REVISITING NEP-2023 THROUGH ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

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ABSTRACT

The Comprehensive Guide to the National Education Policy 2023 envisioning the transformation of the Indian education system, emphasizing critical thinking, fostering holistic development, and embracing global perspectives. The New National Education Policy 2023 critically envisions a brand-new holistic education system for the country, hinging on the effective adoption of modern training methods, application of technology, and imparting practical and contemporary skills, to shape the overall personality of students. The NEP 2023 aims to help students define and recharge their creative, analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking abilities, topped by actively pursuing digital literacy. The policy states, "The highest priority of the education system will be to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school by 2025. Overall, the NEP 2023 provides for large-scale reforms in higher education, aiming to bring in more flexibility, shifting the focus from exam-centric to holistic and experiential, clearcut provision of entry/exit options, key synchronization of vocational subjects, and portability of academic credits to enable more mobility.

The world is rapidly evolving, driven by groundbreaking technologies like artificial intelligence, automation, and the internet. These advances are reshaping life and work as we know it. To thrive in this dynamic landscape, today's students need a modern education that equips them with the knowledge and skills to tackle 21st-century opportunities and challenges.

Keywords : New NEP, Universal Foundational Literacy, groundbreaking technologies ,modern education and 21st Century

INTRODUCTION

The National Policy on Education (NPE) is a policy formulated by the Government of India to promote and regulate education in India. The policy covers elementary education to higher education in both rural and urban India. The first NPE was promulgated by the Government of India by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1968, the second by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986, and the third by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2020. The world is rapidly evolving, driven by groundbreaking technologies like artificial intelligence, automation, and the internet. These advances are reshaping life and work as we know it. To thrive in this dynamic landscape, today's students need a modern education that equips them with the knowledge and skills to tackle 21st-century opportunities and challenges.

 The National Education Policy was established in the year 2020. It came into existence during the academic year of 2023-24, thereby becoming popular as the NEP 2023. The policy is termed as one of the pathbreaking and game-changer documents that have been conceived and formulated with the objective of bringing about a complete transformation in the Indian education system by 2030. The New National Education Policy 2023 critically envisions a brand-new holistic education system for the country, hinging on the effective adoption of modern training methods, application of technology, and imparting practical and contemporary skills, to shape the overall personality of students. The NEP 2023 aims to help students define and recharge their creative, analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking abilities, topped by actively pursuing digital literacy.

Overall, the NEP 2023 provides for large-scale reforms in higher education, aiming to bring in more flexibility, shifting the focus from exam-centric to holistic and experiential, clearcut provision of entry/exit options, key synchronization of vocational subjects, and portability of academic credits to enable more mobility.

Effects of Redefining NEP 2023

- NEP 2023 promotes skill-based education, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving.
- Inclusivity is a key focus, offering equal opportunities for diverse learners.
- Emphasis on local languages and cultures provides a global perspective.
- Improved teacher training and increased funding for better infrastructure.
- Embracing digital education to prepare students for a tech-driven future.
- NEP 2023 paves the way for holistic and meaningful learning.

Guidelines of NEP 2023

- **Holistic Development Focus:** NEP 2023 fosters cognitive, emotional, and societal growth for students.
- **Early Foundational Learning:** Prioritizes Early Childhood Education and Care for strong foundations.
- **New Curriculum Structure:** Introduces a 5+3+3+4 structure for experiential and skill-based learning.

- **Vocational Education Goal:** Aim for 50% of learners in vocational education by 2025 is to contribute to the Nation's human capital.
- **Regional Language Learning:** Emphasizes regional language learning up to Grade 5, to enable a familiar learning environment.
- **Tech-Driven Education:** NEP 2023 emphasizes using platforms like DIKSHA to enable access to quality education.
- **Adaptive evaluation system:** The policy emphasizes rethinking assessments to shift from summative to a more comprehensive evaluation system.
- **Teacher Training:** Continuous training and professional development of teachers to align with evolving teaching approaches.
- **Inclusivity and Equity:** NEP 2023 commits to ensuring education for all, regardless of socioeconomic or physical barriers to learning.

NEP 2023 Highlights

The policy states, "The highest priority of the education system will be to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school by 2025. The rest of this Policy will become relevant for our students only if this most basic learning requirement (i.e., reading, writing, and arithmetic at the foundational level) is first achieved. To this end, a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy will be set up by the Ministry of Education on priority. Accordingly, all State/UT governments will immediately prepare an implementation plan for attaining universal foundational literacy and numeracy in all primary schools, identifying stage-wise targets and goals to be achieved by 2025, and closely tracking and monitoring the progress of the same". Subsequently, the NIPUN Bharat Mission (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) was launched on 5 July 2021 to achieve this goal.

