



Pratidhwani the Echo

A Peer-Reviewed International Journal of Humanities & Social Science

ISSN: 2278-5264 (Online) 2321-9319 (Print)

Impact Factor: 6.28 (Index Copernicus International)

Volume-IX, Issue-II, January 2021, Page No.159-162

Published by Dept. of Bengali, Karimganj College, Karimganj, Assam, India

Website: <http://www.thecho.in>

National Education Policy 2020- Towards a Refreshing Future

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Abstract

Education is a necessity and not a luxury. But needless to say, observing the present condition of the educational arena, it seems otherwise. Whether it be a school, college or university, it has become a status symbol to get admission in them rather than procuring the quality education which is supposed to be exuded by them! Nevertheless, the eternal objective of education has always been to attain wisdom and discretion to lead a fulfilling life. In the most humble gurukulas and ashrams of the ancient India, the values of life were very carefully instilled amongst the disciples or seekers of knowledge as the most vital part of education so that later in life the pupils developed a healthy mind, body and soul.

The National Education Policy 2020 comes as a fresh breath to dispense the staleness pervading within the existing policy of education. The present paper endeavors to analyze the NEP-2020 in the light of the present social, political and cultural conditions.

Keyword: NEP 2020, institution, school, college, university

Introduction: Education and society are indivisible entities, they mutually mirror, empower and enrich each other all along their journey towards their ultimate purpose of a self-reliant society free from bias and injustice. Rather society is that mirror which reflects the effect of every single crucial belief, dogma, policies, doctrine etc., one amongst which are the contemporary education policies prevalent within the society.

Basically in any society, few vital parameters help in the assessment of the current education system like the extent of employment opportunities, the basic temperament of a common man towards research and innovation, the outlook of society towards arts and vocational subjects, the respect an individual holds towards his own country and cultural values etc. These parameters give a valuable feedback and present a somewhat brief outline of the modifications so needed in the education policy.

Analyzing the Principles: The National Education Policy 2020 has aligned itself meticulously for creating a 'swanirbhar bharat' or self-reliant India.

The following article basically attempts to analyze the principles which formulate the National Education Policy 2020 and provide it with its completeness.

The principles upon which The National Education Policy 2020 is based can be primarily distinguished into physical, mental and psychological levels based upon the faculties they influence.

Since mind is the subtlest of the three, the principles influencing the behavioral or emotional quotient of an individual like life skills, ethics, human and constitutional values, education in public service, a rootedness and pride in India and its diverse culture and last but not the least the substantial investment in a strong, vibrant public education system which will develop the

community participation spirit amongst the students may be included. Recently in a survey it was found that reputed companies are recruiting employees with more of emotional quotient than intelligence quotient. Thereby this aspect of our educational policy will enable students to develop on a psychological or emotional level.

Similarly the principles of outstanding research, creativity and critical thinking, emphasis on conceptual understanding may help in influencing the mental attributes of the students. In the corporate world today, R&D Departments have a place that the brain holds in a body! Needless to mention that these departments function on the above mentioned principles which help to develop the user-friendly nature of a company and consequently as a by-product increase its annual turnover.

Finally the physically influencing properties of the principles upon which the National Education Policy 2020 has been founded like flexibility, no hard separations, multi-disciplinary and holistic education etc provide a wide-purview of choice according to the interest and skills of the students. In a recently published discussion on the National Education Policy 2020, Honorable Union Cabinet Minister for Education Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' quoted a student saying that now he could select and combine Ayurveda with the language Sanskrit as there are many profound instructions written in Sanskrit which would help him in his study of Ayurveda.

Creative Education: The gulf that existed between employment and education can be hoped to be bridged by the present national education policy 2020 given its flexibility that exists as one of its prominent features. It may be a long journey but every journey starts with baby steps which has already been initiated in the form of the introduction of the national education policy 2020. It is a universal fact that all children love to learn. It's simply in their nature. So why so many children dread school and does it really have to be this way.

As Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica write in their popular book 'Creative Schools', "Conventional schools were never intended to be places of joyful, creative learning. Fortunately there is an alternative to this traditional approach, and that is 'creative schools', this term does not describe schools with two hours of art class wedged between a math assessment and a grammar lesson rather it means approaching learning through a completely different perspective, by avoiding strict schedules, guidelines and frequent assessments, trying out new ways of creating the ideal learning environment for each individual pupil. Everyone learns, the teacher, the parents and the schools themselves".

The theory behind this excerpt truly materializes in the form of the very first principle upon which the National Education Policy 2020 has been founded and that is recognizing, identifying and fostering the unique capabilities of each student by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres.. The principle of multidisciplinary and holistic education will provide a potent impact on the students of performing arts, fine arts, sports etc.

