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# EDUCATION

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**“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world” - Nelson Mandela**

### **History of Education in India**

India has a rich tradition of imparting knowledge .Learning in ancient times was imparted by teachers called Gurus .Pupil gather around them and live with them like a family in place called Gurukul. Learning in ancient India was an intimate relationship between teacher and student called as Guru-shishya parambara.

The system focused on the **moral, physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects of life**. It emphasised on **values such as humility, truthfulness, discipline, self-reliance and respect for all creations**. Thus it focuses on the holistic development of the individual by taking care of both the inner and the outer self.

In traditional education Students were taught to appreciate the balance between human beings and nature. Teaching and learning followed the tenets of Vedas and Upanishads fulfilling duties towards self, family and society, thus encompassing all aspects of life.

Education system focused both on learning and physical development. In other words, the emphasis was on a healthy mind and healthy body. You can see that education in India has a heritage of being pragmatic, achievable and complementary to life.

### **Evolution of Education in India**

- ❖ Ancient learning
  - Both formal and informal mode of education existed

- Education was imparted at home, temples, tols, gurukuls, pathshalas.
- Students went to viharas and universities for higher education (Nalanda, Takshashila)
- Gurukuls, also known as ashrams, were the residential places of learning.
- The form of education was mostly religious and spiritual.
- ❖ Medieval period madrasas and maktabas became the centres of education along with traditional education.
- ❖ Modern Education system
  - It was the contribution of British government in India
  - From Macaulay minutes, Woods Despatch, Saddler education Commission created the fundamental framework of Modern education.
  - Nationalist educational programmes, wardha scheme of education, establishing national schools and colleges etc.

### **Education In Post Independent India**

#### **Constitutional Provisions:**

- ❖ At the commencement of the constitution Article 45 under part IV (DPSP) provides that state shall provide free and compulsory education for all children from 6 years to the age of 14 years.
- ❖ 86th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002, making elementary education a fundamental right by inserting **Article 21A**.
- ❖ Fundamental Duties under article 51A (part IV A) also insists parents or guardians to impart education to the child.

## Right To Education Act (RTE Act),2009

- **86th Amendment Act 2002** introduced **Article 21-A**, which provides for free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right.
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act was enacted to implement this fundamental right
- Provisions:
  - ❖ Right of children to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in a neighbourhood school.
  - ❖ Provision for a non-admitted child to be admitted to an age-appropriate class.
  - ❖ Norms and standards like **Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTRs)**, buildings and **infrastructure**, school-working days, teacher-working hours, appropriately **trained and qualified teachers are** enumerated.
  - ❖ It prohibits (a) physical punishment and mental harassment (b) screening procedures for admission of children (c) capitation fee (d) private tuition by teachers (e) running of schools without recognition.
  - ❖ Development of curriculum in consonance with the values enshrined in the constitution, ensuring all-round development of the child, building a system of child-friendly and child-centred learning.
  - ❖ To further inclusiveness, 25% reservation is provided for disadvantaged students in private schools.

## Education Commissions in Independent India

### ❖ Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49)

- The University Education Commission was constituted under Radhakrishnan. It moulded the education system based on the needs of independent India replacing the colonial character of Education (Macaulayism).
- UGC was established based on the commission recommendation.
- It charted the value system in Indian education.

### ❖ Kothari Commission

- **It** laid the basic framework for Indian education.
- Provision:
  - Standardisation of the educational system on a 10+2+3 pattern.
  - Emphasised the need to make work experience and social/national service as an integral part of education.
  - Linking of colleges to several schools in the neighbourhood.
  - Equalisation of opportunities to all and to achieve social and national integration.
  - **Neighbourhood school system** without social or religious segregation and a **school complex system integrating** primary and secondary levels of education.
  - Establishment of Indian Education Service.
  - On the job training of the teaching staff and for efforts to raise the status of the teachers to attract talents into the profession.
  - To raise expenditure on education from 2.9% of the GDP to **6% by 1985**.

- The committee report paved the way for National Educational Policy 1968.

#### ❖ **National Education Policy, 1985**

- The policy aimed at the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunities, especially for women, SC and ST.
- Launching of “Operation Blackboard” to improve primary schools nationwide.
- IGNOU, the Open University, was formed.
- Adoption of “rural university” model, based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, to promote economic and social development at the grassroots level in rural India.

#### ❖ **TSR Subramanian Report:**

- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) – children from four to five years of age – to be declared as a fundamental right.
- Need to constitute an **Autonomous Teacher Recruitment Board**. Four years integrated B.Ed. The course should be introduced.
- Integration of IT in Education needed.
- **National Skills Qualification Framework** should be scaled up. The choice of vocational courses should be in line with local opportunities and resources.
- **National Accreditation Board (NAB)** subsuming the existing accreditation bodies.
- All India Education Service.