The transition of the model, as per National Education Policy 2023, will be implemented by reclassifying the education stages as the following:

- **Foundational Stage:** The fundamental stage of laying the foundation that is further stratified into two substages: 3 years of preschool or Anganwadi, followed by classes 1 and 2 in primary school. This essentially covers children between 3 and 8 years. The focus will be on activity-based learning.
- **Preparatory Stage:** Covering students of class 3-5, and in the age bracket, 8–10 years. Students will be steadily exposed to the fundamental learning aspects of speaking, reading, writing, physical education, art, science, languages, and mathematics.
- **Middle Stage:** This stage covers students of classes 6 to 8, in the age group of 11 and 13 years. It will introduce students to more abstract concepts in mathematics, sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities.
- **Secondary Stage:** Classes 9 to 12, covering the ages of 14–18 years. It is subclassified into two parts: classes 9 and 10, covering the first phase, while classes 11 and 12, covering the second phase. These 4 years of study is intended to inculcate multidisciplinary learning, driven by depth and critical thinking. This provides for multiple options of subjects.

Multi-Faceted Curriculum

The NEP 2023-24 stresses a holistic curriculum that goes beyond textbooks to incorporate crucial skills like:

- **Literacy and Numeracy** – Mission to enable reading fluency, counting concepts, and fundamental arithmetic operations for all students by Grade 3
- **Languages** – Multilingual exposure without language imposition, the flexibility of choice
- **Digital Skills** – Coding from Grade 6 onwards mandatory across curriculums
- **Vocational Exposure** – <u>Internships</u>, community experiences from the secondary school itself for real-world application
- **Environmental Education** – Understanding climate change, and sustainability through projects
- **History and Culture** – Appreciating India's roots via arts, architecture and traditions.

Reduced Exam Stress

A highlight of NEP 2023-24 are initiatives targeted to minimize student anxiety that detracts from actual learning such as:

- Two attempts to pass the Grade 10 and 12 board examinations
- Competency-based periodic assessments throughout the year tracking skill progress
- Open-ended analytical tasks to evaluate understanding versus memorizing
- Multiple evaluation methods like quizzes, presentations, and projects besides conventional testing
- Focus on self-paced mastering of concepts tested before moving grade levels.

Empowering Teacher Community

Teachers are nation builders catalyzing students' all-round growth over their formative years. Hence NEP 2020 gives strategic thrust to **strengthen the teaching community** via:

- Mandating 4-year integrated teacher preparation <u>degree</u> courses covering pedagogical methods beyond just subject knowledge
- Regular upskilling of educators via District <u>Institutes</u> for Training and Educational Research (DIET) programs on the latest techniques
- Enhanced <u>career</u> progression schemes to attract and retain outstanding talent
- Global teaching opportunities including Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty (VAJRA) for knowledge exchange
- School complexes for resource sharing, bridging capability gaps across rural and urban areas.

Smooth Assimilation Using Technology

Given connectivity reaching remote towns via cheap data and smartphone penetration, NEP 2020 harnesses **ed-tech innovations** by:

- Launching India's integrated online learning platform SWAYAM hosting e-content, video lectures, virtual labs, and teaching modules

- Tracking performance via the National Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) dashboard
- Smart classrooms for digital learning content, online assessment mechanisms
- Policy mandating EdTech forums and challenges to continuously identify solutions plugging gaps

This technology interplay promises to enrich conventional models through personalization and remote access – blending high-tech classrooms with high-touch teachers.

Increased Autonomy to Colleges

NEP 2023-24 notes that over-regulation has constrained academic innovation and institution building. Hence it allows greater self-governance empowering colleges and universities to:

- Recruit outstanding faculty aligned to specializations beyond seniority
- Design a competitive curriculum integrating global best practices
- Forge creative partnerships across academia and industry
- Evolve context-driven strategies aligned with their visions

In return for autonomy, institutes will undertake external peer reviews every 5 years to incorporate constructive feedback. By enabling meritocracy and accountability, positive transformations can be sustained.

