

New Education Policy 2019 – An Overview

Dr. M. Ramana,
Reader in Economics,
M.R. College (A),
Vizianagaram – 535002.
Email:dramanamullu@gmail.com

Abstract

The Draft on New National Education Policy – 2019 proposes revolutionary changes in School Education, Higher Education, Technical Education and Adult Education. Changing the syllabus according to the changing situations, expanding secondary education horizons, giving space to the student tastes and designing courses, giving importance to Indian values and traditions in lessons, implementing three languages theory, importance to vocational courses, and in addition developing computation thinking, digital library, creating scientific temper, problem solving skills, social responsibility, communication skills, moral values, improving spirit of enquiry, teaching socially sensitive things etc., are made part of the Draft. In one word, on 5 pillars called access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability, this new education policy is designed, according to the Draft. In the school education age for children education as fundamental right is increased to 3 - 18 years from the present 6 -14 years. The Draft recommends in place of the present 10+2 education system, a 5+3+3+4 method. In the realm of higher education, the Draft has divided higher education institutions into (1) institution with world-class research and research institutes with quality instruction (2) institutions with exceptional quality in teaching and having research to a certain extent (3) colleges which can rise to the level of autonomy by their own effort. It seems the Draft is more in favour of privatization of education especially higher education. Many of the recommendations are not practicable, sound and specific.

Keywords: *New Education policy, Social responsibility, Accountability, Privatization*

1. **Introduction:** The committee setup under the chairmanship of Dr. Krishnaswami Kasturi Rangan by Central Human Resource Ministry in its 484 pages report of 'New National Education Policy Draft' has proposed to cleanse the present educational policy being practiced all over the country. In one of his interviews, Dr. Rangan informed that basing on the earlier report submitted by T.S.R. Subrahmanian on new education policy and the Central Government Human Resource Development Department Report and with an intention to develop the nation, this report is prepared with great foresight. The committee has studied school education, higher education, technical education and adult education being implemented all over India and their key issues. Indicating scientific basis for their recommendations, this committee has described how this policy can be implemented at state and central levels. It has given a one month time for the suggestions of educationists. If this Draft is approved by the President of India, the national educational policy of 1968 will be nullified, bringing great changes in the national educational policy. Changing the syllabus according to the changing situations, expanding secondary education horizons, giving space to the student tastes and designing courses, giving importance to Indian values and traditions in lessons, implementing three languages theory, importance to vocational courses, and in addition developing computation thinking, digital library, creating scientific temper, problem solving skills, social responsibility, communication skills, moral values, improving spirit of enquiry, teaching socially sensitive things etc., are made part of the Draft. In one word, on 5 pillars called access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability, this new education policy is designed, according to the Draft.

2. School Education

With regard to school education, in the Draft there appears revolutionary changes. The Draft says that schools have to be recognized as school complexes and the burden of curriculum has to be lessened. In addition, secondary school education from 9 to 12, the nearby government schools offering pre-primary education to 8th Standard, Anganwadis, schools offering vocational

and adult education courses all, according to the Draft, have to be brought under these school complexes. In the school education, age for children education as fundamental right is increased to 3 - 18 years from the present 6 -14 years. Also it proposes free and compulsory education from the pre-school to 12th standard. As a result, there arises a need to shift the nursery, LKG, UKG education under the aegis of Central Women Welfare Ministry to Education Ministry Control. It proposes games and education based on discovery to children above the age of three. It recommends, in place of the present 10+2 education system, a 5+3+3+4 method. That means the primary education is four stages. They are (1) Foundation stage – this has 3 years pre-primary, 1,2 classes, (2) Preparatory stage – this has 3,4,5 classes. (3) Middle stage – this has 6,7,8 classes. (4) Secondary stage – this has 9,10,12 classes. By the time a student completes these stages, he completes 18 years. Also the Draft suggests that, in the preparation of syllabus topics local issues of states to be given priority and the books should develop feelings of unity and integrity among students. It also decides to introduce vocational courses giving importance to physical education, and give a big stage to Indian Sanatana Dharma, model reasoning etc. Giving a chance for children between age of 3 – 8 years to choose only 3 languages, to implement 'Modular Board Examination System' which enables to choose a few out of many, the Draft indicates that no student should leave school because of financial difficulties. Neuro-Physicians say that in 85% of the children between 3 – 8 years, their mind is at best to easily understand any topic. In years 3 – 8 years, 8 – 11, 11 – 14, 14 – 15 it suggests that an educational system has to be devised to suit their interests and their developmental needs. The committee chairman Dr. Kasturi Rangan tells that 10+2 system has done great good to our nation. In the efforts to unify school education system in India, this is an important factor, he says. But in accordance with the changing situation, necessities of employment, cognitive science, new launches all these have necessitated a new educational system

3.Higher Education

Among the youth of the nation of age of 19 – 23 years, only 25.8% are reaching higher education. According to MHRD report released in 2016, in America 86.7%, Australia 86%, Germany 65.5%, China 39.4% are reaching higher education level. Irregularities in organizations such as U.G.C, AICTE, NAAC, appointment of outside people, their control, higher education

