
Fostering Innovation and Creativity Across Educational Stages: A Deep Dive into NEP 2020's Vision

Nisha Rani

Research Scholar, Department of Management Studies
Central University of Haryana, Jant-Pali, Mahendergarh (Haryana)
nishasaini2810@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

A revolutionary change in India's educational system, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 seeks to promote creativity and innovation at all learning levels. This study explores the strategic framework of NEP 2020 and examines its goal of fostering innovation and creative thinking in students from elementary school through higher education. The study sheds insight on the possible influence on students' cognitive and creative skills by analysing the policy's emphasis on experiential learning, holistic development, and interdisciplinary methods. The study also offers perspectives on how NEP 2020 could change the overall trajectory of Indian education in the future. The significance of developing an innovative mindset and creative abilities to meet the demands of a fast-changing global landscape is shown by this research through a critical review of vital policy initiatives.

1. Introduction

National Education Policy, 2020

Everyone needs to receive an education in order to develop their full potential as a person, create an inclusive society, treat everyone equally, and advance the nation's overall development—that is, its

social, cultural, political, technological, and sustainable transformation. With the primary goal of ensuring that everyone has access to high-quality education free from discrimination, the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is the first education policy of the twenty-first century. It is based on the fundamental pillars of "Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability". The New Education Policy (NEP) was adopted by the Union Cabinet in July of 2020. It will take the place of the 1986 National Policy on Education. It is a comprehensive framework with an emphasis on education from the country's primary level to higher education. To emphasise education and learning, innovation, and creativity at all educational levels (pre-primary through higher education), the Indian government also renamed the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to Ministry of Education (MOE), as stated in the NEP.

Main Emphasis of NEP, 2020 :-

- A. Development of curriculum, pedagogy & other policies keeping in mind diversity and local needs.
- B. Equal access to education & inclusive education.
- C. Participation of community in school & other educational institutions activities.
- D. Use of ICT in educational planning, implementation and its management.
- E. Emphasis on conceptual understanding rather than rote-learning and exam oriented.
- F. Identifying unique capabilities and qualities of each student.
- G. To encourage innovation, creativity and critical thinking.
- H. Emphasis on continuous review of educational programme and regular assessment by experts in education.

Innovation & Creativity at different levels of education in context of NEP 2020

Innovation means originality of ideas. Innovation is done in various fields like in science, technology & industry. According to Oxford dictionary of English "Innovation is making changes to something established by introducing something new". To put it another way, an innovation is any project, concept, or practice that a person or other adoption units consider to be novel. It is related to ingenuity, creativity and contextual embeddedness.

Keeping this in mind, to bring innovation & creativity in education various provisions are made in NEP 2020, which are as follows :-



- A. **DIKSHA** - A nationwide library of excellent materials on basic literacy and numeracy is called Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA).
- B. **Technology assisted high-quality enjoyable and inspirational books for students** -To raise the standard of education, a variety of technology-assisted and motivational books will be available in local public libraries as well as schools.
- C. **Open & Distance Learning (ODL) programmes** - Both State Open Schools and the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) provide these. The individuals in India who are unable to attend a physical school would have access to teaching and learning via the use of innovation and technology.
- D. **Competency based teaching, learning & education** to achieve the aims of education.
- E. **Multilingualism teaching and learning** - to support language instruction in all languages by utilising cutting-edge, hands-on techniques like gamification and apps.
- F. **Promoting and encouraging the high performing Indian Universities** to set campuses in other countries and creating opportunities for the top universities of other countries to set up in India.
- G. **Inculcating mathematical and computational thinking** needed in professions involving Artificial Intelligence. It is emphasised throughout the schooling years with the help of variety of innovative methods.
- H. **Establishing centres** for technological development, start-up incubation, and cutting-edge research to foster creativity and innovation among student populations.
- I. **Adult education** for 23 years to 35 years of age to achieve the aim of 100% literacy rate.
- J. **Enabling higher education institutions' (HEI) faculty** to carry out innovative teaching, research, and service in whichever way they perceive appropriate.
- K. **National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)** - It is an independent organisation that will be founded to give free ideas on how to utilise technology to enhance teaching, learning, planning, assessment, administration, and other aspects of education in both secondary and postsecondary settings.
- L. **Creation** of digital infrastructure, digital repository, digital content for online education.
- M. **Encouragement of innovation and professional, technical education** in domains such as technology, engineering, hotel management, and medicine, among others.
- N. **Promotion of research** in art, history, language, culture, humanities along with innovations in the science and social sciences for the overall and inclusive progress of a nation.

O. To raise India's investment in innovation, research, and creativity, which is at just 0.69% of GDP at the moment, whereas it is 2.8% in the USA, 4.3% in Israel, and 4.2% in South Korea.

2. Review of Literature

At the level of School Education

At school education level, in following ways innovation and creativity is included

A. Universal access to Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) –

- i. From age 3-6 years in ECCE (Anganwadi/Pre-school/Balvatika).
- ii. From age 6-8 years in class 1st and 2nd in primary school.
- iii. Learning is flexible, activity-based, inquiry-based, multi-level and play-based.
- iv. NCERT will create the National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Education (NCPFECE).

B. Transforming Curricular & Pedagogical Structure

It is (5+3+3+4) in which 3 years in Anganwadi/Pre-school and 12 years in school.

- i. Foundational stage (5) – Play-based, activity-based.
- ii. Preparatory stage (3) – Discovery and interactive classroom learning
- iii. Middle stage (3) – Experiential learning in the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, humanities, etc.
- iv. Secondary stage (4) – Multidisciplinary study, greater critical thinking, flexibility and students choice of subjects.