#### ● **New National Educational Policy (NEP), 2020 (Kasturirangan Report)**

- The NEP is based on the recommendations of **Kasturirangan and T.S.R. Subramanian committees**. NEP, 2020 lays emphasis on reforms in education at all levels from pre-primary to higher

education. It aims to bring transformation to the education system of India in line with contemporary needs.

➤ **Provisions:**

❖ **School Education:**

- Universalization of education by 2030 through 100% GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) from pre-primary to secondary.
- Open schooling system (no admission requirements like NIOS) for out-of-school children.
- 5+3+3+4 curriculum system replacing existing 10+2 system.
- Teaching in mother tongue up to class 5 with no imposition of any language.

❖ **Higher Education:**

- Broad-based, multi-disciplinary, holistic UG (Undergraduate) education with provisions of a **flexible curriculum, integration of vocational education, multiple entries and exit points** with respective degrees, and also **undergraduate programs in regional languages**.
- Academic bank of credits to enable transfers of credits between institutions
- HECI (**Higher education commission of India**) as an umbrella **regulator** except for legal and medical education.
- Promotion of multilingualism in schools and colleges.
- It also paves the way for foreign universities to set up campuses in India.



- **Further Developments under National educational Policy,2020**

- Engineering in regional languages: The government will also announce the launch of engineering degrees in regional languages in about 14 smaller institutions.
- The government will also announce the establishment of the National Digital Education Architecture and National Education Technology Forum.
- Academic Bank of Credit will be rolled out for students in over 290 top institutions from the current academic year 2021-22 onwards
- All institutions in the top 100 of the National Institutional Ranking Framework as well as those who have achieved an A grade under the National Assessment and Accreditation Council will be allowed to participate in the credit transfer system.
- This will help in credit verification, credit accumulation, credit transfer and redemption of students, and promotion of the students.

- **CHALLENGES TO NEP,2020:**

- India is grappling with **huge learning gaps**. This is because the **needs of children are more personalised and cannot be addressed only through online mode**.
- With the extension of school closures and fear of infections, children are losing touch with understanding, comprehension, reading, and speaking skills.
- The digital divide is also causing the education divide in India. Today, in India, over 90 percent of students do not have devices that allow them to access online learning holistically.

- When **the government is calling for greater autonomy**, several **universities continue to function without full-time heads and vice-chancellors**.
- NEP asks for the highest priority to literacy and numeracy, but the government has **slashed the school education budget** by almost Rs 5,000 crore; higher education has suffered a Rs 1,000 crore cut.
- Cancellation of the Class XII board examinations and subsequent challenges for institutes of higher education.
- **Funding Commitment:** The Ministry set a target of expenditure to 6% of GDP. However, such an increase in funding has been proposed but not achieved for the last half-century.
- **Funding Crunch:** COVID-19 and lockdown have created a funding crunch for the government (the 1968 NEP was also handicapped by a shortage of funds) and the provision of free breakfasts can only be considered in the next academic year if a budget allocation is made to cover it.
- **Mother tongue debate:** The proposal to make the mother tongue the medium of instruction till Class 5, which has stirred up the fiercest debates, is dependent on state governments. This proposal is criticised by various states like Tamil Nadu.
- **Unrealistic Targets:** “The goals of 50% Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education and 100% in secondary school are laudable. But when you realise it’s currently 25.8% in

Higher Education & 68% in Class 9, wonder if such targets are realistic.

- **Lack of fee regulation:** Fee regulations exist in some States even now, but the regulatory process is unable to rein in profiteering in the form of unaccounted donations.
- **Unfinished work:** The government has yet to finalise the draft Higher Education Commission of India bill which has been languishing in the ministry for over a year.
- **Long Process:** The process of converting affiliated colleges into degree granting autonomous institutions and then further into fully fledged universities is estimated to take at least 15 years, as the Centre will have to provide financial assistance for this purpose

### **Suggestions to improve NEP,2020:**

- India needs a robust institutional mechanism and large-scale capacity building to create enthusiasm among stakeholders. Every stakeholder at the state, district, sub-district, block-level has to have ownership and understand the concepts of NEP.
- **Directorates of education have to be strengthened** in order to ensure that the **policy permeates to the district and zonal level** educational clusters.
- To help children to realise their full potential, India requires **effective strategies to physically equip teachers and students with better tools** in the classroom, **increase access to laptops and other gadgets**, install interactive whiteboards and **provide fast and reliable internet access**.
- The **state and national boards across the nation will have to start with pilot programs**. The **creation of master trainers should be**

**done, and** they have to **train principals and teachers** in urban and rural areas.

- **a special purpose vehicle (SPV) needs to be created** to ensure NEP funds are available and that the implementation process is not delayed.
- India also needs to **promote private philanthropy for funding** both public and private higher education institutions.
- In order to implement the NEP, **research, evaluation and documentation** are essential **along with coordination and convergence of the policy and programs connected** with the NEP.

