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National Education Policy 2020: Envisioning Educational Transformation
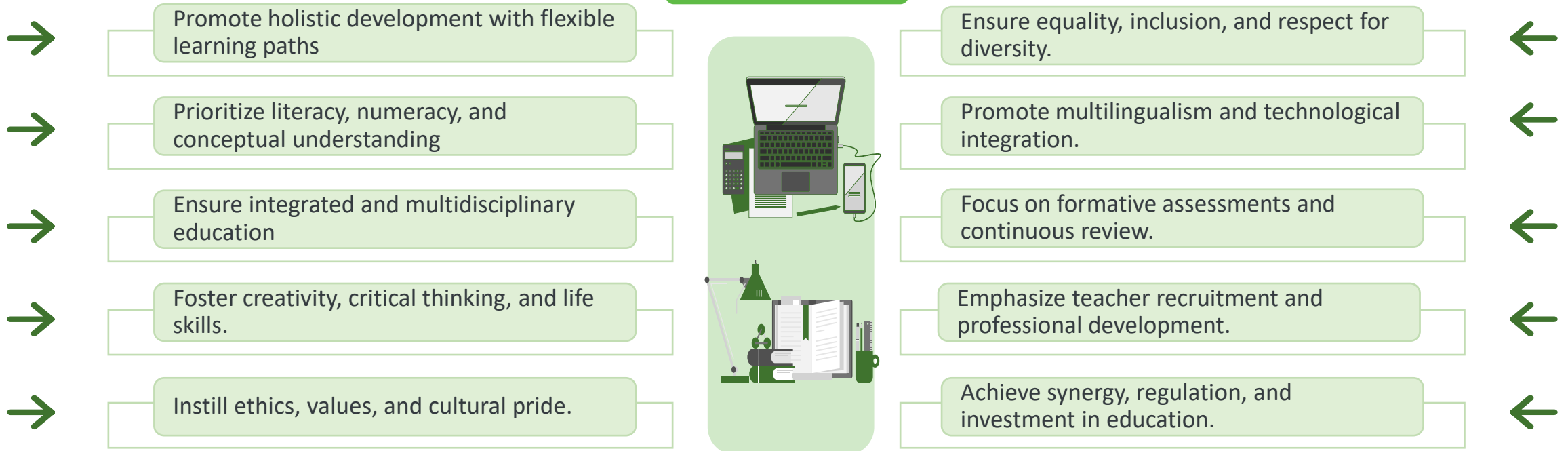
August 2024

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Overview of National Education Policy

The **National Education Policy (NEP)**, the **3rd** major educational reform after NEP 1968 and 1986, was shaped by the Dr. K. Kasturirangan led committee in 2017 and approved by the Union Cabinet on July 29, 2020. This policy introduces a revised **5+3+3+4** pedagogical structure for ages 3-18, replacing the traditional 10+2 system.

Key Principles

→ Promote holistic development with flexible learning paths

→ Prioritize literacy, numeracy, and conceptual understanding

→ Ensure integrated and multidisciplinary education

→ Foster creativity, critical thinking, and life skills.

→ Instill ethics, values, and cultural pride.

← Ensure equality, inclusion, and respect for diversity.

← Promote multilingualism and technological integration.

← Focus on formative assessments and continuous review.

← Emphasize teacher recruitment and professional development.

← Achieve synergy, regulation, and investment in education.

Source: National Education Policy

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New Pedagogical Structure

Private schools are not mandated to implement NEP 2020. However, those that implement it have the flexibility to selectively adopt the aspects of the policy that best align with their needs.

Stage	Foundational	Preparatory	Middle	Secondary
Grades	Preschool, 1-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
Ages	3-8 yrs	8-11 yrs	11-14 yrs	14-18 yrs
Features	• No uniforms/exams • Flexible, play-based & activity-oriented learning • No standardized curriculum.	• Exams are introduced. • Introduction of light textbooks, structured, interactive learning. • Formal medium of instruction.	• Subject-focused, abstract, & experiential learning. • Vocational/Technical education • Optional language and Internship programs	• Multidisciplinary study with greater depth. • Emphasis on critical thinking • Optional Foreign language

Source: National Education Policy

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Institutional Restructuring

The Academic Bank of Credits, established in July 2021 under NEP 2020, digitally stores and allows the transfer of semester credits across Indian universities.

