Restructuring Indian Education: NEP 2020 "A Dawn towards New India"

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Abstract

India, one the oldest civilizations of the world a multi-diverse country in terms of geography, caste, language, cultures, festivals and the ethnicity as well as the rich education system of India such as Vedic and Guru-Kula system and transferred through many phases. After independence, India redesigned the entire education system as per its own style taste as well as the requirement and aspirations of the country. The 10+2+3 pattern was recently replaced by the National Educational policy of 2020 with 5+3+3+4 yet to be implemented and bringing new shapes in education with the focus on multidisciplinary approach, flexibility, credit system digital progress etc.

Being the first major education policy of the 21ˢᵗ century, it has come up with the expectations to redeem past glorify of Indian education system and hence proposed to devise the entire education system and frame the policy for new India along with its own spirit and ethos. As a major capsule to achieve India's target partnership with the completion of SDG-4 by 2030 and India's journey of Digital excellence has been in line which has got its importance during this Pandemic where numerous online plat forms were restarted or boosted to excel in academics.

Key words: Education system, National Education Policy 2020, Digital initiatives.

Introduction

The Indian education system is one of the glorious systems of the world. The rich diversity of cultures, traditions, languages, festivals, people as well as geographical complexities has made the country home to numerous species. With the population more than 1.2 billion (**census 2011**) makes it the second largest education system after China in the world (**Cheney, Ruzi,. & et.al 2005).** The education system was no doubt governed by the Vedas and the Gurukul system was in vogue where the journey of education of the child started in formal as well as non-formal way of education and this practice is still prevailing throughout the world. The studies revealed that the ancient education system was so rich in terms of its broader vision as it aimed at holistic development of the student while preparing him for the life along with inner and outer spheres of personality such as physical development, social, moral, aesthetic and the spiritual development of the individual to design a rough livening being into a pure human being. *(NCERT E Pathshala 2020-21).* The studies reveal that Taxila has had also glorified as an emergent centre of learning till the 5ᵗʰ century A.D. Whereas the Nalanda was destroyed during the later 12ᵗʰ century but around the same era in Nalanda the subsequent institutions of learning were prevailing in Vallabhi in Kathiwad and Kanchi (**Report of University Education Commission. 1948-49**).

The introduction of Modern education system can be traced back to the Macaulay's Minute of 1835 in which complete focus was given to the western literatures especially English language and least

focus was given to native languages and literatures which lead to the Orientalist-Anglicist rivalry among scholars, administrators and policy makers, but acknowledging the fact that Raja Ram Mohan Roy played a key role for the spread and promotion of English language among Indians (**Choudhary,. et.al. 2021).** Regarding education and teaching learning process, it is revealed that in contrast to the environmental or natural aspects education like Gurkula system, it had drastically changed the fabric of teaching learning system in the country by confining it to the classrooms only by the breakdown of communication by nature so was the textbook and examination system based on the western system **(Jain., Choudhary,. et.al. 2021)**

For such purpose the historic Downward filtration theory of 1835 under the headship of Lord Macaulay was adopted which aimed at training the upper classes of Indians which could easily communicate and control the fellow Indian masses. While the two disputing groups as orientalist and angilicists was a big challenge before the lord Bentinck as well as Macaulay because the major issue was over the content and medium of instruction such as English verses native languages (Stephen. 2010). But we must not forget the Wardha scheme famously known as the Basic scheme of education or Nai-Taleem which laid a due stress on the craft based education as well as mother tongue as these two main recommendations were much needed in order to produce skilled individuals for the service of nation **(Mishra.2020).**

The most important document in the modern education system is also credited to the Woods Despatch of 1854 which is called as the Magna-Carta of modern education in India. Looking at the diversity of the nation, the document not only promoted the western education system but also gave a due weightage to vernacular languages. The development and grading system of education departments as well as the establishment of three universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras which glorified the Indian literature along-with western languages besides the establishment these universities on the model of London University.

The first ever education commission of India took place in 1883 under the chairmanship of sir William Hunter in which a group of experts discussed over the various issues pertaining to education starting from the primary level and focussed on the development for all sections. The review committee of Sargent report in 1944 had recommended for the evaluation of entire education system and most importantly the establishment of a centrally regulating and controlling agency for higher education such as University Grants Commission which took place in 1956.

