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National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Holistic, Multidisciplinary and Technology Based Education

Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a comprehensive and inclusive policy document that seeks to transform India into a knowledge superpower, and it has been designed to enable all individuals to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to lead a productive and fulfilling 21st century life. It seeks to foster a more equitable, inclusive, multidisciplinary, techno-based, and holistic education system that is responsive to the needs of present-day students. It seeks to provide universal and equitable access to quality education for all, regardless of personal, social, and economic backgrounds. The NEP 2020 also seeks to promote the use of technology to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the education system. The policy also focuses on the development of the human capital of the country by providing access to quality education for all. The NEP 2020 has set out to create a system that is responsive to the changing needs of society and capable of meeting all the demands of the upcoming future. In order to achieve this, the policy proposes a paradigm shift in the way education is delivered and managed. The NEP 2020 also seeks to provide access to quality education to every Indian. In this regard, the policy seeks to promote a culture of learning, provide opportunities

for lifelong learning, increase the number of educational institutions, and promote the quality of teaching and learning in all educational institutions. It also proposes that educational experience promote a more balanced development of and cultivate relationships among the different aspects of the individual, as well as the relationships between the individual and other people, the individual and natural environment, the inner self of students, and external world, emotion, and reason; different disciplines of knowledge; and different forms of knowing. NEP 2020 recommended the education policy, which has broadened the horizons of India's education system and is mainly focused on technological-based education that will develop students' inventive thinking, higher-order thinking, sound reasoning, effective communication, and high productivity. The present study highlights NEP 2020 towards holistic, multidisciplinary, and technology-based education, some challenges for implementation, and also makes suggestions for the successful implementation of NEP 2020 for 21st century children.

Keywords: Development, Empowerment, Holistic, Multidisciplinary, National Education Policy, Students, Teacher, Technology

Introduction

The National Education Policy 2020 is an ambitious policy document that seeks to bring about a revolutionary transformation in the Indian education system. It outlines new strategies to improve the quality of education, increase access to education, and create an equitable and inclusive education system. It also lays out a framework for the development of a new curriculum, methods of assessment and evaluation, and a new system of governance in the education sector. The policy also emphasises the importance of technology in education and provides for the setting up of a National Educational Technology Forum to promote the use of technology in the classroom. Holistic education is a fairly new movement that began to take form as a recognised field of study and practice in the mid-1980s in North America. It seeks to challenge the fragmented, reductionistic assumptions of mainstream culture and education and is concerned with “underlying worldviews or paradigms in an attempt to transform the foundations of education. As Ron Miller (1992), one of the leaders of the movement, argues, holistic education is not to be defined as a particular method or technique and must be seen as a paradigm, a set of basic assumptions and principles that can be applied in diverse ways. Holistic education addresses the broadest development of the whole person at the cognitive and affective

levels and aims for the fullest possible human development, enabling a person to become the very best or finest that they can be and develop fully ‘those capacities that together make up a human being’. Holistic educators are convinced that the further evolution of civilization and human consciousness requires a renewed measure of respect and reverence for the inner life of the growing person. It provides students with a sense of meaning and order to things. By introducing students to a holistic view of the planet, life on earth, and the emerging world community as a “context of meaning,” holistic strategies enable students to perceive and understand the various contexts that shape and give meaning to life. It is a journey for both the educator and the student, and the nature of holistic education can change as they each progress through the programme and draw different experiences from it. The process of holistic education must therefore be flexible and dynamic to accommodate these personal differences and influences and, moreover, differences in the rate of personal progression.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the concept of holistic education and its importance
- To analyse the evolution of education policies in India
- To know the idea of a multidisciplinary and techno-based education system
- To discuss holistic, multidisciplinary, and technology-based education towards National Education Policy 2020

Methodology

The present study is mainly established on secondary data, which are gathered from renowned research articles, journals, position papers, etc. and are all related to “National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Holistic, Multidisciplinary, and Technology-Based Education.”

The Evolution of Education Policy in India

- University Education Commission (1948 - 1949)
- Secondary Education Commission (1952 - 1953)
- Education Commission (1964 - 1966)
- National Policy on Education (1968) (First NEP)
- 42nd Constitutional Amendment (1976)

- National Policy on Education (NPE) (1986) (Second NEP)
- NPE 1986 modified 1992 (Programme of Action 1992)

Holistic

The word holistic is not new and it is being applied in many fields, and in the field of medicine, once a person is ill, the entire root cause, even the generation, is also studied before treating the disease. What would happen if holistic was not followed as an important concept? It looks like the problem is being addressed, but it has not been completely resolved, meaning there is always a possibility of the same reoccurrence in the near future. In the field of education, it doesn't change. If a person is trained to become a banker, a complete series of courses are taught along with the other important skills that are required to ensure the perfect application of the same. (Pathak, 2020) If he has the knowledge but doesn't know how to implement it, or if he has both but is unable to tackle a situation that occurs very often in his profession, it will not be considered a holistic approach. Therefore, completeness comes and continues to exist once all the required knowledge is converted into a skill that ensures the best application for the expected results, which is the right holistic approach.

