National Educational Policy 2020 - Heart of Sustainable Development Goals 2030

Seema A. Patil

Assistant Professor, TMV'S Lokmanya Tilak Law College, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

Education is a fundamental human right, which provides knowledge and skills to people to increase employment prospects, reduce poverty and improve health and wellbeing. The road to achieving quality education, which is the backbone and basis of every society's development, is through education policy. The concept of sustainable development is equally important for society's growth. The effects of human society on the environment give rise to the idea of sustainable development. Sustainable development is the idea that human societies must live and meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable Development Goals 2030, which are focused on transforming the world, were established in order to achieve sustainable development throughout the globe. Education is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which includes total 17 goals one of which, Goal No. 4 purely emphasizes on educational quality, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone. After thirty years, the present administration in India has introduced the National Education Policy (NEP-2020), which focuses on achieving quality education and sustainable development for the nation.

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is a blueprint for a new India that aims to reform the educational system. This policy was approved on July 29, 2020, by Indian cabinet. The NEP 2020 is also in the line of Goal 4 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG 2030), which clearly believes quality education is the base of sustainable development. NEP 2020 will strengthen all the citizens of the country by enhancing their skills and knowledge. Furthermore, it clearly talks about the complete modernizing of Indian educational system from pre-primary to higher education along with curricular reform to institutional reform in a phased manner, which will help India to achieve SDG objectives.

Education for Sustainable development is a lifelong learning process and very important aspect of quality education. The development of information, skills, values, and behavior essential to build a sustainable world is usually defined as education for sustainable development. It provides learners knowledge, skill, values of all ages and also an agency to address interconnected global challenges including climate change, loss of biodiversity, unsustainable use of resources, and inequality. It empowers learners of all ages to make informed decisions and take individual and collective action to change society and care for the planet. It develops the intellectual, socio-emotional and behavioral dimensions of learning and covers learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment itself.

In present article researcher study the role of NEP 2020 for achieving quality education and also analysis how quality education is foundation for achieving every goal of Sustainable Development 2030.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, National Education Policy, United Nations, Sustainability, Quality Education

Introduction

> "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence".

> - Rabindranath Tagore [1]

Education is one of the most vital mechanisms in a country's progress and it is very important to keep improving our education system and programme with the frequently changing times. It is a best tool for achieving economic and social mobility.

Ancient Bharat was renowned for its strong philosophy, scientific approach, and spiritual knowledge, but such system was decline over time due to the introduction of Macaulay's system, which was intended to produce a labour force to support the colonial rulers. With the implementation of Macaulay's system, the ancient Indian educational system was either eradicated or abandoned under the Colonial regime. Thus, the legacy and significance of the old Indian knowledge system were never passed on to succeeding generations of India. In the year 1968, 1986 education policies were passed but such policy was lacked multidisciplinary approach, coordination among the funding agencies, and paid little attention to the problem-solving nature of research. So after 34 years new National Education Policy was passed. The NEP 2020 has put more of an emphasis on indigenous culture, Indian languages, and experiences that incorporate scientific dynamics of several discipline genres that started in elementary school and continued through higher education.[2]

In ancient India the aim of education was not only the acquisition of knowledge but in that time, education was centred on the total realization and liberation of the self. A quality education is the foundation of sustainable development, the main aim of which is to achieve universal quality education for all.

The new national Education Policy 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 4 share the goals of universal quality education and lifelong learning. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the government's flagship program, aims to provide all Indians with a high-quality education, and is supplemented with specific programs for nutritional assistance, higher education, and teacher training.[3]

History of Education Policy in India

Education policy means the plans, rules, and regulations that manage the operation of education system. The policy framed by the Government related to the educational sector is necessary for the uniformity in this sector. For development of strong and secure nation proper plan and policies are require. Since the

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[1] https://ankurkashyap85.medium.com/is-it-time-to-rethink-about-meaning-of-education-23d46c2ee1c
[2] NEP 2020: National Research Foundation paves a way for self-reliant India. https://www.academics4nation.org/
[3] https://in.one.un.org/page/sustainable-development-goals/quality-education-in-india-sdg-4/

emergence of Civilization, educational institutions have existed in India. Even before independence, educational policies were existed in India. In ancient India, the main object of education was religion and that time no significant efforts were made to universalization of education. In that time, education system was monopolized by a few groups and all people were not able to access education. In ancient era, educational opportunities based on Cast, gender, religion of individual and these factors determine to whom the education was accessible.[4]