#### ❖ Educational Sector (General Data)

- Literacy rate in India as per **Census 2011**: 74%.
- Literacy rate: Male: 82.1%; Female: 65.5%
- Kerala tops the rankings, followed by Delhi, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- Bihar is the lowest among states, followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand etc., however, they are improving their position.
- Bihar has a literacy rate of 63.8%, and that of women is 53.3%.
- Literacy rates for both adults as well as youths have increased, still, the absolute number of illiterates in India is as much as India's population was at the time of independence.
- The gender gap in terms of literacy began to narrow first in 1991 and the pace has accelerated, however still lags far behind the global female literacy rate of 7% (UNESCO 2015).
- There are large state variations in the gender gap.

- However during 2001 – 2011, male literacy rate increased by 6 percentage points but female literacy increased by nearly 12 percentage points. Achievement in female literacy in Bihar is noteworthy: from 33% in 2001 to 53% in 2011.
- Be that as it may, India is still lagging behind the world literacy rate of 86.3%(UNESCO 2015). A major group of states lies in the average rank i.e. just above the national level of 64.8 percent.
- As per **National Sample Survey (NSS)**, the literacy rate of persons of age 7 years and above at the All- India level stood at 77.7 percent. Literacy at the elementary school level is 96 per cent.



### ● **Problems in Indian Education Sector in general**

- **High Rate of Illiteracy:** As per Census 2011, over 26% of India's population is still illiterate, compared to 4% in China.
- **High dropout rate:** According to **NSSO 71st round (2014)**, dropout rates are very high for boys at the secondary school level. Reasons for the same are economic activities, lack of interest in education and financial constraints.
- **Elitist Attitude** in implementation of the educational policies, neglecting basic education and prioritising higher education. The ratio of per-student public expenditure in tertiary level is high relative to the primary level in India.
- **Poor quality of education:** **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), 2005** reflects this deteriorating quality. The report opines

that deficit in foundational reading and arithmetic skills are cumulative, which leaves students grossly handicapped for further education.

- India had fared poorly in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test 2008, 2009.
- The report also shows that 1 out of 4 children leaving Class VIII are without basic reading skills (ability to read at least a Class II level). (ASER 2018)
- Education policies in India are **focused on inputs** rather than on learning outcomes.
- Problems with Teachers: such as shortage in manpower, absenteeism, lack of adequate teaching skills, defects in teacher training etc.
- Inadequate public spending: From 1952-2012, education expenditure as a percentage of total government expenditure increased from 7.92 to 11.7 and as a percentage of GDP increased from **0.64 to 3.31**. But it has still not reached 6% of GDP, as was recommended by the Kothari Commission way back in 1964.
- Non-Inclusive and Inequitable Educational System: Even though **Article 15(4), Article 15 (5)** provides reservation for SC, ST, OBC in higher educational institutions, Economic Survey 2018-19 points out their inadequate representation in these institutions.
  - The rich-poor divide is also visible in all levels of the education system.
- Inadequate employability skills with youth:
  - India's long-standing neglect of primary and secondary education has limited access to quality basic education. No skill development program can succeed without an underlying foundation of basic education.

- National Policy on **Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015**(PMKVY) had shown disappointing results.
- **Sports education** is a grossly neglected area in the Indian education scenario. Even today sports education is considered a luxury in India.
- Early childhood education (ECE) is needed for **cognitive development** in the early stage.
  - **Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)** has a component for providing ECE through **Anganwadis**. But lack of effective regulation in this sector is eroding the quality of ECE.
- There is a **National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013**. However, the policy has not been properly implemented.

### Way Forward

- **Public Good:** Treating education as a public good can ensure more policy focus and also investments
- **Hybrid Learning:** Towards more application and out of classroom approaches
- **Nutrition:** Midday meals have seen wide success thus, the link between nutrition and educational outcomes must be understood and utilised
- **Public Private Partnership (PPP):** Establishing schools based on this model can ensure quality and also address monetary and accessibility concerns.
- **Infrastructure:** Digital medium is seen as a leveller in terms of access, such infrastructure must be developed alongside physical infrastructure

- **Teacher quality:** An all-India school education service can be formulated for more uniform teacher quality
- **Teacher Training and skilling:** Follow up training must be done throughout the career of the teacher
- **Extension of MDM:** Midday meals should extend to secondary students as well, as it can help reduce school dropout rates and better outcomes
- **Flexible approaches:** Region-specific changes should be made rather than one size fits all approach.



**UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) report 2016** had opined that India is expected to achieve universal primary education in **only 2050**. India is 50 years late in achieving its global education commitments. If the nation wants fundamental changes in the education system, it has to meet the 2030 SDG targets on education.





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