The achievement of independence in 1947 has given the new directions to Indian education system with the help of revolutionary visions of Indian educationists' scholars and reformers. The first commission after independence was the university education commission 1948-49, also called as the Radhakrishnan commission of 1948-49 **(GOI. 1962).** The historical development in Indian education system as the Kothari commission of education headed by the former chairman of University Grants Commission 1964-66. The document was named as the education and national development with five basic principles which focussed on the national and international standards of Indian educational and social development. Most importantly the commission had recommended for the revolutionary national pattern of education as 10+2+3 which still lasts throughout the country. Besides this the commission emphasised upon the spirit of flexibility and value based education looking at the values and socio-cultural ethos of the nation **(Chaudry. 1995).**

The National Policy of Education 1986 was launched by the government of Indian as a wider document in order to resort and overhaul the entire system of education in the country. The policy aimed at the development of human values, equality and also the unity in diversity in terms of socio cultural and educational dimensions not only at national but at international plat forms **(Ghosh, 2000).** As we

know there has always been the problem of quality measures in higher education the policy document responded in a systematic manner for expanding the quality control measures in higher education, enhancing relevance as well as job opportunities in higher education **(Mukhopadhyay, 1999)**. Besides Kothari commission, the National Policy document has played a wider role in the education system of India which is still in practice with the utmost relevance as well as utility in the country. The establishment of various institutions such as NCTE, DIETs, NAAC, SSA, RMSA, and the focus on nationalised documents such as Operation Blackboard, National Knowledge Commission and overhauling of educational institutions **(Chandi 2021).** The most important document with the beginning of twenty first century was the formation and implementation of Sarva Shiksha Ahiyan 2001 as a flagship program for the complete access to elementary education by the year 2010. The program was held under the banner of Universalization of Elementary Education government of India with the objectives of universal provision, access and retention for which huge amount of funds were allocated from time to time.

Despite various provisions from the govt. local authorities and other stock holders the studies reveal that merely 13 percents of the primary schools were designed in accordance with the RTE guidelines by 2016-2017 **(Rai & Majumder, 2019).** According to a report from UNICEF in 2014, the number of dropout children was reduced from 13 million in 2006 to less than 6 million children in 20014 with the improvement in Gross Enrolment Ratio from 80 to 97 percent by 2016. But despite the fact RTE forum Analysis indicated that one lakh thirty thousand schools were closed throughout the country and others were merged with other schools. Later on the SSA was merged Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and formed Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SMSA) and came up with the new initiative for the universalization of Higher education Rashtriya Utchater Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in 2013. Because it was claimed that the shift has been made in response to the fulfilment of UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-4) to attain the universal access pre-primary education while discarding the gender inequality at all levels of education by 2030 **(Sharma.2020).**

The major breakthrough in the twenty first century was the announcement of National Educational Policy 2020 which emerged as the first of its kind in the twenty first century with forward looking vision for twenty first century dedicated to the nation on 29th of July 2020. The document came up with the various modifications in the existing system of education, beginning with the shift in the pattern of education from **10+2+3 to 5+3+3+4**. In comparison to previous policy, the 2020 policy carves for not only free education already envisioned by NEP-1986, SSA-2001 or RTE Act-2009. But it focussed on the free, equitable and quality education to all from early childhood with the stress on foundational literacy and numeracy up to higher education. **(Batra, 2020).** The document has envisioned for turning India into a global and knowledge society by the deadline of SDG-4 2030 for which 6 percent of the GDP shall be spent on education. It also aims at the enhancement of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) from 25 percent up to 50 percent by 2035 **(Goel. 2020).**