During the British period western education was introduced which has important impact on the emergence of an education policy. At time of British ruling several charters were passed by the British government for advancement of education in India. During pre-independence period of India, the British government was the main agency for deciding the course education system and for educational administrative purposes Britishers formed different commissions like Wood's Dispatch, 1854, Hunter Commission (1882-83), Sadler Commission, Hartog commission, Sargent plan commissions. A major reform in the Indian education system was brought by Woods Education Dispatch, popularly known as 'Magna Carta of English Education in India'. The important aspect of Woods Dispatch was that it paved the path for the establishment of universities in India. The Calcutta University established in 1857, was the first Indian university of Modern India. After that, the Bombay and Madras universities were established.[5]

A new section in education policy began after independence of India. In that time, Indian education system faced number of problems and challenges in education field, thus in order to address these challenges Government of India established commissions and recommended comprehensive policies for educational problems and also for the improvement of the education system in India. After independence India adopted the Constitution in 1950 and education became the responsibility of both state and central governments. The principle of 'equality of educational opportunity' was emphasized in the Constitution, as was the accomplishment of social justice through a policy of 'positive discrimination. Education policies in independent India have been heavily impacted by the Education Commissions that have been established from time to time.[6]

The first National Education Policy was introduced in the year 1968 after independence. This is one of the very important education policies of the Government of India which was introduced by then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The main objective of this education policy was to provide free and compulsory education to fulfill the directive principles of India, improve the quality of education, Common Educational System to reduce inequality. The second education policy was introduced by then Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi in the year 1986 which has given a solid foundation to the Indian education system. This policy was modified in the year 1992. Then after 34 years, new National Education Policy 2020 come into existence which has been guided by the vast history of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge and ideas with strong foundation for the introduction of modern and more robust education system. [7]

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[4] History of Education Policy in India. http://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000033SO/P000300/M013097/ET/145258955205ET.pdf
[5] Ibid
[6] Id

"National Education Policy 2020 focuses on learning instead of studying and goes ahead of the curriculum to focus on critical thinking; National Education Policy stresses on passion, practicality and performance than on 'Process'" [8]

Sustainable Development

In the year 1987, Bruntland Commission described the concept of sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Sustainable development has four dimensions: society, environment, culture, and economics which are connected to each other.[9]

Sustainable Development Goals 2030

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were introduced in January 2016 following the Paris Conference, which brought together 184 member governments and the education sector to advance global development. The objectives are to achieve the goals and see implementation, coordination, financing, and monitoring with the help of all the world's nations. There are 17 Goals with 169 targets, which have been set for the world community for Sustainable Development.[10]

Among these 17 goals of sustainable development, Goal 4 that is 'Quality Education' has been recognized most important and basic element of sustainable development, which help to change the world in right direction. Basically, for the improvement of people's lives, standard of living and for proper use of natural resources quality education is essential factor.

The 2030 Agenda of SDG is universal, transformative, and rights-based. It is comprehensive action plan of action which involve nations, the UN system and all other parties like Government, citizens. The Agenda is the most comprehensive blueprint for eradicating extreme poverty, lowering inequality, and preserving the environment that has been developed to date. The basis of Agenda is call to action for people, planet, and prosperity. It inspires us to make the drastic changes that are urgently required to move the planet toward a sustainable and resilient course.[11]

Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development centers on quality education, which is composed of 7 outcome targets and 3 means of implementation to create action to ensure quality education. The major objective of SDG 4 is to ensure that everyone has access to high-quality education in all countries and the opportunity to learn throughout their lives. The objective of goal 4 is not only increase enrollment ratio of children in education system but also to ensure that they must achieve proper academic success with help of properly tread educators and adequate school infrastructures which will lead to positive educational outcomes. The aim of goal 4 is "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."[12]

7 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351869292_Journey_through_the_India's_National_Education_Policy_-_Previous_and_the_Present

8 https://mgcub.ac.in/pdf/NEP-2020%2027%20October_colour.pdf

9 https://www.unesco.org/en/education/sustainable-development

10 https://www.researchgate.net

11 https://www.unssc.org/sites/default/files/2030_agenda_for_sustainable_development_kcsd_primer_en.pdf

12 SDG 4 and Targets. https://campaignforeducation.org/

Necessity of NEP 2020

Every sector, regardless of subject, has rules and regulations which are require for running that certain system, and the same thing is also applying to education system, which is basis of human civilization and progress. The lack of a policy in the field of education results in a chaotic and unclear environment, which has the disadvantage of making decision-making unpredictable and inconsistent. NEP 2020 policy mainly based on human development which enabling every student to develop to their maximum potential.