Multidisciplinary

Multidisciplinary education is a unique educational approach that allows students to learn and explore distinct subjects or curriculum from various disciplines, and education is not limited to a particular discipline. For instance, a student of engineering can take a subject in the humanities. A multidisciplinary and holistic approach to education is instrumental in developing integrated individuals. It is a ground-breaking move as it helps the students learn sciences, technologies, mathematics with liberal arts, humanities, languages, social sciences, professional skills, vocational skills, ethics, morality, human values, and so on at the same time. The education that exists must allow a person to think in many aspects. It is uncommon that a person's behaviour remains the same, irrespective of the situation or the people. Meaning the same person plays a different role in different places, situations, and relationships, and hence comes out to be multidisciplined. NEP 2020 has to embrace a policy that suits and makes one's completeness for the positivity and the benefits of the nation as a whole. An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, and administration. Appropriate integration of technology into all levels of

education will be done to improve classroom processes, support teacher professional development, enhance educational access for disadvantaged groups, and streamline educational planning, administration, and management. Technology-based education platforms, such as Diksha and Swayam, will be better integrated across schools and higher education, and higher education institutions will play an active role in conducting research on disruptive technologies and in creating instructional materials and courses, including online courses in cutting-edge domains.

National Education Policy 2020

This National Education Policy envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India, that is, Bharat, sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all and thereby making India a global knowledge superpower. The policy envisages that the curriculum and pedagogy of our institutions must develop among the students a deep sense of respect for the fundamental duties and constitutional values, bonding with one's country, and a conscious awareness of one's roles and responsibilities in a changing world. The vision of the policy is to instil among the learners a deep-rooted pride in being Indian, not only in thought but also in spirit, intellect, and deeds, as well as to develop knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions that support responsible commitment to human rights, sustainable development and living, and global well-being, thereby reflecting a truly global citizen. The vision for NEP 2020 is "technology use and integration" in order to provide a pathway for the students to make India a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy around the globe, and the central government came out with a comprehensive framework for holistic learning and development to ensure systematic changes in the education system of the country. This is the third time that the government has changed the NEP and the first time since 1986, and the new framework is divided into 4 stages: the Foundational stage (5 years), Preparatory stage (3 years), Middle stage (3 years), and the Secondary stage (4 years).

NEP 2020: Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education

Holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings, like intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral, in an integrated manner. Such an education will help develop well-rounded individuals that possess critical 21st century capacities in fields across the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields; an ethic of social engagement; soft skills such as communication,

discussion, and debate; and rigorous specialisation in a chosen field or fields. Such a holistic education shall be, in the long term, the approach of all undergraduate programmes, including those in professional, technical, and vocational disciplines. The main aim behind converting all streams of education into multi-disciplinary forms is to produce multi-dimensional, well-rounded individuals equipped with all types of knowledge, skills, competencies, and know-how about life, people, places, arts, sciences, languages, and technologies too. Apart from building capacities, enhancing abilities, shaping attitudes, promoting aptitude and proficiency, and improving motivation and efficiency, multi-disciplinary education will be offered to build the character, persona, intellect, physique, positive insights, and outlooks of learners and transform them into ethical, rational, compassionate, and caring citizens. Education must create all-rounders who serve like champions in every walk of life, and that is the aim and objective of multidisciplinary and holistic education that will be offered in the NEP 2020 era. To develop diverse capacities of human beings, including intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, interpersonal, humanistic, and moral capacities, in an integrated manner. This type of education will help develop versatile and well-rounded individuals who are well-equipped with twenty-first century skills and capacities in diverse streams, including the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, professional, technical, and vocational fields, etc. A holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings—intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral in an integrated manner. Such an education will help develop well-rounded individuals that possess critical 21st century capacities in fields across the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields, an ethic of social engagement, soft skills such as communication, discussion, and debate, and rigorous specialisation in a chosen field or fields. Such a holistic education shall be, in the long term, the approach of all undergraduate programmes, including those in professional, technical, and vocational disciplines. A holistic and multidisciplinary education, as described so beautifully in India's past, is indeed what is needed for the education of India to lead the country into the 21st century and the fourth industrial revolution.

