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## **National Education Policy : Exploration and Perspectives**

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## INDEX

1. Analysis of New Education Policy: 2020 ..... 05  
**Prof. Vinod D. Late**
2. Curriculum Design and Development: A Vital component of the NEP's Achievement ..... 11  
**Renuka Ramakant Londhe**
3. National Education Policy 2020 : Advantages And Disadvantages For Students ..... 19  
**D. V. Raje**
4. National Education Policy 2020 and challenges before Higher Education ..... 22  
**Dr. Prakash Ratanlal Rodiya, Dr. Suresh J. Phule**
5. NEP 2020: Impact and issues ..... 31  
**Aman K. Shaikh V. D. Panchal**
6. Overview of Nep 2020 ..... 37  
**Dr. Prakash Ratanlal Rodiya**
7. National Education Policy 2020: Skill Development and Vocational Education ..... 42  
**Mr. Krishnkant Bhujang Walasange**
8. New Education Policy 2020: A Comparison with 1986 Policy ..... 47  
**Miss. Aakanksha Kashinath Balsaraf**
9. National Education Policy overview and principles ..... 55  
**Prof. Sampada Suresh Kale**
10. New Education Policy and its Impact areas ..... 61  
**Miss Jaya M. Nahata**
11. Higher Education in NEP 2020 ..... 69  
**Dr. Sachin Bhandare**

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## 11. Higher Education in NEP 2020

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The unique historical discussion over NEP 2020 started from January 2015, then, in May 2016, the ‘New Education Policy Planning Committee’ appointed under the chairmanship of former Cabinet Secretary TSR Subramaniam submitted its report. Based on this report, the Ministry submitted some inputs for the preparation of the Draft on National Education Policy, 2016. After this ‘National Education Policy Drafting Committee’ was appointed in June 2017 under the chairmanship of senior scientist and Padma Vibhushan awardee Dr. K. A Kasthurirangan. This committee submitted the ‘National Education Policy Draft, 2019’ to the Minister of Human Resource Development on May 31, 2019. The draft was uploaded on the website of the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the portal ‘MyGov Innovate’ and made available for the people, stakeholders, and partners in these areas to register their views, suggestions and comments.

While formulating the National Education Policy 2020, the recommendations and suggestions from all levels have been consulted and discussed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. In this process, more than two lakh suggestions were considered which could receive from 2.5 lakh gram panchayats across 676 districts, 6600 blogs, and 6000 civic bodies.

The National Education Policy 2020 plans to move higher education from affiliation to autonomy. The policy has decided to phase out the system of affiliation over the next fifteen years and give autonomy to all the colleges in order to reduce the burden

of a large number of affiliated colleges on the university. In NEP, higher education institutions are classified into three groups namely research universities, teaching universities and autonomous colleges. Provision has been made to develop a mechanism for granting autonomy to third group colleges in a graded manner and to lay emphasis on undergraduate education.

The word 'autonomy' means 'freedom'. Therefore, the higher educational institutions get freedom to conduct academic and financial affairs. As a result, colleges get freedom to formulate curricula, develop innovative teaching methods, prioritize skill development, introduce new subjects, conduct examinations, declare results, decide and implement their own academic calendar, etc. Though NEP boosts autonomy, not all higher education institutions are perfect in terms of infrastructural facilities and educational facilities to facilitate the education under autonomy. There are certain issues associated with the higher education system in India. Some prominent issues are: One, in the last decade there has been no recruitment in higher education institutions with few exceptions. On an average, 40 percent of faculty posts are vacant in state universities and colleges. Second, the posts are being determined based on the number of students in 2017. It results in unequal student-teacher ratio. Thirdly, the government has completely stopped giving non-salary grants to educational institutions. Fourthly, the government has a policy of starting new subjects on self-financial basis even in aided colleges. Students have to study such courses by paying fees. It puts financial pressure on the students? Actually, education is a service sector and it is not a salable commodity. But it is unfortunate that education has to be bought in recent times. Fifth, merit holders are hired at fixed wages. In some places this honorarium is not even paid properly. There is no guarantee how long the job will last. Sixth, there are issues of adequate physical facilities, manpower, unequal student-teacher ratio, question of scholarships, non-funding policies of the government, etc. So how successful will the policy of autonomy be? NEP 2020 expects

Indian Colleges and universities should raise their own resources, universities should create their own financial resources by providing knowledge to industries, create economic strength by giving advice to industries and business world, etc. are being discussed. Even if these options are considered viable, the option of providing education by charging fees to the students can never be viable. This is a form of systematic shirking of the responsibility of higher education. It is the constitutional responsibility of the government to provide equal, free, compulsory and quality education to all. Academic autonomy to educational institutions can excel in quality parameters; there is no reason for anyone to object for giving autonomy to higher education institutions. But mandating all higher education institutions to be autonomous is impractical. It is necessary to financially strengthen those higher education institutions to give them autonomy. In NEP 2020, affiliation of colleges will be phased out over 15 years and colleges will be given graded autonomy through a tier-based system. Over time each college will develop as either an autonomous degree-granting college or a constituent college of the university.