The earlier educational system was operating on the directives of the NEP of 1986 and the RTE act of 2009, but huge gaps were discovered that were pulling it away from the universal aim of education. Thus, to overcome this issue there was a clear need for a reformed educational system and framework that leads India toward self-sufficiency and success in the global race for talent. The growth of any nation is determined by its working-age population and it's potential. About 60% of the population in India is between the ages of 10 and 60, and for them to succeed; they must be fully equipped with the necessary abilities, which should be given to them as a foundation in schools.[13]

New Education Policy provide balancing education to children, it means this policy is well mixture of theoretical and practical training. Actually, vocational training, internships and practical exposure if incorporated into curriculum it make graduates better at problem-solving, decision-making and better hands-on working experience.

The current 10+2 school system will be replaced by 5+3+3+4 under NEP 2020, which will include students from 3 to 18 years of age. The earlier 10+2 curriculum of the education system lacked research and skill, the new education policy aims to generate productive and engaged citizens for an all-inclusive society. As per New Education Policy, every university should aim to become multidisciplinary by 2040, which will help the country gain an accurate expertise from the graduates of the universities. Presently, current workforce mainly specializes in a particular field but with the help of new NEP it will be easy to future employees to obtain a broader perspective towards problem solving. NEP 2020 will act as a gateway for Education Technology organizations that are constructing comprehensive technologies, like Learning Management Systems, Online Labs, ERP Software, and more. Even the National Education Technology Foundation (NETF) will support modern Ed-Tech goods and services in order to improve the nation's academic environment. Additionally, the policy stated that at least 50% of students in the Elementary and secondary education and higher education systems must have access to vocational training by 2025.[14] The two key pillars for advancing society and the nation's economy are research and innovation. The National Education Policy also emphasizes research and innovation through establish technological development centers, centers in research fields, increased industry-academic links, and inter-disciplinary research, including study in the social sciences and humanities.

Role of the National Education Policy in Achieving United Nation Sustainable Development Goals

Education itself is combination of many sectors, so one strait jacket formula for each and every person does not fit to all and also it will not suit to everyone. Thus, considering different flows of education,

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[13] National education policy is need of the hour. https://www.hindustantimes.com/
[14] Why the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is the Need of the Hour. https://www.thehighereducationreview.com/

NEP 2020 came into existence. Since the NEP had come out after a period 34 years, there were lots of expectation from it and this policy almost coverd many areas of education system. The NEP 2020 gives a comprehensive foundation for a fundamental change in planning and delivering education at all levels and in all forms. This policy emphasis on multidisciplinary learning, it mainly focuses on innovation, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, and idea development. But, for implementation NEP 2020 require changes in the curriculum and pedagogy as well as the procedures, structure and educational administration systems also. New NEP is combination of the academic and vocational education which helps in overall development of children and at last it also helps in progress of Country.

Under the new policy, the government aims to bridge social gaps in participation, access, and learning outcomes in school education with a target of 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio (GEER) or zero school drop outs by 2030.[15] The NEP 2020 correlates with Goal 4 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, which states clearly that access to education is the foundation for sustainable development. The NEP offers a significant opportunity for access to lifelong learning and quality, affordable education that has the power to reshape the Indian education sector. SDG 2030 include total 17 goals out of which most of the goals will be able to achieve if quality education will be provided to children and the foundation of new NEP 2020 is also quality education which directly or indirectly helps in achieving number of SDG 2030. For the attainment and execution of SDGs societal, economic, and environmental these three criteria are very important and the basis of these criteria is education. In fact all SDG fail without quality education.

