



# **Atmanirbhar Bharat and Education Policy.**

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## **Abstract**

Atmanirbhar Bharat is not a new concept. Indian freedom fighters under British rule used this concept to fight against British policies and they used the term Swadeshi instead of Atmanirbhar Bharat. Both the concepts are almost similar and the main objective behind it is to prepare India to become self-reliant for the future. Therefore, the Government of India is initiating several policies and programs for self-reliance in all dimensions of functioning such as economic, social, environmental, political, cultural and educational. Educational sector is very basic and important sector because education plays a very important role in the development of the country. Therefore, to achieve the Atmanirbhar Mission through education, India has made several reformative changes and introduced the New Education Policy 2020. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) has different views as compared to the old education policies and aims to enhance learning beyond extended. It is Encouraging students to leverage their real-world experiences, excellence in higher education, experiential learning through the development of professional skills, quantitative thinking and promoting research and innovation. This paper sheds light upon the major reforms in the education system undertaken to achieve the Atmanirbhar Bharat mission.

**Keywords:** Atmanirbhar Bharat, Indian Education System, Vocal for Local, National Education Policy, NEP-2020.

## **Introduction:**

There are no hard separations between the arts and sciences, extracurricular activities and extracurricular activities, or academic and vocational streams. This gave the students the freedom, responsibility, and independence to pick the learning courses and programmes that matched their interests, passions, and expertise. This is a form of Atmanirbharta where all students will discover their passions, overcome their weaknesses, tap into their full potential, and contribute positively to society with a focus on equity and inclusion. "Vocal for Local," the slogan and the underlying message, echoed the desire to promote and help establish Indian products as a global brand. NEP, 2020 aims to instil the crucial confidence needed for the call for a self-sufficient nation to be successful and envisions an education system rooted in Indian morals that directly contributes to transforming India, or Bharat, sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, making India a global knowledge superpower (Jha, et.al. 2020).

The development of humanistic, ethical, constitutional, and universal values such as truth (satya), righteous behaviour (dharma), peace (shanti), love (prem), nonviolence (ahimsa), scientific temper, citizenship values, and life skills will all be included in value-based education. Lessons on seva/service and participation in community service programmes will also be seen as crucial components of a holistic education. In order to enhance quality, affordability, equity, access, and accountability in education, the Union Cabinet approved the National Education Policy in July 2020. This policy aims to bring about dramatic changes in the Indian educational system. The NEP 2020 drafting committee undertook extensive efforts to develop a policy that takes into account state and local governments, professional opinions, international best practises in education, practical knowledge, and stakeholder participation. The goal is high, but how it is carried out will indicate whether it really encourages an inclusive education that prepared students for the profession.

### **A Glimpse of the Indian Education System:**

The students at the revered Gurukul system of Indian education used to reside at Guru's place, learn and acquire skills and practices, which was later implemented to find solution to the real-life problems, and live meaningfully (Ved, 2007; Kumar, 2016; & National Policy on Education, MHRD 2020). Knowledge-acquisition was a dynamic process that involved interaction with real-world events and the natural world rather than being restricted to books and memorization of facts. The Guru spread the knowledge that goes beyond religion, literature, scriptures, medicine, astrology, warfare, statecraft, history, public affairs, among others. The quality of education was unparalleled and students from all over the world used to visit India to acquire knowledge. Indian history shares a rich heritage with the world, with the likes of Nalanda, Taxila and Vikramshila, each of which stood out in their era as world-class universities. Over time, especially with the advent of the British and the stifling colonialism, this ancient Indian education system was systematically and strategically dismantled. The larger objective was to create a subservient and loyal native class that would further British interest in India, with the aim of introducing English education in India and building a class to act as interpreters between the government and the masses.

In 1835 first time Lord Macaulay introduced English education for Indians, this approach intervene the Indian education system. Since its independence, India has had three different education policies namely- National Policy of Education (NPE) 1968, National Policy of Education 1986 and the new National Education Policy 2020. All the three Education Policies have had different objectives and approaches according to the needs of the then India and its population.

The first National Education Policy was introduced in 1968 with the prominent objectives of education for employability; promote national growth and integration, universalization of education and emphasis on moral values among other objectives. In the year 1986 the second National Education Policy came and the main objective is to reducing inequalities in education opportunities, continual learning and specialization in education, and



standardization in administration and regulation mechanism in HEIs among other objectives. And the third policy is New Education Policy 2020 aims at catering to the changing spectra and perspective of the industrial revolution, and wants to mould the future Indian workforce into holistic and complete individuals capable of independent decision making, independent action and producing independent progress (National Policy on Education 1968; 1986; New Education Policy, 2020).

### **Highlights of the New Education Policy 2020:**

The NEP suggests directional changes in the whole educational set up from schools to higher educational institutions. With the motto of expansion and excellence the NEP lays stress on skilling with theory which is a forward looking and futuristic move. The policy suggests radical overhauling of the educational structure so as to prepare students to take on new challenges. The present 10+2+3 educational pattern will be replaced by a more specialized and multidisciplinary 5+3+3+4 structure labeled as foundational, preparatory, middle and secondary stages respectively. And expansion of online education is another important aspect duly addressed in the National Education Policy 2020 (Sharma, 2021). The conception of one nation- one education can be the agent that would potentially remove social and economic inequalities from the educational system. The National Working President of the Forum of Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste Legislators and Parliamentarians, Mr Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal has, during an interview with The Deccan Herald in September 2019 stated, “if we really need to battle and root out discrimination, then it ought to begin from schools. We have such a lot of forums, why ought to we've got so many forums in the first place. Let this country have a single board, which will monitor education from a very early stage” (UNESCO, 2013).

The vision of NEP is rest lies on the implementation and its roadmap, which will determine how far it is able to foster universal education, job creation, skill acquisition, equity, world class universities, and subsequently assist in building a self-reliant Bharat. NEP-2020 helps students to improve their skill, and build perfect-professional personality to make India a developed, digital and self-reliant country (Singh, & Malik, 2021). An important modification in NEP 2020 is the suggestion to set up the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI), as an umbrella body for higher education, excluding medical and legal education HECI is aiming at reforming the higher education sector.

NEP 2020 also allows foreign universities and colleges to come to India and this brings out a modification for the domestic institutions to improve the quality of education provided by them. Another significant modification the NEP 2020 suggests that the National Testing Agency will serve as a premier, expert, single testing board to conduct entrance examinations for undergraduate and graduate admissions and fellowships in Higher Education Institutions (Kurien, & Chandramana, 2020). Additionally, policy also allowing foreign universities will enable world- class education available locally at a significantly lower cost without travelling and will considerably degrees the human capital migrating to other countries for study and job prospects. The Indian higher education system is providing all the opportunity for foreign universities to set up campuses in the country.

## Conclusion

The policy introduces a complete gamut of modifications and reads largely as a truly progressive document, with a firm grasp on the current socio-economic topography and the prospect of future uncertainty. Instead of waiting for a new education policy every ten years for a change in curriculum, this will enable the educational system to continuously improve itself. Overall, the NEP 2020 talks the need to develop professionals in several of fields ranging from Agriculture to Artificial Intelligence. India needs to be ready for the future.

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