



Inclusive Education and National Education Policy 2020: Importance, Highlights and Challenges

¹Author Priyashree Konwar

ARTICLE INFO

RECEIVED 9 DEC 2023

ACCEPTED 5 JUNE 2024

PUBLISHED 31 AUGUST 2024

ABSTRACT

Inclusive education is an education system that ensures quality education to every student without any barriers like ability, physical disability, culture, language, family background and age. It includes the disabled as well as the non-disabled. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines inclusive education as “a strategy to ensure that all children, including those with disabilities, have access to quality education that meets their diverse learning needs and prepares them for life, work and citizenship.”(WHO,2021). The National Education policy (NEP) was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on July 28th, 2020. According to NEP 2020, “Education is the single greatest tool for achieving social justice and justice.’ The new National Education Policy is an education policy as it aims at making the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned to the needs of the 21st century and the 2030 sustainable development goals. The researcher has collected data from different sources like websites, journals, articles, e-books, reports, commissions, national policies on education and articles published in local national and international papers etc..

Keywords:

Inclusive education, Disability, NEP 2020, Inclusion.

¹ Corresponding Author : Assistant Professor(PT), Department of Education, Khowang College, Assam
Email – priyashreekonwar60621@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

Inclusion is the policy or practice of making sure that everyone in society has access to resources and opportunities. It is a universal right of human beings. Its aims to inculcate all human beings irrespective of race, gender, religion, status, creed income, disability etc.

Inclusive education is a new approach towards educating the children with disability and learning difficulties with that of normal ones within the same roof. It includes everyone with non-disabled and disabled people (including those special educational needs) learning together in mainstream schools, colleges and universities. In inclusive classrooms we can see students of different learning styles, talents, powers and ability levels. The principle of inclusive education that education for all was adopted at the "World Conferences on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality."(Salamanca Statement, Spain1994) and was restated at the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 2000). In the year 1987, the National Council of educational research and training (NCERT) collaborated with UNICEF and launched project Integrated Education for Disabled Children (PIED in India, to promote the education of children with disabilities into regular schools.

The government of India is committed to ensuring basic education for every child. It formulated a number of policies in the light of special education since its independence. One of the oldest initiatives undertaken by the government of India was the Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme of 1974(NCERT, 2011). In the 1980s the ministry of Welfare, government of India, realized the crucial need for a institution to observe and regulate the HRD program within the field of disability Rehabilitation. The National Programme of Action (1992) stresses the need for integrating Children with special needs with other groups. The government of India implemented the DPEP in



1994-95. In the late 90s the philosophy of inclusive education is added in District Primary Education Programme (DPEP).

The researcher has reviewed some literature relating to Inclusive Education and its impact on educational institutions, parents, students, teacher, public etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To know the importance of Inclusive Education.
- 2) To discuss about different highlights of NEP2020.
- 3) To study about major challenges in implementation of NEP2020.

METHODOLOGY

The study involves the qualitative and analytical method of research mainly based on secondary sources like book& journal, Reprint of published papers soft copies included web pages, newspaper, article, research paper, encyclopedia etc.

ANALYSIS

Inclusive education is one modern trend that many countries seek to adopt as an innovative concept and pursue to practice as an application in conjunction with scientific progress, the education of people with disabilities, and in order to fulfill and abide by the relevant international conventions.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- Inclusive education maintains social balances by providing equal opportunity to all. It removes all kinds of prejudices and discrimination.
- Inclusive education provides a better quality education.
- It promotes self-reliance and enables children to acquire coping skills. Critical thinking, decision making power and problem solving skills are also developed.
- It removes the boundaries and obstacles.
- It is important for developing healthy citizenship among students.
- Inclusion must to work to build an individual's skills and abilities to be successful.



- Its helps to build friendship with one another.
- Inclusive education can help to reduce bullying and harassment in schools by creating a safe and welcoming environment for all students.
- Inclusive education encourages parents to become more involved in their children's education and understand their child's situation and connect with them.
- Inclusive education helps to provide education to the students through various innovative methods of working keeping in view the learning problems of the children.