Strong educational standards will result in the production of a sufficient workforce for the nation and a contribution to its gross domestic product. Access to education, quality education, and affordability of education are all excellent ideals found in the NEP 2020. Our administration intends to implement several of these characteristics. By NEP 2020, a new India will be possible.[16]

Relation between NEP 2020 And SDG 2030
The socio-economic environment of country is not static it is ever changing which demand overall transformation of education system to achieve the goals fixed by UN from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to SDGs. In order to focus on SDG 2030 in India, a committee was established to design the NEP 2020 under the leadership of K. Kasturirangan

The main objective of NEP 2020 is to establish India as 'a global knowledge superpower' by providing quality education, by encouraging innovation and by cultivating sound research culture.[17]

The United Nations gave the world the Sustainable Development Goals, which are based on what we need to survive in a better future. The Agenda 2030 has 17 Global Goals, which are supported majority of nations. The SDGs are stated in the National Education Policy 2020 (India), which also calls for integrating these objectives into Indian educational policy. The UN has designated the decade of 2020–

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[15] https://www.indiatoday.in/education
[16] https://gpatindia.com/role-of-national-education-policy-in-achieving-un-sustainable-development-goals-experts-view/
[17] SDGs and India's New National Education Policy 2020. https://delhipostnews.com/sdgs-and-indias-new-national-education-policy-2020/

2030 as the 'decade for action'. As the epidemic hits the world, it is also beginning to be known as the decade of resilience.[18]

Quality education is the basis of goal 4 SDG 2030, which is cornerstone for the growth of nation, thus quality education and SDG 2030 go hand in hand for the good transformation of the globe. The NEP is in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which brought to the forefront access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability in education which is foundation of quality education. The Quality Education makes school and college education more exhaustive, flexible, multidisciplinary, suitable for the needs of the 21st century.

The government has formed the New Education Policy 2020, which is a significant step toward India's development and transformation for the better. The NEP 2020 says:

> "'This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st-century education, including SDG 4, while building upon India's traditions and value systems."[19]

As per the NEP, it is need of hour to shift from traditional teaching methods toward teaching students to think critically, solve problems and make them capable to adopt versatile thinks which useful for their overall progress. These new methods of teaching not only improve the students but also it also improve the socio-economic condition of India and helpful in development of the nation. NEP 2020 is part of global educational ecosystem so it also combines the global educational policy guidelines. Number of nations are the member of UNSDG 2030, and all the member countries have agreed to include education for sustainable development i.e. lifelong learning into their policies as per their national priorities which will obiviouly support sustainable development. NEP 2030 is in conformity with SDG 4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. SDG 4 Promote free primary and secondary education and universal literacy. NEP aims to ensure 100% gross enrollment of children in schools.

The another target of SDG 4 is to eliminate gender inequalities in education and guarantee equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations. On same point, NEP 2020 also highlight the significance of equality in education and vocational knowledge and has provision to integrate it in the mainstream courses. NEP 2020 introduces very innovative idea in school education where it include at least 10 days bagless periods in school through which school students will get a chance to interact with vocational experts like carpenters, artists, potters, gardeners etc at the local level to gain hands on experience. There will be internship opportunities to students to learn such skill and develop the skills.[20]

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[18] NEP and the SDGs- Are we ready for SDG 4BW, Available at: https://eklavyaparv.com
[19] Ibid
[20] Ibid, 17

Conclusion

The majority of countries today, including India, find it challenging to strike a balance between economic growth and environmental preservation. Because of this, countries may experience economic growth, but at the expense of severe environmental deterioration, which leads to social injustice and economic inequality. Education for sustainable development, or high-quality education through effective education policy, is the key to finding a balance between economic growth and environmental preservation. In India, the National Policy on Education was first drafted in 1986 and then amended in 1992. Since then, as per the requirement and changing nature of world a number of changes have taken place time to time in educational policy. It is obviously true that effective education policies always result in high-quality education in a nation. A welcome and inspired reform of India's educational system into one that is contemporary, progressive, and egalitarian is National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which is based on the principles of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability in Education. By making both school and college education more comprehensive, flexible, and appropriate to the needs of the 21st century, NEP 2020, which is associated with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD), intends to transform India into a dynamic knowledge society and worldwide knowledge superpower.

The NEP 2020 drafting committee made a great effort to create the policy. Before drafting actual educational policy, the committee member takes into account a variety of opinions, best practices in education, on-the-ground experiences, and public comments. The successful execution of NEP 2020 is depend upon how implementers identify the difficulties and attempt to overcome them. Thus, to overcome and deal with all challenges of education, great deal of acceptance, commitment, optimism, change in attitude, and mind-set is required. The future of Indian education will be impacted by NEP 2020, which moves our educational system closer to meeting international norms.