



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATION AND THE NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020

KEY WORDS: Education, NEP 2020, socio-cultural aspects, limitations.

Umaina C

Research Scholar, NSS Training College, Ottappalam. University Of Calicut.

Prof. (Dr) Ampili Aravind

Principal, NSS Training College, Ottappalam. University Of Calicut.

ABSTRACT

Educational institutions are the forms of culture that bring up the future generations. Mastering particular knowledge, skills and cultural values is a significant factor in the implementation of the cultural function of education. Social and environmental factors play a crucial role in determining the extent to which educational potentials are realized. National education policy, (NEP) 2020 is expected to generate more achievements in the education system in India. Keen attention has been given to the social and cultural well being of society including children, teachers, parents and school environment. This article studies the New Education Policy 2020 with respect to socio-cultural aspects. The socio-cultural aspects related to education namely students, teachers, learning environment, language, art and culture are thoroughly studied from the NEP 2020 document published by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. A brief description of NEP 2020 and some major limitations for the implementation of the new education policy are also included in this article.

INTRODUCTION

Background

According to Russian pedagogy, the three educational functions are cultural, social and humanistic. Aristotle considered education both a process and a result of socialization in society. Educational institutions are the forms of culture for bringing up the future generations. Mastering particular knowledge, skills and cultural values is a significant factor in the implementation of the cultural function of education. (Taranenko, et al., 2019)

The academic achievement of children is directly and indirectly influenced by the environment in which they live. School, home and socializing spaces are the prominent places that shape a child's overall development. Social and environmental factors play a crucial role in determining the extent to which educational potentials are realized. These factors determine a child's overall development and academic achievement which leads to a mature and able personality. (Sreekala, 2016)

The National education policy, NEP 2020 is expected to generate more achievements in the education system in India. It concentrates on the drawbacks of the previous educational policies. The main focus areas under NEP 2020 are classified as school education, higher education, other key areas of focus and making it happen. Keen attention has been given to the social and cultural wellbeing of the society including children, teachers, parents and school environment.

Objectives

- To discuss the New Education Policy 2020 in brief with respect to socio-cultural aspects.
- To focus on various socio-cultural factors such as teachers, parents, learning environment and the promotion of arts and culture in the New Education Policy 2020.
- To discuss the limitations for the implementation of New Education Policy 2020 with respect to socio-cultural aspects.

Need And Significance

NEP 2020 could bring a new educational network in the country, which would strengthen the social and economic indicators of the educational system. Keeping in view the entire development of a nation, The Indian Government has decided to change its education policy after 34 years. (Kumawat & Sharma, 2021)

A conducive learning environment is important for a well-developed education system. All the citizens who are obliged

to the rights and duties provided by the constitution should have realized the available provisions regarding the socio-cultural environment of the society. NEP 2020 addresses the common problems related to learning environment from the preschool stage to the university stage. While reviewing the literature regarding NEP, articles focusing on the socio-cultural factors determining education was not found. So, in this study the researcher focused on the socio-cultural foundations of the education system as proposed by NEP 2020.

NEP 2020 At A Glance.

Under the new education policy of 2020, our schooling network is assumed to be changed and fixed by 2030. The whole system of education will be split on the basis of 5+3+3+4 model which includes 3 years of preschool or anganwadi and 12 years of schooling. The existing regime is running on 10 +2 model. The financial affairs for NEP 2020 are proposed to be divided between the Centre and the state as 6% of the GDP of the country should be allocated for the education purpose. Various services for vocational education, adult education, teacher education, technology-based education and education for the development of art, language and culture are also incorporated in NEP 2020.

Four stages of schooling according to New Education Policy are, 1. The foundation stage comprising of five years of learning from the age of three. It covers play way methods and activities for ensuring basic education. 2. The Preparatory stage includes three years of learning from the age of eight. Activity based learning and discovery learning will be used for the educational transactions at this level.

3. The Middle stage commences from eleven years and ends at fourteen years. More abstract themes in science, mathematics through experiential learning will be established here. 4. The Secondary stage of education is for four years till eighteen years of age. Multidisciplinary approaches where the students inculcate critical thinking and facilities for choosing subjects of their own interest will be there at this level. (Thirumurugan & Sreekala, 2016)

The principles managing both education systems and individual institutions explained in NEP 2020 are flexibility of subjects to be chosen by the learners, easy separations between arts and science, multidisciplinary and holistic approaches, creativity and critical thinking, ethics and constitutional values, life skill education, regular formative assessment, equity and inclusion, efficient teachers, integrity, transparency, continuous policy making, public service,

substantial investment in the public education system and the encouragement of private participation.

Socio-cultural Foundations Of Education in the New Education Policy 2020.

Socio-cultural elements impeding children's academic development are not only prevalent among parents, but also among teachers, school authorities, and the whole community. Socio-cultural components play a significant role in affecting and defining the further development of a nation and that of education. NEP 2020 has suggested many such provisions which include the development of students, teachers, learning environment, art, language and culture. They are mentioned as follows:

Students

Over 85% of a child's brain expansion occurs prior to the age of six. NEP attends to the development of a child from the age of three. The comprehensive aim of ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) will be to attain ideal outcomes in the sectors of physical and motor, cognitive, socio emotional, ethical, cultural, artistic and communication development. ECCE will also be introduced in ashrams in tribal dominated areas.