A) Graduation
- Certificates - awarded after 1 year
- Diplomas - awarded after 2 years
- Bachelor's Degree – awarded after 3 years
- Multidisciplinary Bachelor's Degree (Honours) - awarded after 4 years

C) Masters & Ph.D.
- Master's course duration options:
  2 years post a 3-year Bachelor's
  1 year post a 4-year Multidisciplinary Bachelor's
- Ph.D. program course duration:
  4 years and require a Master's or a 4-year Multidisciplinary Bachelor's.
- M.Phil. will be discontinued
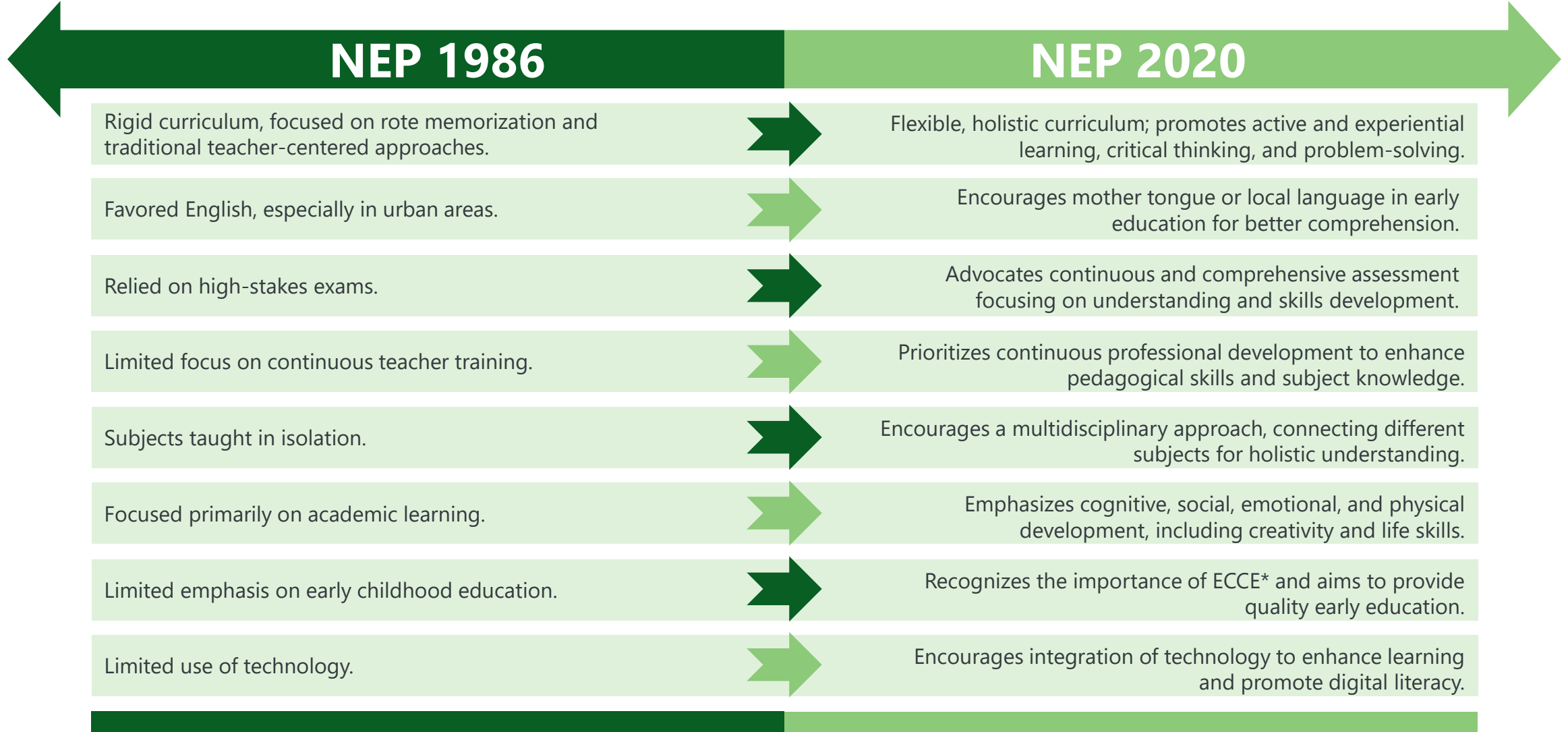