C. Students' physical and mental health and well-being are prioritised.

D. Transforming teaching-learning process - From rote learning and teaching innovative pedagogy i.e., experiential learning, integrated pedagogy, promotion of peer tutoring, the academic calendar includes bag-free days, and classes 6–12 employ and integrate technology into their pedagogy.

E. Holistic Report Card - Application of artificial intelligence (AI) to determine a person's unique ability. The establishment of PARAKH, the National Centre for Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development.

F. Integrating Vocational Education at all levels from class 6th onwards.

- G. Integrating ICT (Information & Communication Technology)** in the classroom teaching and learning.
- H. Indian Sign Language (ISL)** will be taught as a subject.

At the level of Higher Education

At higher education level, in following ways innovation and creativity is included

- A. Transforming HEI's** into large multidisciplinary universities, colleges and HEI clusters/ Knowledge Hubs.
- B. Creation** of independent degree-granting colleges, research-intensive universities, and teaching-intensive universities.
- C.** Creation of **multidisciplinary holistic education** at the undergraduate level.
- D.** Formation of the **Academic Bank of Credit (ABC)**, which would contain the digital credits that students have earned.
- E.** There is **no difference between public and private higher education institutions** because they are both subject to the same regulations, accreditation requirements, and academic standards.
- F.** There will be provisions for **multiple entry/exit options** in under-graduate and post-graduate programme.
- G. Multidisciplinary Education & Research University (MERU)** will be established which will open up new opportunities for India's youth.
- H. A Special Education Zone (SEZ)** will be established for the nation's underprivileged areas, where further coordinated efforts will be required to fully execute all programs and regulations.
- I.** The enhancement of national institutions and the expansion of higher education programs that employ the mother tongue or local language as the primary language of teaching will contribute to the **promotion of classical languages and literature.**
- J. Promotion of lok vidya, or traditional arts,** to help students have a deep understanding of their own cultural heritage, history, and customs.
- K.** To establish, activate, evaluate, and accept the educational vision, among other things, the **Central Advisory Board of Education (CARE)** should be strengthened.
- L.** Creation of the **National Research Foundation (NRF)** to support research in higher education institutions (HEIs) and to ensure sufficient funding for research across all fields.

Professional and Technical Education

In following ways innovation and creativity is included in professional & technical education;

- A. Establishment of** stand-alone technical universities, health science universities, legal and agricultural universities with the main aim to innovate technical education and to create multi-disciplinary institutions.
- B. Encouragement of innovation and technical education** in domains such as catering technology, hotel management, town planning, etc.
- C. The enhancement of agricultural disciplines' capacity and quality** is vital to boost agricultural production by producing graduates with higher levels of expertise.
- D.** In order to prepare future solicitors and judges, **state institutions that provide legal education** should think about **providing bilingual instruction** in both English and the state language of the institution.

Adult Education & Lifelong Learning

In following ways innovation and creativity is included in adult education and lifelong learning

- A. Integration of Adult Education Centres (AEC)** with Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) and other public institutions.
- B.** For adult education, **top-notch technological choices have been developed**, including satellite-based TV channels, online courses and modules, and applications.
- C. Using public libraries and school buildings** for adult education programs on the weekends and after hours.
- D.** To strengthen initiatives for adult education and literacy, **states will collaborate with non-governmental organisations and other community groups.**
- E. Improving library books' online accessibility** and expanding the reach of **digital libraries.**
- F.** Every **community and educational institution** will be fortified and updated to provide a sufficient number of books to meet the requirements of every student.
- G. The curriculum of the adult education** includes the following five types of programmes:
 - i. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
 - ii. Critical Life Skills
 - iii. Vocational Development Skills

- iv. Basic Education
- v. Lifelong/Continuing Education

Online and Digital Education

In following ways innovation and creativity is included in online and digital education;

- A. Broadening of already available online learning systems**, which includes MOOCS, SWAYAM, DIKSHA, etc.
- B. Emphasis on blended learning** i.e., traditional methods of learning plus online learning methods like learning through ZOOM App, Google Classroom, Google Meet (which are extensively used in COVID-19).
- C. Expansion and promotion of ICT based educational institutions and digital platforms.**
- D. Conducting pilot studies** to check the effectiveness of online and digital education.
- E. Creation of virtual labs** for students for gaining practical knowledge.
- F. Providing e-content in regional languages.**
- G. Utilising technology** in:
 - i. Education Planning
 - ii. Teaching, Learning and Assessment
 - iii. Administration and Management
 - iv. Regulation, Self -disclosure and minimum human interface.

3. Conclusion

India's educational system underwent a dramatic paradigm change with the adoption of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which places a strong emphasis on the development of creativity and innovation as fundamental skills at all educational levels. With its emphasis on experiential learning, holistic growth, and multidisciplinary methods, NEP 2020 has the potential to significantly enhance students' cognitive and creative capacities, as this study has shown. Through the integration of these features, the policy seeks to promote an educational climate that fosters curiosity, critical thinking, and lifelong learning, while also providing students with the skills they need to flourish in a fast-changing global world.

But accomplishing NEP 2020's aspirational objectives will require overcoming implementation roadblocks including making sure teachers have proper training, infrastructure, and alignment across various educational environments. In order to completely attain the anticipated goals of greater creativity, innovation, and entirety educational excellence, India's progressive policy will need to be continuously evaluated and adjusted. NEP 2020 ultimately holds the power to reshape the future of Indian education and establish the country as a pioneer in nurturing the upcoming generation of creators and intellectuals.

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