It is observed that in any social order, people seem to develop a certain ideology towards a certain discipline or subject on the basis of the sustainability it provides and the respect it procures. Honestly if we consider the disciplines of performing arts, fine arts, sports etc, the society still hesitates to opt for these subjects given their uncertain future. The very first principle facilitates a renaissance in the status of all the above mentioned disciplines and its students.

In the present context, if we solely focus on the disciplines of performing arts and fine arts, it is an observation that there is an influx of unemployment in these categories which already have

institutions solely devoted to them. Every year there are thousands of students who qualify in the hope of receiving a sustainable future but are disappointed.

Tripura which belongs to the seven sister states has its own rich indigenous culture. Besides it has also accepted and cultivated the Indian heritage of Classical forms of music and arts on its fertile soil. There are talented students and promising artists who out of compulsion are forced to opt for other subjects just because of the uncertainty prevailing in their subjects of interest. Herein has come the National Education Policy 2020 as a new ray of hope in which the principles of flexibility and no hard separation between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams have been introduced in order to end the hierarchies amongst different areas of learning and to promote and preserve all kinds of talents.

Thinking Out-of-the-Box : Currently thinking out of the box is the new trend. Everybody wishes to achieve a state of ‘out-of-the-box’ mind-set. But this caliber needs an all inclusive background of logical, creative and holistic vision which thrives only in certain handful individuals.

Recently in a Radio talk show, there was an interesting narrative of this little girl Sanchita who was looked down upon by her family since she was poorer in her studies compared to her elder sister Ankita. Ankita would always score whereas Sanchita would lag behind and as a result always get scolded by her guardians and teachers. Once it happened that Sanchita’s class teacher visited her house to enquire about her poor performance in school. As he was sitting in the visitor’s room, he noticed some exceptionally beautiful pieces of art in the showcase. Upon enquiring he was told that it was the same poor girl Sanchita who had made all these artifacts and there was more in the store-room. The teacher came to know that she had this amazing talent of turning any rubbish into a piece of beauty. So as a natural instinct she would spend all her time creating beautiful pieces in her house filling up the entire space rather investing her time in her studies.

Realizing the entire situation and not uttering a word further about Sanchita’s poor performance in school, he took leave from the house. The very next day he announced that as a part of the annual fest there would be an exhibition of creativity in which the best piece of art will be awarded. Hearing this Sanchita’s joy knew no bounds, she excitedly started preparing for that exhibition. Finally the day arrived and as expected it was all praises for Sanchita who was awarded for being the best.

After many years of this incidence, the teacher along with his family member was invited in a high-profile renowned artist’s art-show. Totally unaware about what will happen next, the teacher visited the exhibition and found a young vibrant lady-artist touching his feet and welcoming him at the door of the art-show. She introduced herself as the same Sanchita and told her entire story after school. Her life had changed after that small school exhibition and she had received so much motivation that after school she dared to trod on an unusual path of art. This decision of hers was totally supported by family because their outlook too towards Sanchita had changed after that exhibition. Presently she was thriving and was leading an abundant, self-reliant, self-sufficient and a respectable life in spite of being the so called back-bencher of the school. Moreover, she was also able to support her family. Sanchita introducing her teacher to the class of elite visitors announced that she was forever grateful to her teacher and owed her success to him for recognizing her potential and showing her a way out of the so-called conventional path of career.

The above narrative spills the beans. It illustrates the prevalent social ideology about art, it demonstrates that how a small initiative taken by a teacher can completely transform a life for good, that the moral responsibility of a teacher lies also in recognizing the caliber of the students and

inspiring them to pursue the untrodden path and motivating the students to think innovatively , basically teaching them to ‘think’ out of the box.

Back to the Roots: Ancient Gurukul system of education prepared its students for every challenge that life may throw upon. There was no hierarchy and students belonging to every strata of society had to study under a common canopy of the Gurukul. This way students learnt to be sensitive to each other’s needs, likes and dislikes enabling them to extend their heart for the needy in the society later on in their lives. The ancient Gurukul tradition of education included skill-development as well as knowledge pertaining to physical, mental and psychological needs of a human being.

In the Valmiki Ramayan , it is mentioned that Lakshmana could weave beautiful and explicit ‘Parna-Kutira’s’ (huts made of leaves) which he had learnt in Gurukul. This skill came to his rescue while he willingly went on exile with his elder brother.

The principles of life skills, creativity and critical thinking included in the national education policy 2020 very well seem to align with our ancient educational policy of Gurukulas. Conclusively it can be said that the National Education Policy 2020 has endless possibilities which would help re-establish the ‘Bharat’ which has been recognized as the Universal Guru and get back the hidden glory of the Golden Bird, the *Sone ki chidiya*.

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