B) Bachelors in Education
- B.Ed. course duration options:
  4-years post 12th grade
  2-years post 3-year Bachelor's
  1-year post 4-year Bachelor's or a Postgraduate degree.
- By 2030, a B.Ed. degree qualification will be mandatory for teaching professionals.

D) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- Include research-intensive and teaching-intensive universities.
- Autonomous colleges will focus on undergraduate degrees.
- Over 15 years, affiliated colleges will transition to autonomous status.
- Grading will be criterion-based, focusing on individual improvement.

Source: National Education Policy

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Then v/s Now

NEP 1986	NEP 2020
Rigid curriculum, focused on rote memorization and traditional teacher-centered approaches.	Flexible, holistic curriculum; promotes active and experiential learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving.
Favored English, especially in urban areas.	Encourages mother tongue or local language in early education for better comprehension.
Relied on high-stakes exams.	Advocates continuous and comprehensive assessment focusing on understanding and skills development.
Limited focus on continuous teacher training.	Prioritizes continuous professional development to enhance pedagogical skills and subject knowledge.
Subjects taught in isolation.	Encourages a multidisciplinary approach, connecting different subjects for holistic understanding.
Focused primarily on academic learning.	Emphasizes cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, including creativity and life skills.
Limited emphasis on early childhood education.	Recognizes the importance of ECCE* and aims to provide quality early education.
Limited use of technology.	Encourages integration of technology to enhance learning and promote digital literacy.

Source: State Times

ECCE* - Early Childhood Care and Education

Themes for NEP 2020 Implementation

NEP 2020 implementation requires coordinated efforts across multiple bodies, with progress monitored through five key themes: **Learner-centric education, Digital Learning, Industry collaboration, Academic Research, and Indian Knowledge System**.

Learner Centric Education

- Provide opportunities to be flexible & transition across courses
- Adoption of Academic Bank of Credits
- Multiple Entry and Exit
- Multidisciplinary Education

Academic Research and Internationalization

- Promotes quality research within the Higher Education system
- Establishment of the Research and Development Cell (RDC) in HEIs
- Aspire to be global study destination
- Improve global rankings and accreditation of Indian institutes

Digital Learning

- Make quality education accessible to all through online education and ODL*
- Addressing the needs of learners with disabilities.
- Adoption of SWAYAM**

Industry - Institute Collaboration

- Encourage industry readiness and improve employability of students
- Internship/Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programme
- MoUs for Industry – Institute Linkage

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)

- IKS envisions addressing local and global needs while respecting India's rich diversity and culture
- Develop content and conduct exams in Indian Languages

Source: Indian Govt Education   ODL* - Open Distance Learning   SWAYAM** - SWAYAM is a digital platform that offers online courses

Beneficial Impact (1/2)

General Overview

Focus on the overall development of students, including intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and moral aspects.

PARAKH* is designed to provide a comprehensive assessment through a more nuanced and balanced evaluation system.

Special focus on promoting education for disadvantaged groups, including Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST)

Integration of digital tools and platforms to enhance teaching and learning experiences and facilitate personalized learning.

Establishment of a NETF** to facilitate the use of technology in education and create a repository of educational resources.