has not developed, the committee points out. It also commented that education has lost encouragement because of seniority replacing merit. An eternal scarcity for primary resources, financial support has created impediments to the development of universities. Quality, not the quantity be great. In addition to fund allocations when filling up of teaching vacancies, creation of courses equal to future challenges, answerability everywhere, are realized, there is a chance of higher education falling in the right track. In the direction of creating a pyramid like system, the example and efforts of Finland, Canada, Netherland etc be our leading light. The committee also proposes things like reorganization of higher educational institutes, world class instruction, concentrating on research, reorganization of degree education into a 4 years system etc. This Draft also shows implementation of lapse free system in election of teachers, rules relating to their conditions and promotion, regular development in the job, answerability etc. The committee also proposes imparting secular education to degree and P.G students, cleansing education for teachers, creating a conducive atmosphere for learning, founding 'National Research Foundation' anew for improving research capability etc. It also proposed creating arts courses which improve knowledge of the world. With education becoming a business commodity, Arts courses have disappeared and in their place economically viable courses have entered. Evidently, these courses are run by private people. The committee aspires that admissions into higher education should rise to 50% from the present 25% by 2035. The report has divided institutions into (1) institution with world-class research and research institutes with quality instruction (2) institutions with exceptional quality in teaching and having research to a certain extent (3) colleges which can rise to the level of autonomy by their own effort. It has also proposed creation of 'National Higher Education Regulatory Authority', formation of 'General Education Council' to improve educational standards etc.

4.Challenges ahead

For the proposals to be implemented by the committee, Governments need to have huge amounts of funds. Is it possible, as the committee recommends, to raise allocations from the present 3% to 6% - a double increase? It is desirable, but impossible. As of now all the states are struggling from scarcity of funds. The result is that they are entrusting responsibility of education to the private sector, making education a business commodity. It has distanced the

poor from education. The committee has created a new trend in the scenario of education. But it is doubtful if school teachers can fit into the system and are able to teach accordingly in this new environment. Bringing medical, law, agriculture, engineering areas of education under 'Rastriya Siksha Aayog' being formed under the stewardship of the Prime Minister may face strong opposition from those fields. Already 'National Medical Commission' bill has been approved for Medical Education in 2017. What if Medical Education does not come under the aegis of 'Rastriya Siksha Aayog'? What will be the position of this bill then? For improving educational values, for providing necessary funds, control and accreditation, formulation of a separate 'National institute' has been recommended by the committee. If all these are given the high pedestal, what is going to be the position of 'Higher Education Commission of India' which is going to be formed soon? Also the Government proposes to abolish the model affiliated colleges system. It wants them to grow to the 'autonomous status', which indicates that the Government Institutions should not seek the assistance of Government. If a fee hike is contemplated, it will face opposition from the students. Students of the two Telugu states are fortunate in this aspect. Here exists a fee reimbursement scheme. But what about other states? It all appears good on its face, the four years degree system that the Draft proposes. Liberty to choose what papers to be chosen in each semester, a chance to shift from science to commerce or arts in the middle of year, - all appear nice. But all these require teaching and non-teaching staff in sufficient number. Right now most of the educational institutions do not have even half of the required staff. Popular Andhra University is a good example for this. Grading those who have courses with different combinations of subjects is very difficult. For this, the institutions have to appoint extra staff. With the aim to increase admissions by 50%, government is sanctioning extra seats in the existing educational institutions only. In the name of OBC reservations implementation, and now in the name of EBC reservations extra seats have been sanctioned. But funds and teacher posts have not been sanctioned accordingly.

5. Conclusion

Bringing lights of knowledge at the primary level and with their help producing scholars and researchers for the help of society is the goal of education. Architect of the American Constitution Benjamin Franklin formulated that 'investment made for knowledge always yields

good results'. But it is not far from the truth that this investment, instead of grooming children into scholars, is turning them into money spinning machines. The attitude of managements who seek to turn education into a business commodity is the main reason for this. These government institutions which are suffering from the severe scarcity of funds, without solving those problems, do not benefit however so many schemes are introduced. Already 6 times in 1968, 1986, 1992, 2005, 2016, 2017 – years new education policy committees have been formulated. Yet the lapses in the educational system are still continuing.

Most of the private educational institutions are functioning in narrow rooms, rented apartments, and narrow byelanes. Now here do these things find a place and remedies for them are found in the Draft? For lack of necessary educational facilities in the country, students are going abroad for quality education. Now here an effort to check this trend is found in the Draft. A control on fee system, especially in private educational institutions, is very essential. Governments have to move in this direction. If possible, basing on the talent of the educational institutes, facilities, qualification of faculty, past history etc. Institutes have to be categorized into A,B,C and then fee be decided. India is lagging behind in novel experiments. 2017-18 financial survey tells us that funds' being spent on research by China is 2.1% of its GDP, in USA it is 2.8%, in Israel 4.3% and in India it is meager 0.7%. While America, China, Germany etc, own patents in lakhs, India is lagging behind with a few thousands which is pitiable. The reason for this is absence of quality education. The committee, in its report, has discussed at several places of 'Vedic Educational System'. But this system, instead of in full, only a few things which are useful have to be contemplated for implementation. This Draft appears to incline towards Sanskrit and Hindi.

Students, if they learn 2 instead of 3 languages it will be enough. One mother tongue, second English and the third has to be left to their choice. Only a half page is allocated for Dalits and OBCs in this Draft. Even though certain things relating to them are discussed elsewhere also, it could have been better if all things had been mentioned in one place. Also for 6 to 8 classes, 15 subjects have been proposed. To fit all of them into a time table will be a difficult task. Also it requires large number of teachers for so many subjects. The Draft has laid pedestal to traditional views, of which many are unscientific, and hamper growth. How will children

grow into scholarly men, if such things are taught? Will the nation be able to progress with such citizens? No 'detention' was suggested till 8th standard. Because of this, teachers do not teach well with care. This results in lack of knowledge among students. Arts, craft, music, sports, yoga etc., are made crucial subjects. Means there is no place for curricular, extra-curricular and co-curricular topics. The Draft has suggested that all educational institutions without quality be closed. In all, the new education policy wants that education be modified to suit innate, physical and intellectual changes among children, according to the Government of India.

Select Bibliography

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