



DAILY EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

TOPIC

**NEP 2020 IN THE CLASSROOM:
FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE**

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Context

- The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** has been hailed as a transformative framework for India's education system. However, translating policy into practice presents unique challenges and opportunities.

Constitutional Status of Education in India

Fundamental Right

- Article 21A:** It was introduced through the **86th Amendment in 2002**, guarantees the **Right to Education**.
 - It mandates **free and compulsory education** for children aged **6 to 14 years**.
- Article 30:** It grants minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Directive Principles of State Policy

- Article 45:** It directs the State to provide early childhood care and education for children below the age of six years.

Fundamental Duty

- Article 51A(k):** It places a fundamental duty on parents and guardians to provide opportunities for education to their children **aged 6 to 14 years**.

Education in the Seventh Schedule

- Initially, education **was part of the State List**, meaning states had full control over educational policies.
- However, the **42nd Amendment Act of 1976** moved **education to the Concurrent List**, allowing **both the central and state governments** to legislate on educational matters.
 - It enabled national policies like the **NEP 2020**, by replacing the **Education Policy of 1986** and uniform standards across states.

Earlier Education Policies in India

- National Education Policy 1968: Based on recommendations of Kothari Commission.
- Second National Education Policy 1986
- NEP 2020, and National Curriculum Framework For Implementation of NEP 2020.

Key Highlights of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

School Education Reforms

- 5+3+3+4 School Structure:** Replaces the traditional 10+2 system with a more development-focused structure:
 - Foundational Stage (5 years):** Includes preschool and Grades 1-2 (Ages 3-8).
 - Preparatory Stage (3 years):** Grades 3-5 (Ages 8-11).
 - Middle Stage (3 years):** Grades 6-8 (Ages 11-14).
 - Secondary Stage (4 years):** Grades 9-12 (Ages 14-18).
- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):** Strengthened Anganwadi and pre-primary education.
- Mother Tongue/Regional Language:** Till Grade 5 (preferably till Grade 8), teaching will be in home language/mother tongue.
- No Rigid Separation of Streams:** Students can mix arts, sciences, vocational subjects, and extracurriculars.

- **Board Exams Reforms:**
 - ♦ Exams will be made easier with a focus on conceptual learning.
 - ♦ More flexible: Offered twice a year.
- **Universalization of Education:**
 - ♦ 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) target by 2030.
 - ♦ Open schooling for dropouts to bring them back.
- **Coding & Vocational Training from Grade 6:**
 - ♦ Students will learn coding, AI, and robotics.
 - ♦ Internships with local businesses.
- **Assessment Reforms:**
 - ♦ Competency-based learning instead of rote memorization.
 - ♦ **National Assessment Centre (PARAKH)** for monitoring.

Higher Education Reforms

- **Multidisciplinary Education Model:** Colleges and universities will become multidisciplinary institutions by 2040.
- **Flexible degree options:**
 - ♦ 1-year certificate
 - ♦ 2-year diploma
 - ♦ 3-year degree
 - ♦ 4-year research-based degree
- **Common Entrance Exams:** National Testing Agency (NTA) to conduct common university entrance tests (like CUET).
- **Higher Education Commission of India (HECI):** A single regulatory body replacing AICTE, UGC, and NCTE.
- **Increased GER Target:**
 - ♦ 50% Gross Enrollment Ratio by 2035.
 - ♦ Multidisciplinary institutions in every district.
- **Foreign Universities Allowed:** Top 100 global universities can set up campuses in India.
- **Digital & Online Learning Boost:** National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) to support digital education.
- Virtual labs & e-content for all subjects.

Teacher Education & Professional Development

- **Teacher Training Upgraded:** 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree by 2030.
 - ♦ Continuous professional development programs.
- **Performance-Based Promotions:** Teachers will be assessed based on performance & outcomes.
- **Technology Integration for Teachers:** AI-based teacher training and digital learning resources.

Vocational & Skill Development

- **Mandatory Vocational Training:** From Grade 6, students will have internships & hands-on training.
- **More Focus on Skill-Based Learning:** IT, AI, biotechnology, and entrepreneurship courses.
- **National Credit Bank System:** Credits from different institutions can be transferred.

Key Features of NEP 2020 in the Classroom

- **Foundational Learning and Early Childhood Education:** NEP 2020 places significant emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy through the **National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat)**.
- **Multidisciplinary and Holistic Learning:** The rigid separation between academic streams (Science, Commerce, and Arts) has been removed.
 - ♦ Students can now choose multidisciplinary subjects, such as mathematics with music or history with physics.
 - ♦ Schools and colleges are adopting a **Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS)** to allow more flexibility in subject selection.
- **Shift to Competency-Based Learning:** Traditional rote learning is being **replaced by competency-based education (CBE)**, where the focus is on conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.
 - ♦ The **National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023**, developed under NEP 2020, is guiding these changes, ensuring that classroom learning is more application-oriented rather than memorization-based.
- **Integration of Technology in Learning:** Digital platforms such as **DIKSHA, SWAYAM, and PM e-Vidya** are being widely used for online resources, teacher training, and interactive learning experiences.
 - ♦ Schools are incorporating virtual labs, AI-powered assessment tools, and hybrid learning models, enhancing engagement and accessibility.
- **Mother Tongue as the Medium of Instruction up to Class 5:** It is aimed at improving comprehension and cognitive development.
- **Reformed Assessment System:** Schools are adopting **continuous and comprehensive evaluation (CCE)** and **AI-based adaptive testing** to assess students' progress in real time.
 - ♦ The introduction of **PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development)** is ensuring a more competency-based assessment structure.
- **Vocational Education from an Early Stage:** NEP 2020 mandates the integration of vocational education from **Grade 6 onwards**, enabling students to learn skills like coding, carpentry, agriculture, and entrepreneurship. Internships and apprenticeships are being incorporated into school curricula, helping students develop practical skills for the job market.
- **Teacher Training and Professional Development:** Initiatives such as the **National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST)** and **Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP)** are being introduced to enhance teaching quality.
 - ♦ Online training modules on **DIKSHA** and regular upskilling programs are helping teachers adopt experiential and activity-based learning approaches in classrooms.

Challenges in Implementation

- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Many rural schools lack digital infrastructure for technology-driven education.
 - ♦ Other challenges such as availability of textbooks and trained teachers in regional languages are still being addressed.
- **Teacher Readiness:** Not all teachers are equipped to handle competency-based education and multidisciplinary learning.
- **Regional Language Implementation:** Availability of textbooks and trained teachers in multiple languages remains a concern.
- **Assessment Transition:** Moving from marks-based exams to competency-based assessments requires systemic change.

Road Ahead

- NEP 2020 is gradually transforming classrooms across India. Schools and colleges are focusing on student-centric learning, flexibility in education, and skill development.
 - ♦ With continued policy support, digital interventions, and teacher empowerment, the vision of NEP 2020 is becoming a reality.
- As education shifts from rote learning to experiential understanding, the future of Indian education looks promising, fostering critical thinkers, problem solvers, and global citizens.

Source: TH

Mains Practice Question

[Q] How can teachers effectively bridge the gap between the theoretical goals of NEP 2020 and practical classroom implementation while ensuring holistic and inclusive learning?

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