

Aims of education in NPE 1986 and NEP 2020

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***Abstract**

Education is the systematic process of enlightenment that assists individuals to acquire knowledge, skills and experiences; it is the foundational base that is essential to achieve full human potential and foster holistic development of an individual. To add on, it is the fundamental pathway to develop a just and equitable society that aims at promotion of national development and improvement of socio-economic framework of the country.

Education policy of a country is the comprehensive framework that incorporates multiple dimensions like student-teacher ratio, class size, curriculum structure, classroom instruction strategies, challenges that persist in higher education and so on. It is basically the path which aims at fulfilment of academic objectives of a country. With the changing needs of the country as per development in different spheres like economic, political, scientific, technological, social, geographical & so on and the prevailing issues that exists in the country and at global level, education policy need to be reformed. India has witnessed reforms in National Policy on Education ranging from years 1968, 1986, revised 1992 and 2020.

This paper focuses on the aims of education that has been laid in NPE 1986 and NEP 2020.

Introduction

National Policy on Education 1986 was announced under government of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. It aimed at removal of disparities in education and equalisation of education opportunities with focus to educate women, SCs, STs and other backward classes of society. “Operation Blackboard” was initiated as part of this policy which focused on improving the facilities of primary school in both rural and urban areas. There was recommendation of inauguration of All India Educational Service. Although this policy received many oppositions from non-congress parties but still this policy got implemented. A new committee was established under Chairmanship of Acharya Ram Murti in 1990 which proposed certain modifications in NPE 1986 and this came up to known as Programme of Action 1992. This POA was designed under NPE 1986 and proposed conduction of common entrance exams for “All India basis for admission to professional and technical programs” in India. Main aim of this POA was removal of any sort of imbalance be it social or regional, empowering women and minorities and underprivileged sections of society. In 1992, National Policy on Education 1986 was modified by government of PV Narsimha Rao. PM Manmohan Singh adopted this in 2005 as a “common minimum programme”.

The latest New Education Policy 2020 was introduced under governance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This educational policy came after 34 years of the

previous educational policy and approved by Cabinet of India on 29th July 2020. This policy focuses on provision of practical approach to education and learning. Higher education has been sensitive and importance aspect for National growth and development (Kareena Bhatia & Manoj Dash, 2011). It focuses on student-centred approach with provision of multidisciplinary courses that aims at holistic development of individual learners at all levels of career. NEP 2020 is a huge milestone for envisioning India-centered education system. It is scaffolded on foundational pillars of “access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability” and aims to metamorphose India into a vibrant and high-spirited knowledge hub. This aim is aligned with 2030 agenda of Sustainable Development Goal 4 by United Nations. It is also aligned with PM Narendra Modi’s call for “leveraging fourth industrial revolution” which aims at taking India to new heights. NEP 2020 focussed on multidisciplinary education that fosters all-round development of individual. It aims at development of 4-year multidisciplinary undergraduate programmes. Also, M Phil has been discontinued as per this policy. Along with this, school education curriculum was initiated to be easier and less burdensome with reducing syllabus to the ‘core essential’. Primary focus was bestowed on development of “experiential learning” and “critical thinking”. Biggest change was transformation of educational pattern from 10+2+3 to 5+3+3+4. Along with this, the hard separation of streams at secondary education are proposed to be dissolved.

Significance of the study

National system of education aims at elimination of existing disparities in the present education system. India has witnessed reforms in National Educational Policies ranging from years 1968, 1986, revised NPE 1992 and 2020 with changing priorities of society to achieve national development. The erstwhile policies of education focused at paving vision to build nation taking into consideration the prioritized areas of society. But there has been abundant transformation in society now since 1986 with advancements in science, technology, reforms, change in individuals' outlook towards education and career. Thus, there is need to study the aims of education in NPE 1986 and NEP 2020 so as to gauge the changes required in the vision of academic domain and the evolution of National Policies of Education so as to understand the agendas of policies and the challenges that the previous policy might have faced during its implementation.

The emphasis of this study is to critically analyse the aims of education in NPE 1986 and NEP 2020 and the transformations and reforms that have been initiated and implemented from pre-primary to higher education in accordance with the aims laid in the policies.

Objectives

1. To study the aims of education in NPE 1986
2. To study the aims of education in NEP 2020

Aims Of Education in NPE 1986

“The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes out life in harmony with all existence.” – Rabindranath Tagore

As per NPE 1986, the aims of education are as follows-

1. Holistic development of an individual- As per NPE 1986, education prepares an individual for all-round development incorporating both “material” and “spiritual” development.