Stimulating and inspirational books will be introduced for children at all levels of education. It is briefly mentioned that text books will be accessible in both school and public libraries. Nutrition and health including mental health of children will be given importance at all levels of education by incorporating trained social workers, counsellors and the community in schooling system. Careful tracking of students as well as their learning surroundings will be done to ensure students attendance and enrollment. The aim of education will not be mere cognitive development, it will include character building and development of comprehensive students equipped with the skills. It ensured providing augmented study materials for gifted students as well. Provisions for selecting subjects as per the student's aptitudes will be made by the establishment of multidisciplinary approaches in studies. (NEP,2020)

Teachers

Teachers can shape the future of a nation. It is part of our culture that we respect teachers. A child will be safe in the hands of a well-educated, physically and mentally fit, energetic and a skillfull teacher. NEP 2020 guarantees the quality of teacher education, recruitment, deployment, service conditions, and empowerment of teachers. The stimulation and empowerment of teachers are required to assure the best possible future for our children and our nation. For ensuring that worthy students enter the teaching profession, a large number of merit-based scholarships will be assured across the country for studying quality four-year integrated B.Ed. programs.

The practice of unwanted teacher transfers will be controlled for the students to get continuity in the educational environments. Transfers will occur in needed circumstances, in a structured manner by State/UT governments. It is proposed that transfers will be made possible through a computerized and online system that assures transparency. Teacher Eligibility Tests will be made obligatory for both governments and private sector schools to ensure better test material, both in terms of content and pedagogy.

The availability of local and eminent persons or experts as 'master instructors' in various subjects may be utilized by schools to teach subjects like local arts, vocational crafts, entrepreneurship, agriculture, or any other subject. A good service environment and culture in schools will be provided to help the teachers do their jobs precisely. Teachers will not be provided with any work that is not directly related to teaching. Teachers will be given more autonomy in choosing

elements of pedagogy, so that they may teach in the way they find most effective for the students in their classrooms. Teachers will be given continuous and holistic chances for self-improvement and to learn the latest innovations in their professions. (NEP,2020)

Learning Environment.

NEP 2020 makes great efforts to the issues related to the learning environment. The major provisions are as follows: To facilitate learning for all students, with special emphasis on socio economically disadvantaged groups through formal and non-formal methods of education. Provisions for ODL, NIOS AND OS will be elaborated for the same.

State/UT governments may adopt new and improved solutions such as school complexes, rationalization of schools, effective school governance, resource sharing, and community building. The availability of counsellors, trained social workers, technical and maintenance staff will be ensured to create a conducive learning environment. To ensure that schools have positive learning environments, the role of principals and teachers will include developing a caring and inclusive culture at their schools, for effective learning and the benefit of all authorities. Teachers will be given more autonomy in choosing aspects of pedagogy, so that they may teach in the manner they find most effective to create a conducive learning environment.

For giving individual attention to learners, teachers would equip not only subject-teaching knowledge and understanding of subject-related aims of education, but also the pivotal skills for understanding of special needs of children. Therefore, such areas could be improved as secondary specializations for subject teachers, during or after pre-service teacher preparation.

It is ensured that children belonging to tribal communities and minorities receive the benefits of interventions to promote education (NEP,2020)

Indian Languages, Arts, and Culture

The promotion of Indian arts and culture is important for the nation as well as for individuals. Cultural awareness is the major proficiency considered important to be developed in children, in order to provide them with a perception of identity, belongingness, as well as the ability to cherish other cultures and identities. It is through the development of a strong sense and knowledge of their own cultural history, arts, languages, and traditions that children can build a positive cultural identity and self-esteem.

Indian arts of all kinds must be offered to students at all levels of education, starting with early childhood care and education.

Early implementation of the three-language formula to promote multilingualism; teaching in the native language wherever possible; conducting more experiential language learning; indulging outstanding local artists, writers, craft persons, and other experts as master instructors will be included.

Provisions for promoting Indian languages, comparative literature, creative writing, arts, music, philosophy, etc. will be evolved and expanded across the country, and degrees comprising four-year B.Ed. dual degrees will be included in these subjects.

More programs in higher education, will use the mother tongue or local language as a medium of instruction and offer programs bilingually, in order to increase access and promote the strength, usage, and vibrancy of all Indian languages.

Visits by students to different parts of the country, will not only promote tourism but will also lead to appreciation of the diversity, culture, traditions and knowledge of different parts of India. Efforts for preserving and promoting all Indian languages including classical, tribal and endangered languages will be taken into consideration. (NEP, 2020)

Challenges For The Implementation Of NEP 2020

Early streaming of students in to different disciplines may lead the students to confusion. Students may not be able to opt for a career just after their secondary education. This may lead to increase in the rate of dropouts in higher education which may affect their future adversely.

In order to transact the curriculum effectively, well trained and educated teachers are essential. Multidisciplinary approaches in learning may lead to the need for teachers well versed in all the subjects. Drastic implementation of new teacher education programs for teaching multiple disciplines will not be practical.

Doubling the gross enrollment ratio by 2035 may not be easy. In India there are around 1000 universities today. Doubling the gross enrollment ratio means that country have to open new universities every week for next 15 years. Its feasibility is to be re analyzed.

No clear plans for the fund allocation are mentioned clearly in NEP 2020. 6% of GDP will be allocated for the education sector and it will be distributed among the central and state governments. This is the only information proposed here.

CONCLUSION

NEP 2020 is expected to implement a wide and overall change in the Indian education system. A matter of concern is how such a large proposal be implemented in a short time. It covers almost all areas, but clear information regarding many areas is not visible in the proposal. Socio-cultural development also includes a wider area. Teachers, learners, learning environment, assessment, languages, art, literature everything comes under one umbrella. A systematic implementation from the lower sections to the highest ones should be done. Evaluation and proper rectification should happen whenever necessary. Then only the expected harvest in the field of education leading to a well-equipped nation can be achieved.

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