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NEP 2020: Transformation from Classroom to Real-world Skills

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ABSTRACT: Education system is backbone of culture, socio-economic development and growth of a nation. It explores the human potential and refines personality of an individual and thereby of a nation. Education policies are framed to meet the present and future requirements and give time to time directions to the education system. India has three education policies: 1968, 1986 and 2020 with National Education Policy- 2020 (NEP-2020) as the latest one. This policy has been framed to prepare the learners for demanding situations by exploring the role of science and technology in learning skills. Emphasis on vocational education and skill development will bring every student from classroom to the practical field. This Paper aims to discuss how real-world skills education is addressed within the framework of NEP-2020. Interdisciplinary approach along with knowledge and skillful students will prepare Indian youth to face global challenges along with more opportunities to live in. Proper implementation of the recommendations will make India a knowledge super-power country on the globe.

KEYWORDS: NEP 2020, skill development, vocational education, science and technology, knowledge super-power.

I. INTRODUCTION

The present world is changing at a faster pace and becoming more challenging to live in. A long list of current situations like population explosion, terrorism, pollution, health problems, environmental uncertainties, global warming, climate change, technological innovations, extending life outside earth etc. has made life tough in the present century. The saying, "when the going gets tough, the tough get going" motivates to be tough to meet the life challenges. Education prepares an individual for all-round development to meet life challenges and contribute to his country growth. [1] suggest, "Change and uncertainty require lifelong learning," so the students should be learnt to adapt according to the growing world and challenging situations. A strong education system is the key requirement in 21st century to cope up at the globe.

In this modern age of science and technology, the countries advance in this field are leading the world. Education policies are framed to meet the present and future requirements and give time to time directions to the education system. India has three education policies: 1968, 1986 and 2020 with National Education Policy- 2020 (NEP-2020) as the latest one. In India, new education policy (NEP 2020) is written to make Indians capable to fight with present and future problems strongly and transforming India in a scientifically, culturally advanced and enriched peaceful country. The new learning approaches must accommodate the solutions to today problems and the characteristics of new world students, become more inclusive and address twenty-first century interdisciplinary themes [2]. National Research Foundation (NRF) creates an environment for research and innovation in the field of science and technology by funding the reviewed proposals in various fields. There is now a significant body of literature focusing mainly on three topics – motivations for a new model of learning, the specific competencies and skills needed to function effectively in the twenty-first century, and the pedagogy required to stimulate those capabilities NEP encourages learning by doing so that student may understand the concept instead of mere cramming. It will help to develop new skills and innovations and generate more aware generations.

The World Health Organization [3] defines life skills as "the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life." Similarly, [4] describes life skills as a behavior change or development approach designed to balance knowledge, attitude, and skills. These skills nourish mental health and competence thereby prepare young people to face life's realities. Life skills are very important for successful life and help to contribute in society [5]. The present paper focusses on the recommendations of NEP- 2020 to inculcate moral values and explore the role of experimental learning in the development of an individual, society and a nation.



NEP 2020, the education policy of the 21st century replaces the thirty-four-year-old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. The foundational pillars of NEP 2020 are- Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability. This policy aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower to meet the 21st century needs. Making both school and college education more holistic, flexible and multidisciplinary; the policy aims to bring out the unique capabilities of each student. The salient features of the policy are as follows [6]:

- Curriculum revisions from the 10+2 structure to a 5+3+3+4 framework with a focus on critical thinking and holistic development.
- Nationwide access to quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
- Adoption of universal basic literacy and numeracy in elementary school by 2025.
- Hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. are dissolved in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among and silos between different areas of learning.
- Curriculum content are reduced to enhance essential learning and critical thinking.
- Curricular integration of essential subjects, skills, and capacities.
- Creation of a national curriculum framework for school education.