“By education, I mean an all-round drawing of the best in child and man in body, mind and spirit” stated by Mahatma Gandhi was baseline for aim for education as per NPE 1986.

2. Development of Manpower and Vocationalisation of education- Economics and education are interrelated and interdependent. Education is like an “investment in present” which gives us returns in future. Thus, education leads to development of human resource that will ultimately result in national development. Vocational education aims at moulding individual into a self-sufficient employment ready individual. Health-oriented vocational courses were introduced at +2 level of higher secondary education so as to develop healthcare manpower. Certain vocational courses started as soon as after Class VIII. As per NPE 1986, there was vision to give vocational education to 10% higher secondary students by 1990 and 25% by 1995.

3. Development of scientific temperament and logical skills-As per NPE 1986, aims of education is development of logical reasoning and spirit of inquiry in children. This will lead to development in logical skills, problem-solving skills and decision-making skills of children.
4. Acculturation- Education aims at acculturation which is basically a “process of social, psychological and cultural” switch that sprouts from stabilizing the two cultures while “adapting to the prevailing culture of society”.
5. International co-operation and peaceful co-existence- Peace education was promoted by NPE 1986 to create awareness among students about international affairs, peaceful resolution of conflicts, peaceful co-existence of nations and healthy co-operation. Main aim of education was to teach students to live harmoniously and made them realise that apart from individuals, they also are citizens of global world. So, they are taught about peaceful co-existence of international values and our deep-rooted glorious tradition, ethos, cultural heritage and values.
6. National integration and promotion of secular values- Education also focuses on national integration and promotion of secular values. Its chief executive aim is to promote awareness about rights and duties enclosed in Indian Constitution so as to reflect India as a democratic nation.

7. Nurturing children with Moral and Ethical values-According to NPE 1986, curriculum was proposed to have content that cultivates social and moral values in children. Furthermore, content of value education was proposed to be based on “national goals”, our cultural “heritage” and “universal perception. NPE emphasised the necessity of value education as: “if the nation is to be saved from social disaster; it is the high time that moral and ethical values be inculcated in our students from their childhood.”

8. National system of education with provision of equal opportunities and removal of disparities-NPE 1986 aims at provision of common national system of education which is to be provided to all without any discrimination on grounds of gender, economic or social demarcations and so on. NPE 1986 as we all know, has primary aim of provision of equal opportunities to all and removal of disparities. This national system of education includes certain mandatory specifics-

- National curricular framework that will consist of common core subjects.
- Equal opportunities of education to all among nation.
- Common educational structure with 10+2+3 pattern.
- Education with awareness of cultural heritage and social systems.

9. Continuing Education- NPE 1986 emphasised on importance of life-long and continuing education, as there were remarkable advancements in field of science and technology, which paved way for time-to-time upgradation of skills. Thus, aims of education were to upgrade skills of individuals as per the needs of employment world. This included housewives, youth, industrial workers and agricultural workers who were proposed continuing of their education at their own pace as per their time management.

Aims Of Education in NEP 2020

“Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.”

- Albert Einstein

As per NEP 2020, aims of education are as follows –

1. Multidisciplinary education- Aim of education is “acquisition of knowledge” to prepare oneself for the life and also “complete realization and liberation of self”. The great rich legacies of great scholars like Chanakya, Gargi, Maitreyi, Patanjali, Panini, Gautama and so on, need to be “nurtured and preserved” via our education system. The idea of multidisciplinary teaching is based on the institutions of ancient India like Nalanda, Takshashila, Vallabhi and Vikramshila. It is proposed that all HEIs will become

multidisciplinary by 2030 with increased enrolment rates in thousands by 2040

2. Outcome-based education- NEP 2020 proposes that there will be establishment of General Education council and the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework so as to implement Outcome-based Education. Education aims at professional development or capacity building of individuals.
3. Integration of Vocational education with academic education – This policy aims at re-imagining vocational education as the one that is equivalent in status of mainstream education. It has been proposed that by 2025, 50% of students will be exposed to vocational education.
4. Provision of efficient infrastructure, proper trained teachers, safe hostels for girls and innovative education centres to students all each level of education.
5. Provision of opportunity to students who by any reason drops the school and wants to re-join the school
6. All-round development of individuals- This policy aims that education must develop both “cognitive capacities” and “emotional capacities” of children. Education must cater to the global needs of country and also the rich heritage of India

7. Reduction of dropout rates in education - NEP 2020 aims at achieving 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio in each level from pre-school to secondary stage by 2030.
8. Inclusive education- As a part of inclusive education, this policy aims at providing education facilities to SCs, STs, OBCs, girl child, transgenders, children with special needs, minorities and tribal communities. It has been proposed that those locations which need special attention for their educational development must be entitled “Special Education Zones”. Also, there will be “Gender Inclusion Fund” for girls and transgender students. RPWD Act 2016 has stated two provisions; one is that children who have “benchmark disabilities” will have choice either to study in regular school or special school; two, that for children who receive “home-based education”, there should be equal status for them with those who receive education via general system
9. Innovative pedagogy- This new education policy focussed on preparing children about learning “how to learn” so that they can develop critical thinking skills, problem solving skills and creative abilities. This will lead to development of pedagogy that aims at making education “more experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centred, discussion-based, flexible, and, of course, enjoyable.”