On Primary and Secondary Schools

Emphasis on activity-based, play-based, and discovery-based learning to foster cognitive and emotional development.

Learning in the mother tongue or regional language up to Grade 3 to enhance understanding and retention.

Starting from Grade 6, students are introduced to vocational subjects to develop practical skills.

Promotion of inquiry-based, discovery-based, and discussion-based teaching methods.

Reduced curriculum content to focus on core essentials.

PARAKH - Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development,
NETF** - National Educational Technology Forum*

Source: Strategy for New India, National Education Policy

Beneficial Impact (2/2)

On High Schools and Colleges

Reduce number and pressure of board exams
Focus on assessing core concepts and higher-order skills.

Introduction to a wide range of elective subjects to cater to diverse interests and career aspirations.

Integration of online and offline learning methods to provide flexibility and enhance learning experiences.

Establishment of the National Research Foundation (NRF) to promote research and innovation

Partnerships with industries to provide internships and training programs

On Teachers and Institutions

Continuous professional development and upskilling programs for teachers like seminars and workshops.

Development of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) to define the competencies and standards for teachers.

Greater autonomy to institutions for curriculum design, governance, and administration.

Encouragement of collaborations with international institutions to enhance global exposure and competitiveness.

Establishment of HECI* to oversee and regulate higher education, ensuring quality and accountability.

Source: Strategy for New India, National Education Policy

HECI - Higher Education Council of India*
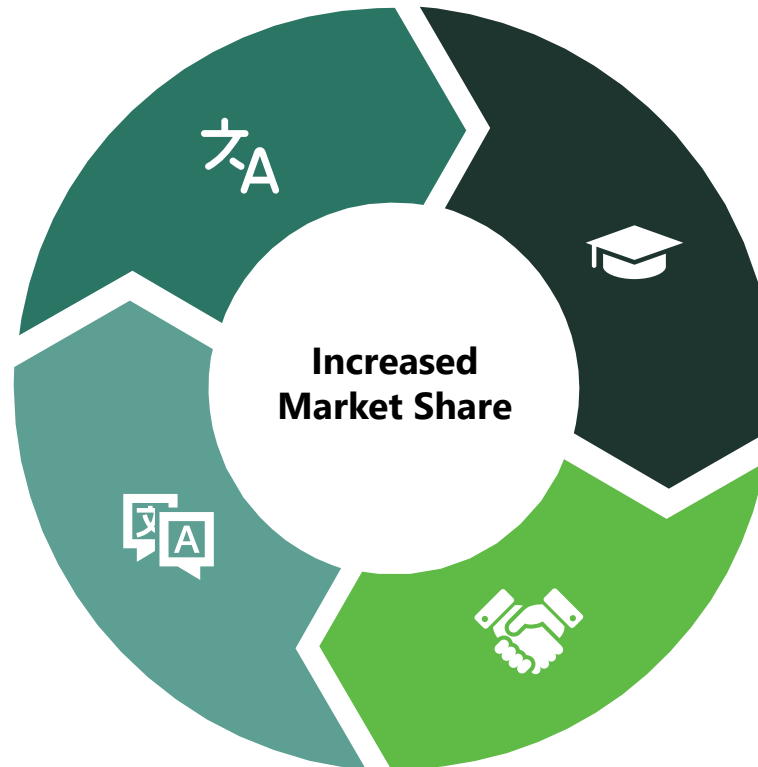
Challenges of NEP 2020

01

Language Barriers

The emphasis on teaching subjects in mother languages presents challenges in finding qualified teachers and developing study materials in regional languages.

02

Duration of Graduation

The policy extends the duration of graduation to four years, but this poses the risk of students leaving courses midway, as shorter diploma programs offer a quicker alternative.

