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## National Education Policy 2020 and the Concept of Assessment

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### ABSTRACT

the basic aim of National Education Policy 2020 is to revitalise the education system in India. For that, certain changes have been proposed. The present study is a humble attempt to highlight the proposed changes made in the field of assessment. It also makes an attempt to compare the assessment system proposed in NEP 2020 to that of previous policies. Descriptive and analytical in nature, the study relies on both primary and secondary source. It is felt that such study is essential to comprehend the basic principles of NEP 2020 which, in turn, will be instrumental in implementing the policies in practical terms

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### Introduction

Assessment ordinarily means the act of judging or deciding the amount, value, quality or importance of something. In other words, assessment refers to the process of testing and making a judgment about someone's knowledge. As far as examination is concerned, assessment is a practical form of measuring the competence of the students by evaluating three major factors associated to the learning objectives- knowledge, skills and attitude. NEP 2020 introduces a major change, a move from summative to formative assessment, recognizing that learning is a dynamic and continuous process that transcends the boundaries of traditional examinations. The policy underscores the importance of assessments that measure not only intellectual competence but also emotional and social expertise, often referred to as 'soft skills.' These skills include critical thinking, cultural awareness problem solving, empathy, grit,

perseverance, teamwork, leadership, and effective communication, all essential for holistic development and success in the 21st century. The impact of these assessment reforms is far-reaching. In the realm of school education, they necessitate changes in assessment practices, teacher roles, and student expectations. The integration of assessment with curriculum and pedagogy becomes imperative. In higher education, these reforms aim to elevate the quality of assessment, foster research and innovation, and grant greater autonomy to institutions. Strengthened accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms are integral components of the assessment reforms. The present study attempts to highlight the special aspects of assessment as prescribed in NEP 2020.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the study may be summarized as follows:

1. To highlight the major aspects of NEP 2020 in respect of assessment
2. To make a comparative study of previous policies and NEP 2020 in respect of assessment.

### **Methodology**

The present paper is descriptive and analytical in nature. The study is based on both primary and secondary source. The primary source consists of the Draft NEP and NEP 20230, while the secondary source comprises of articles, research papers and other writings published different journals and books. Logical regression is made whenever and wherever necessary.

### **Analysis**

A turning point in Indian education was reached with the ratification of the National Education Policy 2020 in July of that year. It is a thorough policy statement that lays out a vision for the restructuring of India's educational system at every level, from pre-kindergarten to higher education. The modernization of assessment procedures is one of the major issues covered by NEP 2020. The strategy promotes a change to a more complex and varied evaluation system in recognition of the shortcomings of conventional examination-based assessments. This change indicates a commitment to preparing students for the needs of the 21st century and is consistent with global trends in education. Continuous and comprehensive evaluation, which combines formative and summative assessments, is emphasized by NEP 2020. This method seeks to offer a more comprehensive understanding of a student's educational path by considering not only academic achievement but also traits like critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and knowledge application in real-world situations. The policy also emphasizes the value of lessening exam pressure and promoting an environment in the classroom that fosters creativity and

innovation. It also emphasizes how technology is incorporated into evaluation procedures, creating new opportunities for adaptive and customized evaluation techniques.

Objectives of Assessment Reforms in NEP 2020 :

1. **Moving Beyond Rote Memorization:** The Indian educational system has historically come under criticism for prioritizing rote memory, in which students learn facts without really understanding the underlying principles. This method frequently results in surface-level learning, where students may perform well on tests but have trouble applying their information in real-world settings. Here, it is intended to shift the emphasis from rote memorizing to a more comprehensive comprehension of the principles. This entails encouraging learners to go deeper into material, investigate its real-world applications, and understand the guiding concepts. Instead, then focusing on a student's ability to repeat facts, the NEP 2020 assessment method tries to gauge their understanding and application of knowledge.
2. **Fostering Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills:** Effective problem-solving requires the capacity to critically assess data and make defensible decisions. Both in the classroom and in the real world, these abilities are essential for success. In the past, India's assessment practices frequently prioritized memory and recall tests above critical thinking tests. Assessments that actively promote the development of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities are intended to be incorporated into NEP 2020. This entails developing examinations that call for students to use their knowledge in analytical ways, come up with solutions to challenging issues, and reflect critically on a range of topics.
3. **Reducing Exam-Induced Stress and Anxiety:** Students who take traditional exams may experience significant levels of stress and anxiety. The stress of passing a single, important exam can be harmful to a student's mental health and may not be an accurate indicator of their overall aptitude. NEP 2020 aims to reduce this stress by implementing a continual evaluation mechanism. This entails periodically evaluating pupils during the school year so they may show their understanding and development throughout time. The approach intends to lessen the severe strain associated with onetime, high-stakes tests by distributing assessments across a variety of formats and periods.
4. **Ensuring Comprehensive Skill Development:** Students are increasingly understood to require a wide range of abilities in addition to academic knowledge to succeed in the modern world. These include, among other things, digital literacy, creativity, teamwork, and communication skills. NEP 2020 aims to make sure that examinations analyse a student's development of these more

general, transferrable skills in addition to their academic proficiency. In order to prepare students for an increasingly diversified and competitive global economy, it is necessary to provide examinations that let students demonstrate their skills in areas outside the traditional subject matter

