



The Vision for Education in the New Education Policy

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Abstract:

The National Policy on Education was framed in 1986 and modified in 1992. Since then several changes have taken place that calls for a revision of the Policy. The Government of India ready to bring out a National Education Policy to meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regards to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry.

Keywords: Education, National Policy on Education (NPE)

1. Introduction

While the final draft of the new National Education Policy is under consideration with several stakeholders including members of Parliament, various educational institutes, academia for further enhancement of the draft. But it surely aspires to leave an imprint on the important education sector of the country. It is ready to give education sector a new vision and objectives by introducing deep structural changes. The measures listed under the title "Some Inputs for Draft National Education Policy-2016" that was released on the citizen engagement platform has tried to address significant defects in the Indian education system accumulated over decades, while announcing its inspiration from solely indigenous sources, ancient and modern. The suggestions in the document are based on the simple instrumental principle cause-and-effect: India needs to teach its students what is needed in the world; if a certain thing is taught, the students must be able to reproduce and apply it; where there is autonomy, there must be accountability; learning must lead to employability.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To analyse the key areas of intervention in the NPE 2016 Draft.
2. To analyse the varied initiatives undertaken by MHRD to achieve the development of education in India.

3. Research Methodology

The paper is based on the secondary data. The data has been collected from various websites of government and non-governmental bodies. This study basically follows doctrinal research method in the compilation, organization, interpretation and systematization of the primary and secondary source material. The study is analytical and descriptive in nature.

4. The Key Areas of Intervention of NPE 2016 Draft

Painted with a broad brush, the NPE 2016 Draft is ready to face the challenges made by the social, economic and political conditions of India. It is capable of ensuring inclusive quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. It aims at equipping the youth with knowledge, skills, attitudes

and values that are required to lead a productive life, participate in the country's development process and to meet the demands of the fastchanging, ever-globalising, knowledge-based economy and society. Through following key interventions, the draft Policy provides a framework for the development of education in the country over the next few years.

5. Access and participation

To improve the participation of children in pre-school education, the draft Policy aims to start a program for children in the pre-school age group which will be implemented in coordination with the Ministry of Women and Child Development. It also aims to strengthen pre-school education in anganwadis by developing learning materials and training anganwadi workers. Presently, the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 applies to elementary education only. To improve access to education, the draft Policy suggests bringing secondary education under the ambit of the RTE Act. However, a strategy to increase enrolment across different levels of education has not been specified.

6. Quality of Education

To cater the issue of learning levels in school going children, the draft Policy proposes that norms for learning outcomes should be developed and applied uniformly to both private and government schools. In addition, it also recommends that the existing no-detention policy (promoting all students of a class to the next class, regardless of academic performance) till class 8 be amended and limited to class 5. At the upper primary stage (class six onward), the system of detention should be restored.

7. Curriculum and Examination Reforms

The present curriculum followed in schools does not help students to acquire relevant skills which are essential to become employable. The draft Policy highlights that the assessment practices in the education system focus on rote learning and testing the students' ability to reproduce content knowledge, rather than on understanding. The draft Policy aims to restructure the present assessment system to ensure a more comprehensive evaluation of students, and plans to include learning outcomes that relate to both scholastic and co-scholastic domains. In order to reduce failure rates in class 10, the Policy proposes to conduct examination for the subjects of mathematics, science and English in class 10 at two levels. The two levels will be part A (at a higher level) and part B (at a lower level). Students who wish to opt for a vocational stream or courses for which mathematics, science and English are not compulsory may opt for part B level examination.

8. Teacher development and Management

The mismatch between institutional capacity to train teachers and required supply in schools results in a shortage of qualified teachers. The draft Policy recommends that state governments should set up independent teacher recruitment commissions to facilitate transparent, merit based recruitment of principals, teachers, and other academic staff. For teacher development, a Teacher Education University should be set up at the national level to focus on teacher education and faculty development. In addition, the draft Policy also states that all teacher education institutes must have mandatory accreditation. To ensure effective teacher management, periodic assessment of teachers in government and private schools should be carried out and linked to their future promotions and increments.

9. Skill development and Employability

The NEP draft 2016 proposes to integrate skill development programs in 25% of schools and higher education institutions in the country. This is in line with the National Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Policy that was released by the government in 2015. Presently, over 62% of the population in the country is in the working age-group (15-59 years).[4] Only 10% of this workforce (7.4 crore) is trained, which includes about 3% who are formally trained and 7% who are informally

trained.[5] In developed countries, skilled workforce is between 60-90% of the total workforce.[6] Initiatives undertaken by MHRD to achieve the development of education.

Two main key initiatives in the field of education mentioned by MHRD are creation of a Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) and the establishment of 20 so-called world-class universities. Both HEFA and world-class university plan had found mention in the previous budget. The introduction of HEFA will fund the infrastructure growth requirements of government higher educational institutions and allow them to raise funds and repay them over a period of time from their own income. HEFA will allow an institution to borrow 10 times its annual internal income. HEFA will start operation with a book of Rs1,100 crore. The ministry has made tremendous progress on the world-class universities initiative. The plan is to have 20 world-class universities 10 private and 10 public, with each requiring an investment of at least Rs 5,000 crore over the next few years. The ministry is also exploring whether it can reduce the central government allocation to flagship education schemes such as the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and Mid-day Meal scheme while increasing it for new initiatives focused on quality improvement and assessment. It is also considering making allocations, or at least part of the allocations, performance-based (with academic outcomes being a measure of performance). Quality of education remains an important issue. While access to school education is near universal level, the quality remains low. Some 250 million students are in schools in the country with nearly 80% enrolled in government-run schools where quality is often questionable. Performance-based funding, quality education, and employability will be key going forward for the schemes outcome and instilling competition among states to do better to get more funds.

10. Conclusion

The country's education policy was last revised in 1992. It outlined equitable access to quality education, with a common educational structure of 10+2+3 years. The draft Policy 2016 aims to create an education system which ensures quality education and learning opportunities for all. The overall picture of education development in the country is mixed and there are many persisting concerns and challenges relating to access to and participation in education, quality of the education imparted, equity in education, system efficiency, governance and management, research and development, and financial commitment to education development.

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