10. Multiple entry and exit in undergraduate courses - Also, choice-based credit

system will be operating for assessment in undergraduate programmes.

Duration of Undergraduate programmes is for 4 years with special provision to exits in following ways-

- Exit after 1 year, will be certified with Diploma
- Exit after 2 years, will be certified with Advanced Diploma
- Exit after 3 years, will be certified with a pass degree
- Exit after 4 years, will be certified with project-based degree.

11. Standardization of Indian Sign Language - One of the aims of education that

makes this policy unique from other educational policies of India is standardization of Indian Sign Language (ISL) and developing of curriculum in ISL from students with “hearing impairment

12. Education must enrich children with Indian ethos and tradition- This policy

aims at transforming “Bharat” by enriching education system with Indian ethos and rich tradition. It is also envisioned that pedagogy and curriculum need to nourish students with awareness about our “Fundamental Duties and Constitutional values”.

13. Tech-based education and research – This policy is formulated at the time

when “Artificial Intelligence”, data science, coding and other tech-based

proficiency is in high demand, thus, it aims at provision of these courses from at all levels of education.

14.Introduction of “balvatikas” - It has been envisioned that “Universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school” will be achieved by 2025. Before entering Grade 1, each child will study in “Preparatory Class” or “Balvatika”, where child’s cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains will be developed along with early numeracy and literacy making the child “school ready”. It has also been proposed that in tribal-dominated areas, “Ashramshalas” will introduce ECCE as significant step in education

15.Establishment of PARAKH(Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) i.e., new national assessment centre as a standard assessment setting-body to assess students pan-India.

16.Multilingualism - NEP 2020 promotes “multilingualism” at school education. It has been proposed that preferable till Grade 8 and importantly till Grade 5, medium of instruction in school will be “mother tongue/local language/regional language/home language”, so teachers will adopt bilingual mode of teaching. Three-language formulae will continue as before in order to promote national unity and multilingualism.NEP 2020 is very unique in itself as under a great initiative “Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat”, it emphasises on ‘The Languages of India’ as aims at providing projects to students from

Grade 6 to 8. There have been provisions as to aware children about Indian languages and literature in these languages like Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Pali, Prakrit, Malyalam, Odia and Persian. This policy aims at teaching these languages through “experiential and innovative approaches” along with “integration of technology”. Along with Indian languages, this policy also aims at teaching foreign languages like Persian, German, Portuguese, Russian and so on

17.Diluted Boards – As per NEP 2020, board exams will be conducted twice a year and will gauge the core competencies of students including 2 parts in exams, one being subjective and other being objective.

18.Obtaining Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for children from Grade 1-2 by 2025.

19.Lifelong Learning and Adult Literacy- This policy aims at achieving “foundational literacy” for all citizens of India.

20.Bag-less days – In these days, students will be out for exposures on any “vocation of their choice” for at least 20 days. It aims at making all children “school ready” before entering in Grade 1 by 2030.

Conclusion

Aims of Education in NPE 1986 primarily focussed on removal of disparities in education and provision of equal opportunities for all children in education system.

Along with this, other aims of education highlighted in NPE 1986 are all-round development of individual, acculturation via education, education for national integration and promotion of secular values, education for manpower development, Vocationalisation of education, development of scientific temperament and logical skills, international co-operation and peaceful co-existence, nurturing children with moral and ethical values and continuing education. Whereas, in comparison to it, aims of education in NEP 2020 primarily focused on provision of multidisciplinary education along with achievement of 100% gross enrolment ratio in primary education by reducing dropout rates in education. Along with this, other aims of education in NEP 2020 are integration of vocational education with academic education, holistic development of individual, outcome-based education, inclusive education, innovative pedagogy, bag-less days, multiple entry and exit in undergraduate courses, standardization of Indian Sign Language, enriching children with Indian ethos and tradition, introduction of “balvatikas”, establishment of PARAKH for assessment, multilingualism, changes in board examination pattern, obtaining foundational literacy and numeracy and lifelong learning and adult literacy.

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