National Education Policy 2020 attempts to overhaul learning assessments from one which is accumulative and primarily tests rote memorization skills to one that is:

- Constant and determinative as well
- Stress on competence
- Variation in the nature of the progress reports
- One that inquest higher-order skills, such as critical thinking, critical analysis and speculative clarity

The progress card is proposed to be all comprehensive and panoramic, multifaceted report which properly highlight the progression and the distinctiveness of the learner. It aims to cover both self-evaluation and evaluation by peer, and the advancement of the child in venture-supported and inquiry-based learning, panel games, quiz, group work role plays, portfolios and so. Guardian-teacher meetings shall coexist with it. The basic aim is to include parents in the education system.

Some of the pivotal modifications in the system of board examinations are:

- Flexibility in selecting subjects by learners
- Evaluation of main expertise. Memorisation is given less importance.
- To reduce pressure a semester and motile system is proposed
- Redesigning of question papers of certain subjects, splitting them in two parts-MCQ and essay type questions
- Best-of-two attempts: one main assessment and the other option for reclamation
- Option to select subject levels based on the learner's interest

Students will be required to accept school evaluations in Grades 3, Grade 5, and Grade 8 so that student's learning progress may be assessed round the school years rather than assessing them just in class 10 and class 12.

PARAKH as National Assessment Centre

PARAKH stands for Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development is established as a norm-setting body. PARAKH will operate under Ministry of Human Resource Development MHRD that with certain distinct objectives like:

- Laying down criterion, quality, evaluation code of learners
- Mentoring the State Achievement Survey and undertaking the National Achievement Survey
- Auditing achievement of learning outcomes in the country, and
- Spurring and assisting the school-boards to deviate their evaluation design in accordance with National Education Policy 2020

PARAKH will make suggestions to country's school boards in respect of new assessment patterns as suggested in the new policy and recent research. Promotion of partnership or cooperation between the school-boards is a major role to be played by PARAKH.

In post independent India, several attempts had been made to revitalise education system. Thus, Radhakrishnan Commission of 1948-49, Mudaliar Commission of 1952-53, Kothari Commission of 1964-66 put great accentuation on the need for refurbishing evaluation of students through examinations to initiate standard and determination.

National Policy on Education of 1968 & 1986 & 1968 advocated a deflection in the focus of examination from certification to learning progress. 1986 National Policy on Education recommended for abrogation of overindulgent elements like subjectivity and chances, discouraging the act of memorization. Launch of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, appliance of grade in lieu of mark, Initiation of semester system from secondary stage in a phased manner were some recommendations.

The National Education Policy 2020 introduces a profound transformation in the way assessment is conducted in school education. NEP 2020 necessitates significant changes in assessment practices at the school level. The shift from summative to formative assessment implies that schools must incorporate regular assessments that gauge a student's progress throughout the academic year. Teachers are encouraged to employ diverse assessment tools, including quizzes, projects, presentations, and observations, to provide continuous feedback to students. With a reduced reliance on high-stakes final exams, students experience less examination-related stress. Throwing more weight on formative assessment enables teachers to identify each learner's strengths and weaknesses. This individualized

approach to learning allows educators to provide targeted support to help students excel. Teachers are encouraged to adopt learner-centric and interactive pedagogical approaches. Classroom activities should not centre around content knowledge but they should encourage problem-solving skills and should induce critical thinking. In summary, NEP 2020's assessment reforms in school education signify a move towards a more holistic, learner-centric, and skills oriented approach to assessment. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) introduces significant assessment reforms that extend into the realm of higher education. This section delves into the impact of NEP 2020's assessment reforms on higher education institutions in India. Higher education institutions are encouraged to prioritize research and innovation. Assessment practices should align with the development of research skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities among learners. NEP 2020 promotes greater autonomy for higher education institutions. They have the flexibility to design their own curricula and assessment methods, aligning them with the specific needs of their students and disciplines. The policy places a strong emphasis on accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms. Institutions are encouraged to seek accreditation to ensure that their assessment practices meet established standards.

## Conclusion

To conclude, NEP 2020's assessment reforms have the power to completely transform the Indian educational system by promoting a more thorough and student-centered evaluation strategy. Although there are implementation issues, the intended benefits of these reforms can be achieved with coordinated efforts in teacher training, technological infrastructure, and stakeholder involvement. This strategy is a brave move in the direction of developing well-rounded, critical-thinking people prepared for the challenges of the twenty first century. There are challenges, no doubt. Strategic measures must be adopted to address precarious issues in order to implement NEP 2020 in higher education successfully. Some prominent issues like the issues of accessibility, quality of teaching, research, and innovation and assessment. Concentrated, unified and practical effort from the stakeholders is crucial for successful implementation of NEP 2020.

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