II. LIFE SKILL ASPECTS AND RELATED CHAPTERS

To meet the everyday life challenges, NEP recognizes real life skills as essential competencies. These skills encompass communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills. Key aspects related to life skills in the NEP are:

- Streamlined curriculum framework: Emphasis on integrating life skills education at all levels of schooling, from early childhood to higher education aims to make these skills a core part of the curriculum rather than taking them as separate or optional subjects.
- Experimental learning: Focused on critical thinking and skill development, NEP encourages a pedagogical shift towards activity-based learning, projects, group discussions, and practical learning experiences to nurture life skills.
- Teaching practices: To impart effective life skills education to the students, there is focus on necessary teacher training programs. Professional development programs are designed to enhance teacher's ability to integrate life skills into teaching practices.
- Essential skills and values: The policy advocates to recognize every child's natural talent and skills alongside academic achievements and develop suitable assessment frameworks to evaluate student's acquisition of life skills.
- Holistic Development: Holistic development of policy aims to nurture social, emotional, and ethical competencies through the cultivation of life skills along with academic excellence.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of India emphasizes the importance of life skills in several chapters, particularly focusing on holistic development, foundational literacy, and flexibility in education. Here are the key chapters where life skills are highlighted:

Chapter 4: Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools

This chapter puts emphasis on the development of essential real-life skills such as communication, teamwork, resilience, and leadership. The new curriculum design encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills instead of rote learning.

Chapter 5: Teachers

This chapter underscores the teacher training in imparting life skills alongside academic content. Teacher education programs are to be redesigned to include life skills training, socio-emotional learning, and well-being.

Chapter 6: Equitable and Inclusive Education

This chapter emphasizes the need for inclusive education that imparts life skills to all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It highlights the importance of socio-emotional learning as part of a well-rounded education.

Chapter 11: Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education

It advocates for a multidisciplinary approach that integrates academic knowledge with life skills. The aim is to develop well-rounded individuals who are prepared for real-world challenges.



Chapter 23: Technology Use and Integration

It discusses the role of technology in enhancing life skills education, ensuring that students are equipped with digital literacy and other essential skills for the 21st century.

Incorporation of real-life skills into various aspects of the education system through NEP- 2020 will be a milestone to make students not only academically proficient but also capable of navigating life's challenges effectively. It recognizes essential life skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, analytical thinking, and resilience. These real world life skills of NEP focus on acquiring right skill sets and will provide students more viable career options. The key strength of NEP 2020 is its acknowledgment of the diverse needs of learners and its commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable education system. By integrating life skills education into the curriculum, the policy aims to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real-world application, preparing students not just for exams but for life itself. The emphasis on experiential learning, project-based activities, and vocational training further reinforces this goal. Additionally, adequate resources and support systems must be in place to ensure that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to quality life skills education. The collaboration between government bodies, educational institutions, teachers, parents, and communities will be vital in realizing the vision of a holistic, inclusive, and future-ready education system. The vision as well aligns with the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. NEP's approach to life skills education reflects a comprehensive strategy to prepare students for personal success, social responsibility and enriched citizenship in the 21st century. Policy implementation strategies of-course require a shift towards learner-centric approaches, including experimental learning, project-based learning, and competency-based assessments. The NEP 2020's focus on life skills education represents a progressive shift towards nurturing well-rounded individuals capable of dealing with the complexities of modern life. By prioritizing these essential skills, the policy has the potential to transform India's educational landscape and empower the next generation to lead fulfilling and impactful lives.

III. CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of policy implementation identifies some challenges including resource constraints, inadequate infrastructure, traditional attitudes towards education and teacher training. The efforts for implementation need to be well studied and evaluated in a methodical manner in order to draw long term effective solutions to address the concern of educating the diverse population of India.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enhancing teacher training programs to equip educators with pedagogical skills for life skills education
- Strengthening collaboration between schools, communities and stakeholders to support holistic student development.
- Integrating life skills assessments into existing evaluation frameworks to measure student progress effectively.

V. CONCLUSION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a significant step towards overhauling India's educational landscape, emphasizing holistic development and the acquisition of essential life skills. Through its multifaceted approach, the policy seeks to equip students with critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, emotional intelligence, and other competencies crucial for thriving in the 21st century. In conclusion, the NEP 2020 marks a significant step towards life skills education system into India's educational landscape, meanwhile multifaceted challenges in successful implementation are to be addressed. The NEP 2020 represents a significant shift from traditional content-heavy and rote-learning approaches to a more holistic and multidisciplinary curriculum. By incorporating real-world skill education, NEP 2020 aims to develop not only academic expertise but also critical leadership skills in students. The success of this policy will depend on the effective implementation at the ground level, ensuring that the envisioned changes translate into tangible outcomes.



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