry in schools. Thus, keeping in view the pros and cons of this policy, it can be concluded that the National Education Policy will be very beneficial for the students.

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studying in higher education but the school going students may face some challenges also after the implementation of this policy. Dr. Rupesh G. Sawant and Dr. Umesh B. Sankpal postulate about this policy:

National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is a welcome and ambitious re-imagination of India's education system into a modern, progressive and equitable one. Built on the foundational pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability, NEP 2020 is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD). It aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multi-disciplinary, suited to 21st century needs. (3459)

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