Restructuring Higher Education

NEP 2023-24 also envisions large-scale restructuring of higher education by moving 3900 isolated institutions into 150 multidisciplinary education clusters by 2040 across regions. Key aspects are:

- Consolidated universities conducting integrated programs in teaching, research, vocational, and professional education.
- Allowing credit transfers across disciplines. For instance, credits achieved in extracurricular pursuits like sports, entrepreneurship, social service, etc. accrued over 4-5 years count towards the final degree.
- Formation of Professional Standard Setting Bodies for benchmarking global quality standards within specialized domains.
- Mandating Institutes of Eminence (IoEs) to focus on multidisciplinary education and collaborative research.
- Large universities to additionally master specialized niches like Sanskrit studies, Agriculture, Law, Engineering, and Medicine focused on both regional and national priorities.

By removing rigid boundaries across subjects, such restructuring seeds fertile grounds for interdisciplinary innovation in solving complex real-world problems in a well-rounded manner.

Expanding Equitable Access

Foreseeing the wide range of opportunities that will unfold by 2047 during India's 100th year of independence, NEP 2020 promises education access to all including:

- **Schooling** – Achieving 100% youth and adult literacy before 2030
- **Higher Education** – Raising Gross Enrollment Ratio from ~26% to 50% by 2035 including vocational skills with at least 1 large multidisciplinary HEI in every district
- **Online Education** – Top quality blended degree courses via the SWAYAM platform removing geography barriers
- **Adult Education** – Part-time, modular, online courses for reskilling or upskilling
- **Disabled Learners** – Barrier-free campuses, assistive devices and content

Such massification schemes will significantly widen participation to tap into the complete spectrum of citizen potential fuelling an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Attracting Private Investments

Transforming such a massive education system catering to 260+ million students requires significant investments. Hence beyond increasing public funding from 4% to 6% of GDP by 2030, NEP 2020 promises autonomy and incentives to unlock private financing via:

- Favorable norms for education financing, FDI, and Philanthropic giving
- Land allotments, infrastructure upgrades encouraging private participation
- Light-touch governance boosting innovation and economies of scale
- Institute-industry linkage cells for market-aligned education programs, apprenticeships, and employment

Attracting private investments can bridge funding gaps for a smooth rollout.

Implementation Roadmap

The NEP 2020 reforms are not an overnight shift but a 15-year journey implemented in a phased manner tracking progress via clearly defined targets:

By 2025

- Digital infrastructure ready in 50% of higher education institutions
- Training initiated for 1 crore teachers on integrated <u>teacher</u> preparation courses

By 2030

- 100% of youth achieve foundational and numeracy skills
- 50% GER achieved in higher education including vocational streams

By 2035

- Public funding raised to 6% of GDP on education
- Multidisciplinary HEI is present in every district
- 75% of HEIs enjoy full autonomy

By 2040

- High-quality blended/online education accessible to all
- Merging of 3900 stand-alone institutions into 150 multidisciplinary clusters across regions

Via constituent actions aligned around a shared vision, India gears up to nurture talent fully realizing human potential.Key Takeaways from National Education Policy 2023-24. In a nutshell, the NEP 2023-24 promises a vibrant shift introducing structural and curricular changes across schools and higher education.

Here are the major takeaways:

New 5+3+3+4 design aligning learning with student growth
Multidisciplinary curriculum – coding, arts, yoga mandatory up to senior secondary
Flexibility via academic/vocational choices
Competency assessments supplement conventional exams
Teacher empowerment via integrated degrees, regular training
Technology integration – SWAYAM, DIKSHA, smart classes
Institutional autonomy promoting quality and innovation
Restructuring higher education into multidisciplinary universities
Expanding access to equitable opportunities
Private investments for scalable, quality education

Over the next 10-15 years, these changes will reimagine teaching methodologies, curricula structures, assessments, and institutional frameworks – catalyzing students to imbibe crucial skills as responsible leaders and conscious citizens, while teachers assume roles as guides and influencers in this journey. By imparting world-class equitable education, India envisions creating empowered individuals equipped to actively contribute across domains – arts, science, culture, business, and community development – raising national and global impact.

Conclusion

This revamping of NEP at this juncture has the potential to transform the Indian education system into a more inclusive, flexible, and learner-centric one. The New Education Policy 2023-24 is a progressive stride reflecting the needs of this dynamic era. By equipping students with crucial skills like problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and real-world exposure, India gears up her next-generation talent to remain relevant. Simultaneously, empowered teachers, institutional autonomy, and technological integration promise modern infrastructure delivering quality instruction. Over 15 years, prioritized phased execution of different schemes will systematically sustainably transform school and higher education.

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