Towards a More Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education

India has a long tradition of holistic and multidisciplinary learning, from universities such as Takshashila and Nalanda to the extensive literature of India combining subjects across fields. Ancient Indian literary

works such as Banabhatta's Kadambari described a good education as knowledge of the 64 Kalaas, or arts, and among these 64 'arts' were not only subjects, such as singing and painting, but also scientific fields, such as chemistry and mathematics, 'vocational' fields such as carpentry and clothes-making, 'professional' fields, such as medicine and engineering, as well as 'soft skills' such as communication, discussion, and debate. The very idea that all branches of creative human endeavour, including mathematics, science, vocational subjects, professional subjects, and soft skills, should be considered 'arts', has distinctly Indian origins. This notion of a 'knowledge of many arts' or what in modern times is often called the 'liberal arts' (i.e., a liberal notion of the arts) must be brought back to Indian education, as it is exactly the kind of education that will be required for the 21st century. Assessments of educational approaches in undergraduate education that integrate the humanities and arts with Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) have consistently shown positive learning outcomes, including increased creativity and innovation, critical thinking and higher-order thinking capacities, problem-solving abilities, teamwork, communication skills, more in-depth learning and mastery of curricula across fields, increases in social and moral awareness, etc., besides general engagement and enjoyment of learning. Research is also improved and enhanced through a holistic and multidisciplinary education approach. A holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings, like intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral, in an integrated manner. Such an education will help develop well-rounded individuals that possess critical 21st century capacities in fields across the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields.

Technology and NEP 2020

India is a global leader in information and communication technology and in other cutting-edge domains, such as space, and the Digital India Campaign is helping to transform the entire nation into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. While education will play a critical role in this transformation, technology itself will play an important role in the improvement of educational processes and outcomes; thus, the relationship between technology and education at all levels is bidirectional. Given the explosive pace of technological development allied with the sheer creativity of tech-savvy teachers and entrepreneurs, including student entrepreneurs, it is certain that technology will impact education in multiple ways, only some of which can be foreseen at the present time. New technologies involving artificial intelligence,

machine learning, block chains, smart boards, handheld computing devices, adaptive computer testing for student development, and other forms of educational software and hardware will not just change what students learn in the classroom but how they learn, and thus these areas and beyond will require extensive research both on the technological as well as educational fronts. The use and integration of technology to improve multiple aspects of education will be supported and adopted, provided these interventions are rigorously and transparently evaluated in relevant contexts before they are scaled up. An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration, and so on, both for school and higher education. The aim of the NETF is to facilitate decision-making on the induction, deployment, and use of technology by providing the leadership of education institutions, state and central governments, and other stakeholders with the latest knowledge and research, as well as the opportunity to consult and share best practices. Further, 'Open and Distance Learning' will be made more relevant with credit-based recognition of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to make these courses on par with the highest quality in-class programmes. The government will also set up an autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), which will work as a platform for free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, and administration. Investment in digital infrastructure, development of online teaching platforms and resources, creation of virtual laboratories and digital repositories, training teachers to become high-quality online content creators, developing and implementing online tests, and defining content, technology, and pedagogy standards for online teaching and learning are all part of the strategy. The policy calls for the establishment of a dedicated unit to plan the growth of digital technology, digital content, and capacity building for both school and higher education's e-education needs. The policy recognises the value of technology in assisting teachers, bridging the language gap between teachers and students, building digital libraries, popularising language learning, and ensuring greater educational access. It is also suggested that coding be included in school curricula as a necessary skill for students to learn. The policy also recognises that technology can be a useful tool in promoting teacher education and promotes the use of online teacher-training platforms. The policy's focus on using technology to ensure the quality and accountability of regulatory bodies, including the State School Standards Authority and the Higher Education Commission of India, as well as its four

verticals, the National Higher Education Regulatory Council, National Accreditation Council, Higher Education Grants Council, and the General Education Council, is an intriguing aspect.