03

Disparity in Language Exposure

Private school students' early exposure to English creates a gap with government school students, who study in regional languages, potentially hindering effective communication in English.
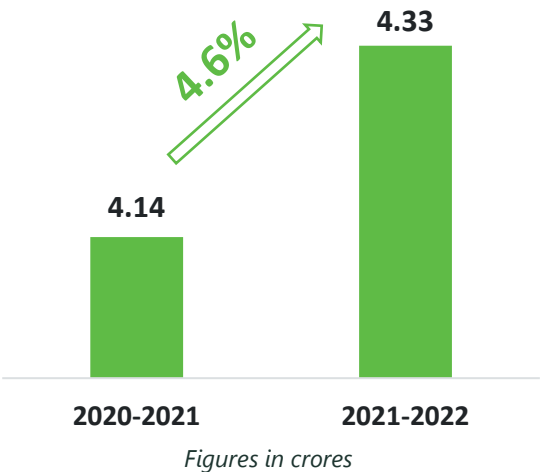
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Implementation Strategy

NEP 2020 implementation requires collaboration between Central and State Governments. The reliance on subject-wise committees at both levels to analyze gaps, discuss, and implement reforms may lead to delays and inconsistencies in execution.
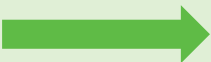
Increased Market Share

Source: Edubull

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NEP 2020 through Numbers

Total Student Enrolment for Higher Education post NEP

4.6%

4.33

4.14

2020-2021   2021-2022

Figures in crores

26%
(2018)

50%
(2035)

The NEP 2020 has outlined an ambitious task of nearly doubling the Gross enrolment ratio (GER*) in higher education by 2035.

Source: AISHE, SWAYAM, Textbook, MoE

NEP 2020 through numbers

2071	Number of academic institutions registered on academic bank of credit	
50%	Percentage of learners to have exposure to vocational education by 2025	
38 Lakh	Number of course enrolments on SWAYAM for January-24 semester	
50 Lakh	Teachers trained under NISHTHA as of 2023	

*GER - Ratio of people enrolled in higher education to the population in the age group of 18-23
**NISHTHA - The National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement

Opportunities for Existing Institutions

Opportunity to integrate teacher education programs into multidisciplinary colleges and universities, with options to offer 4-year B.Ed., 2-year B.Ed., and specialized certification courses.

Clear demarcation of roles across regulation, accreditation, funding, and academic standard setting offers easier pathways for starting and operating HEIs.

Potential to leverage increased academic and administrative autonomy for quality enhancement, resulting in both financial and non-financial benefits.

Growing opportunities to expand enrolments through ODL, online programs, and branch campuses in other countries.

Enhanced access to research funding for private HEIs, driven by a merit-based, peer-reviewed process and an improved regulatory environment.

Potential to create credit-based, continuous learning courses in partnership with vocational training providers/ITIs, offering employment-oriented programs at affordable prices through optimized resource strategies.

Source: KPMG

*HEI – Higher Educational Institutions   **ODL – Open Distance Learning   ***ITI – Industrial Training Institutes

Conclusion

Shift in Assessment Approach

- **Holistic Assessments:** Reduces the pressure of high-stakes exams, promoting understanding over rote memorization.

- **Personalized Learning:** Multidisciplinary approach allows subject choices from various streams, aligning with individual interests and career goals.

Support for Under-Represented Groups

- **Inclusive Policies:** Regions of the country with large populations from educationally-disadvantaged SEDGs will be declared Special Education Zones (SEZs).

- **Inclusive Practices:** Constitute a 'Gender-Inclusion Fund' to provide equitable quality education for all girls as well as transgender students.

Flexibility and Credit System

- **Credit-Based System:** Enables accumulation and transfer of credits between institutions, offering a flexible educational path.

- **Academic Bank of Credits (ABC):** Digital storehouse that contains the information of the credits earned by individual students throughout their learning journey.

Recommendations for Implementation

- **Support for Rural Areas:** Provide resources to schools in underdeveloped regions for policy adoption.

- **Monitoring and Collaboration:** Monitor policy implementation and collaborate with stakeholders to ensure inclusivity.

Source: Impact of NEP, Effect of NEP

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