Aas India is having the largest number of youths and as per the demographic profile, India has around 5.5 Million youths below the 25 of age and the capability of sharing twenty five percent of global workforce by the end of 2020 so was the focus given on skill developments *(**GoI. 2008**)*. But as per the NKC report 2009 in higher education sector only 0.64 percent were enrolled in research programs out of around 11 million students enrolled in higher education in 2005-2006. Therefore the policy attempted to encourage the creative minds and critical thinking among students with the help of communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience as well as other life skills **(NEP 2020).** Back to 1994 the teleconferencing facility was provided by ISROU to IGNOU headquarter in order to provide a live communication with the millions of students across the country which has resulted as an

inspiration to millions of students to peruse online courses across numerous platforms. As the Andhra Pradesh Open University nowadays called as the B. R. Ambedkar Open University has started the Bachelors program in library science in 1985. In 2005 EDUSAT program was initiated by ISRO in collaboration with MHRD and IGNOU (**Mazumdar. ToI.2020**). The beginning of open and distance learning can be attributed for making education accessible, more flexible and self-paced on the part of learners for which government has had taken various initiatives and it makes education available as Anyone, Anyway, Anywhere and Anytime by making it more flexible and accessible free from the physical or geographical distances. (**Kawatra.2006**).

Government of India has been quite busy in launching digital friendly programs to provide education and other services to up to the door steps of every individual such as the mission of Digital India and Skill India programs back in 2015 to realise the dream of Knowledge based society. The STEM in Skill India campaign, had envisioned to motivate and develop different learning skills among learners by the year 2022 which are realised in such difficult times and it will definitely help India in the excellence innovative, knowledge- based economy (**Melissa., & Gotad., 2021**). Even back in 1994 India introduced one of the largest education companies Educomp and in 2004 India introduced a VSAT company's program called as *Everonn* which had covered more than eight million learners in 2011 across the country. It is claimed that India is the third largest smartphone market with almost 370 million users by 2018 which is expected to be steeped very sharply from past two years because of the thrust towards switching to online plat forms due to Pandemic in 2020. India has cached and invited the attention of various investments in Ed-tech programs in 2020 in order to compensate the academic loss of millions of students across the country. The major and leading venture invests in 2020 were Byjuys, Unacademy, Vedantu and Topper which are giving their services to prevent more academic losses and have become the essential tools of learning in these COVID times (**IBEF.2021**). The govt. of India has launched the online portal called as DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) in September 2017 to involve students, teachers as well as parents on school based curriculum and pedagogy on LMS. (**Acad. 2021**)

The various other start up programs such as National Digital Educational Architecture (NDEAR) was launched in February 2021 to boost digital architecture in education. Ministry of Education introduced an online platform called as study webs of active learning for young aspiring minds (SWAYAM) and other MOOC courses. Besides these various programs such as e-pathasala, NROER (National Repository of Open Educational Resources) e-yantra (robotics education), virtual labs. Besides the above initiatives there are various other provisions for online learning such as Gamification, Everonn, DIKSHA was again engaged with the imposition of lockdown and closure of educational institutions across the country and surprisingly it had registered more than sixty lac views within the first three weeks of lockdown in 2020. E-Pathshala Portal 2015, NISHTHA in financial year 2021, the National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA). OLabs 2014 as a provision to access to lab learning experience virtually (**IBED 2021**).

As the motto of the National Education Policy 2020 is to "Educate, Encourage and Enlighten therefore its implementation in the country shall not only bring new dimensions in Indian education system but help India inclusively to realize the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 as its partnership with outer world. The vision of NEP 2020 may get fulfilled by realizing its foundations such as Access, Equity, Affordability Quality and Accountability. The allocation of funds for various programs shall also help in realizing the goals of India's digital excellence. The different programs such as facilitation of digital payments through UPI's and the Digi Locker for securing and storing the

credentials for students as well as the National Digital Library for Children and adolescents for facilitating their learning outcomes.

These initiatives have proved their worth in such times and can play a key role in the future endeavours in order to not only cope up uneven crises but can also help us in realising the ultimate goals of excellence. But one thing is quite clear that we must not rely only on any single option, instead we must accept the realities and prepare for any kind of challenge whether it is education, economy or whatsoever. But as far as education is concerned, we must give more focus to it because it is the education only through which we can achieve any goal in the country. Switching abruptly towards online learning was a thrust from the ongoing pandemic, but accepting the hybrid or blended mode of teaching learning management is the wise decision for all of us.

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