The University Education Commission, Kothari Commission, National Knowledge Commission, Yashpal Committee, National Education Policy-2016 Draft Committee chaired by TSR Subramaniam and many educationists in the country emphasized on the recommendation to reduce the burden of affiliated colleges on the university while increasing the number of central universities in the country. Recommendations have been made to give university status to the best colleges, affiliate a maximum of 100 colleges to a university, etc. But these recommendations not been implemented till date. The National Education Policy 2020 suggested all the colleges to go for autonomy for providing quality education. It is illogical. Rather, the establishing government colleges, central/state universities, IITs, IIMs and national level science institutes in proportion to the number of students and colleges for quality education can be an effective solution. Along with this, the option of giving autonomy

(academic) to the best colleges of the country that fit the quality criteria can also be accepted. In short, the burden of colleges on the university can be reduced by giving academic autonomy to some colleges along with establishing new universities. Multidisciplinary education is not offered in Indian universities. This problem is now solved. So now a student can simultaneously study physics and geography or mathematics and philosophy which are considered extreme end subjects. Each phase is different from one to four years of higher education.

Employment through education is a matter of great concern and right. Vocational education will be started from 6th standard. An effort has been made to increase the scope of this in college education and at least 50 percent of students will take vocational education.

The education policy also recommends four separate departments to develop quality of education, regulation of education, standard of education and financial provision for education.

In the college education, there are 3 branches in the admission process namely Arts, Commerce and Science. But according to the new draft, students can choose some subjects from Arts and Science to pursue degree education in which there will be options like Humanities, Science, Arts, Sports, Vocational courses. This option is given to those who have interest in many subjects. For example, it is good that an engineering student can study music while studying in college. Also there are changes in recommended by NEP in higher education. In under graduate program, students will study for 4 years. Leaving the course the middle stage is allowed. If a student leaves the course after first year, he/she will get certificate, in second year he/she will get diploma certificate, in third year he/she will get degree and if he/she completes 4 years he/she will get honors certificate. There are 3 types of options for post graduate program. First option is two year post graduate course for students who have completed 3 year degree i.e. degree course. Second option is one year

post graduate course for students completing four year degree course. Third option will be a five-year integrated program where both graduation and post-graduation can be completed together. Now PhD can be completed in 4 years instead of 5. In the new structure, provision has been made to discontinue M. Phil course. Now PhD can be done even without MPhil degree.

There are more than 45 thousand colleges in the country. A single organization called Higher Education Regulator will be set up to grade them while separate institutions for Pali, Persian and Prakrit languages will be set up.

After the implementation of the new education policy 2020 in the country, efforts to bring higher education under a single regulator are on the fast track. A Higher Education Commission (HECI) will soon be set up by the Ministry of Education. All government procedures for this work have been completed. The formation of this commission was also recommended in the new education policy 2020.

At present, there are 14 regulators for higher education across the country including University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Council for Technical Education, Teacher Education, Skill Development.

Universities and institutes have to liaise with all the regulators for various courses run by them. Also universities and institutes have to approach all the regulators regarding various courses. The plan is to bring all these under one regulator by setting up the Higher Education Commission (HECI). Earlier in 2018, the government had started work on this plan at a fast pace but it could not be completed.

Under the new education policy, a Higher Education Commission (HECI) will be set up for higher education except for medical and law studies. HECI will have four separate parts National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), General Education Council for Standards (GEC), Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) and National Accreditation

Council (NAC).

Important facts of Higher Education Commission (HECI) are:

- 1) The regulator will set up new institutions across the country. Where students will get good quality higher education.
- 2) The regulator will create new standards for research and practice.
- 3) The regulator shall study the performance of all universities and technical educational institutes every year.
- 4) It will come under the purview of the Independent Committee (HECI) constituted for each course in the UGC.
- 5) In case of not imparting good quality education, the regulator may also ban the admission of the students in the institution concerned.
- 6) 10 persons will be appointed in this regulator. It will appoint a distinguished person in the field of education as Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen, 3 members who have been Directors for five years in IIT/IIM/IISC and 3 members who are Vice-Chancellors in any National or State University.

NEP 2020 aims to increase the gross enrollment ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3 percent (2018) to 50 percent by 2035. 3.5 crore new seats will be created in higher education institutions. It also aims to increase GER upto 50% till 2035. Effective implementation of NEP 2020 in the time ahead will determine the success of NEP.

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## 12. Challenges and Opportunities of New Education Policy 2020

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#### Abstract

As we approach the day that marks the completion of India's 73rd year of independence, it's necessary to reflect on the vision that has been laid out for this independent and sovereign nation. Equality in education would be a cornerstone of such a vision for a prosperous, harmonious, equitable and ever-evolving society.

Finally, India's 73rd and 74th years of independence and the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** coincide with the pandemic-year which is responsible for overhauling how we perceive and experience the world around us.

Hence, in light of existing inadequacies and inequalities that the pandemic has created here is a comprehensive overview that will help you understand the New Education Policy 2020. It traces the history of education policy making in India, and outlines for you the challenges and opportunities of New Education Policy. Finally it presents opportunities for a way to proceed.

**Keyword:** Equality, Independence, New Education Policy, Challenges, Opportunities.

#### Introduction

The National Education Policy gives equal right to education. It incorporates school education as an elementary part and makes it compulsory for every child. There have been