Discussion and Conclusion

India's education system is in need of a major overhaul. The current system is outdated and fails to meet the needs of today's students. In order to make the best use of the country's resources and ensure that students are prepared to compete in the global economy, the government must invest in new technologies and infrastructure, improve access to quality education, and introduce innovative teaching methods that focus on critical thinking and problem solving. Additionally, efforts must be made to reduce corruption and ensure that public funds are used to improve the quality of education. Only by making these changes can India's education system be transformed into one that can help the country reach its full potential. The policy envisages a broad-based multi-disciplinary holistic education at the undergraduate level for integrated, rigorous exposure to science, arts, humanities, mathematics, and professional fields with imaginative and flexible curricular structures, creative combinations of study, integration of vocational education, and multiple entry and exit points. A holistic and multidisciplinary education will help develop well-rounded individuals who possess critical 21st century capacities in fields across the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields, an ethic of social engagement, soft skills such as communication, discussion, and debate, and rigorous specialisation in a chosen field or fields. Such a holistic education shall be, in the long term, the approach of all undergraduate programmes, including those in professional, technical, and vocational disciplines. The undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration, with multiple exit options within this period and appropriate certifications: a certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field, including vocational and professional areas, or a diploma after 2 years of study or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme. The 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's programme shall be the preferred option since it allows the opportunity to experience the full range of holistic and multidisciplinary education in addition to a focus on the chosen majors and minors as per the choices of the student. discipline or field, including vocational and professional areas, or a diploma after 2 years of study or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme. The 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's programme shall be the preferred option

since it allows the opportunity to experience the full range of holistic and multidisciplinary education in addition to a focus on the chosen majors and minors as per the choices of the student. The National Education Policy places particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities—both the "foundational capacities" of literacy and numeracy and "higher order" cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving—but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions. The policy has been framed through a consultative process that took expert opinions, field experiences, stakeholder feedback, and lessons learned from best practices into consideration. Policy envisages the separation of regulatory, administrative, and policy-making functions to eliminate conflicts of interest and the setting up of a State School Standards Authority. There is also a greater emphasis on technology to improve multiple aspects of education, including learning, assessment, planning, and administration. The teacher has a key role in the whole process, whereas in techno-based education, various ICT tools are supplemented to make the teaching-learning process effective. There was a rise in pride and interest among the teachers and students for gaining access to ICT and its opportunities, and it has the potential to remove barriers that are causing the low rate of education in the country. ICT as a tool can overcome the issues. In this regard, teacher education plays a critical role in transforming and improving educational processes and outcomes. The NEP 2020 recognises the importance of technology while acknowledging its potential risks and dangers and states that carefully designed and appropriately scaled pilot studies are needed to determine the benefits of 21st-century online and digital education

Educational Implications and Suggestions

- A holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings—intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral—in an integrated manner.
- A holistic education shall be, in the long term, the approach of all undergraduate programmes, including those in professional, technical, and vocational disciplines.
- Even engineering institutions, such as IITs, will move towards more holistic and multidisciplinary education with more arts and humanities. Students of the arts and humanities will aim to learn more science, and all will make an effort to incorporate more vocational subjects and soft skills.

- Imaginative and flexible curricular structures will enable creative combinations of disciplines for study and would offer multiple entry and exit points.
- Departments in Languages, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Indology, Art, Dance, Theatre, Education, Mathematics, Statistics, Pure and Applied Sciences, Sociology, Economics, Sports, Translation and Interpretation, etc. will be established and strengthened at all HEIs.
- The curricula of all HEIs shall include credit-based courses and projects in the areas of community engagement and service, environmental education, and value-based education.
- The undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration, with multiple exit options within this period and appropriate certifications, like a certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field including vocational and professional areas, a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme.
- The 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's programme, however, shall be the preferred option.
- Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities will be set up and aim to attain the highest global standards in quality education.
- HEIs will focus on research and innovation by setting up start-up incubation centres, technology development centres, centres in frontier areas of research, greater industry academic linkages, and interdisciplinary research, including humanities and social sciences research.
- The existing digital platform and ongoing techno-based educational initiative must be optimised and expanded to meet the current and future challenges of providing quality education for all.

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New Normal Classroom and Skill Development among Vocational Higher Secondary School Students

Abstract

A total of 350 vocational higher secondary school students of Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, and Alappuzha districts were selected as the sample. The objective of the study is to find out whether there are any differences between the new normal classroom and skill development among vocational higher secondary school students in categories like districts, streams, and sub-streams. The sampling method was a normative survey using stratified sampling as the technique. The statistical techniques included both inferential and descriptive statistics. The major findings and interpretations regarding the variables, such as New Normal Learning and Employability Skills, were concluded against the criteria given as district, stream, and sub-stream. Conclusively, after the study, New Normal Learning (online teaching and learning) cannot replace the conventional form of teaching and learning but can enhance the form of learning for both teachers and students.

Keywords: *New Normal Learning, Skill Development, Vocational Higher Secondary School Students, District, Streams and Sub-Streams.*