

NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020: PERCEPTIONS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

M.M. Goel

Former Vice Chancellor and Needonomist Professor
Kurukshetra.

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Abstract

To revamp all aspects of the Indian education system for bringing it closer to the best global standards, the Government of India has approved the much-awaited New Education Policy (NEP)2020- a document of 66 pages developed in 27 headings on July 29, 2020. After all, education is the most effective medium of progress and development with the critical and mathematical thinking among the students.

Keywords: *NEP, Education, Policy, Indian Education, Education policy*

Being needonomist academician, I welcome the renaming of the Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) as the Ministry of Education as none of the 28 States have HRD ministries but ministry of education and education is on concurrent list. We should be ready to implement it with quickness as we have taken sufficient time to conceive with lot of discussions with the stakeholders. The new curriculum structure for inculcating scientific temper is welcome step in the right direction. The proposal of National Research Foundation is well received but calls for encouraging policy implication oriented research. There is need of research on the educational products and the students as consumers in the educational industry. There should be complete ban on private coaching in Kota and elsewhere. We have to ensure stopping non attending classes by the private players. Common Entrance test for admissions in the universities and colleges can do wonders in achieving the targets and objectives. The e –courses in 8 Languages is fine.

The NEP 2020 is necessary but not sufficient for transforming Bharat into a global Knowledge economy. To make it sufficient, we must have a time frame for the implementation of comprehensive, holistic and learner centred NEP with flexible system by adopting well defined Public -Private –Partnership (PPP) model. There is a need of the cooperation of the State Governments without any politics as education is on the concurrent list. At the same time, we should be vigilant of the bureaucracy to put hurdles in quick implementation. To strengthen infrastructure, we must have necessary commitment to spend judiciously 6 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education. This calls for adopting the Ambedkar's canons of public expenditure in terms of 'faithfulness, wisdom and economy in execution.

The implementation of NEP also calls for honest, hardworking and humane teachers who are respected, retained and recruited with morality, credibility and accountability. The conversion of careless into careful and useless into useful Indian youth is the greatest challenge in implementation of New Education Policy 2020 with the greatest limitation of overpopulation in Bharat. The permission to foreign universities to setup their campus may lead to unhealthy competition with policy implications for increasing inequalities. I have no hesitation to confess that we may be weak but we are unique to prove our mettle in the global knowledge economy of today. To compete with the foreign universities, we need to accept the challenge with spiritual training of teachers based on sermons from Gita and Anu-Gita for enlightened global citizenship.

NEP aims to increase gross enrolment ratio (GER) to 50 percent by 2035 from the current level of about 25.8 percent calls for strengthening infrastructure in all its dimensions. The objective of converting all higher educational institutions into multi faculty by 2040 is too ambitious. It needs to be noted that 5 of 7 targets of sustainable development goals (SDGs) 2030 on quality education and learning outcomes which calls for fine tuning and continuous monitoring. For efficiency, sufficiency and equity in the system of higher education, we must link fee structure and user charges with inflation rate based on retail prices so that high cost recovery be ensured smoothly.

The issue of examinations require reforms by adopting odd even formula. The odd examinations can be conducted by the institutions internally by replacing internal assessment. The even semester examination by the universities/boards will reduce the burden and declare the results on time. The online education is complementary to class room teaching and learning and cannot be ignored in digital India even in examinations. The three tier government should not poke its nose at every level of education. The central government must take the responsibility of providing secondary education to the entire nation free of cost as a public good. The primary education is required to be looked after by the local governments with freedom to generate resources including proper pricing policy of birth, marriage and death certificates. The domain of higher education including professional and technical education can be left to the states with PPP model which will bring efficiency, sufficiency and equity.

I foresee the challenges in higher education for making the students useful and careful who are otherwise useless and careless as unemployable by the employers in the world of uncertainties in post covid era. The online system of education will deteriorate the standards which are desirable for the Indian economy. There is always a trade-off between quantity and quality and in the name of quantity we forego quality. As a teacher, I have firm faith that online education cannot be substitute of offline education in institutional setup. Both can coexist but cannot survive long in isolation. The related issues are to be resolved at all levels with healthy discussions is the most practical approach to be adopted. As teachers, we have to decide what to do and what not to do with the said problems and challenges for survival, existence and excellence in post pandemic era.

NEP2020 has recommended a single regulatory authority for higher education, Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) with several verticals to fulfil different roles is the right step in the right direction. The first vertical of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) would be the National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC). It would be functioning as the common and single point regulator in the higher education sector consisting of teacher education. However, it would exclude medical and legal education. The second vertical of HECI will be National Accreditation Council (NAC). It would be a meta-accrediting body. The accreditation of all the institutions will be based mainly on basic norms, public self-disclosure, good governance, and outcomes. This accreditation will be carried out by an independent ecosystem which will be supervised by NAC.

The third vertical of HECI according to New Education Policy 2020 will be carrying out funding and financing of colleges and varsities. The fourth vertical of Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) would be the General Education Council

(GEC). It will frame expected learning outcomes for higher education programmes which are also referred to as 'graduate attributes'. The GEC will formulate a National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF).

Currently, the higher education bodies are regulated by the University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). The autonomous umbrella body of Higher Education Council of India (HECI), Regulation (NHERC), Accreditation (NAC), Funding (HEGC), and Academic Standard Setting (GEC) and its functioning will be based on transparent public disclosure. The focus would be on using extensive technology and reduce human interface which will ensure efficiency and transparency in their work. The separation of all the functions in different verticals would mean that each vertical within HECI will be taking on a new and single role which will be relevant meaningful and important as conceived in NEP 2020.

To create and maintain democratic values is another challenge which calls for motivation of intelligent ethical youth to accept politics as a career. To implement NEP smoothly, we need the revival of National Population Commission for the control of population.

We need empowered educational governance as street SMART (simple, moral, action oriented, responsive and transparent). It has to be based on SIMPLE (SQ development, intuition development, mental level development, , love oneself attitude, physical development, EQ development) model developed in the book 'Economics of Human Resource Development in India' (2012). We have to adopt SMART and SIMPLE models for effective leadership at all levels of education. We need Glocalization (think globally and act locally) as a development strategy for becoming self-reliant India (Atamnirbhar Bharat). Enjoy surfing the website www.needonomics.com

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