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

The National Education Policy 2020 is formulated to revamp education system and lay down road map for new India. It was approved Indian cabinet on 29th July 2020. It is largely a very progressive document, with a firm grasp on the current socio-economic landscape and the prospect to meet further challenges. The main objectives of NEP2020 is to increase student's enrollment in all educational institutions such as elementary, school, professional and higher education by 2030. To achieve that it has suggested progressive reform in the existing education and governance systems. The policy also aims to recruit special educators in all school complexes to make sure that teaching is more effective and inclusive. Teachers will be trained to identify learning disabilities in children early on and to help children with learning disabilities succeed in education and take care of their mental health. National Assessment Centre, PARAKH will be formulated to create equitable systems of assessment of children with learning disabilities. This policy attempts to address the growing inequality and inequity plaguing country's education system today. Among others, the NEP 2020 recognizes high dropout rates among socio-economic strata and vulnerable minorities. It also recognizes the unmet educational needs of children living in geographically difficult regions.



HIGHLIGHTS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

- The current 10+2 system to be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8,8-11,11-14 and 14-15 years respectively.
- New policy aims for universalization of education from pre-school to secondary level with 100%
- Gross Enrollment Ratio(GER) in school education by 2030.
- The new system will have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadis /pre-schooling.
- Emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy, no rigid separation between academic streams, extra-curriculum, vocational streams in schools, vocational education to start from class 6 with internships.
- Mother tongue to be used as a medium of instruction until 5th grade.
- Assessment reform with 360 degree holistic progress card, tracking student progress for achieving learning outcome.
- In 15 years affiliation system to be phased out with graded autonomy to colleges.
- Equitable and inclusive education special emphasis given on socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs).
- Light but tight regulation.
- Increasing GER in higher education to 50% by 2035.
- Holistic multidisciplinary education with multiple entry and exit options.
- Establishment of Academic Bank of Credit.
- Setting up of state school standards authority (SSSA).
- Exposure of vocational education in school and higher education system.
- Setting up of new national assessment centre, PARAKH (Performance,



Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development.

- Achieving 100% youth and adult literacy.
- Teacher education-4year integrated stages – specific, subject-specific bachelor of education.
- Setting up of National Research Foundation (NRF) and Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERU).
- Internationalization of education.
- The centre and the states will work together to increase the public investment in education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.
- According to the NEP2020 M. Phil will be discontinued.
- According to the NEP2020, there will be a single common entrance exam for admission to all higher education institutes which will be held by NTA.

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLIMENTATION OF NEP 2020

Training educators: Implementing such bold objectives will require training teachers, educators and official staff appropriately along with preparing a pool of excellent, motivating guides. Learning has to be enjoyable and engaging task rather than an arduous exercise. The policy will have to design a learning ecosystem which takes into account the geographical and cultural diversity of our country as well as the varied learning pace of each student.

Changing the mindset: The current education system is a hangover of the British and Industrial age. The change in mindset will happen two or more generation of parents, teachers, grandparents and educators. A STEM education focused generation has to give way to the NEP.

Bottom-up approach: As Indians, we are socially programmed to accept top-down approach in all areas of life. This social and educational transformation is only possible with a bottom-up grass-root level intervention. A transformation is needed from' what



to think 'and 'how to think'.

Reimagining and adopting pedagogical changes: Education must not only develop the cognitive skills in learners both foundational skills of literacy and numeracy and the 'higher-order' cognitive skills like critical thinking but also 'social and emotional skills' known as the soft skills like empathy, leadership and teamwork. These pedagogical changes are needs to be reimaged for successful implementation.

Opening universities every week is a strenuous task: India today has around 1000 universities across the country. Doubling the gross enrollment ratio in higher education by 2035 which is one of the stated goals of the policy will mean that we must open new universities for the next 15 years.

Funding is the major challenges of NEP 2020: Over 250 million students are expected to enroll in schools in India by 2030. Teachers need to have graduated in an esteemed B. Ed programme for a 21st pass, graduates, post- graduated for one, two and four respectively. The National Education Policy 2020 anticipates an increase in spending on education from 4.6% to 6% of GDP, reaching approximately INR 2.5lakh crores per year. The money will be well spent on building schools and colleges across the country, appointing teachers and professors, and operating expenses such as providing free breakfast for school children.

CONCLUSION

Education is a basic human right. It is the backbone of society. Education brings equal opportunity for everyone and educated people will be able to create a better society. The term inclusion in education to all students bring able to access and gain equal opportunity to education and learning. Inclusive education implies that all students receive meaningful education in the best possible environment. This ensures quality without considering issues such as language, culture, race, family background, age or any discipline. It helps special needs students to develop interactional skills because of the exposure to a social environment and rejects the need of special schools. Inclusive education is a type of education system wherein diverse students learn in the same



classroom. It helps to remove the stigma surrounding disability and sensitizes others about the needs of special students. Both NEP 2020 and inclusive Education helps to remove inequality between all normal and special students. NEP 2020 provides equitable access to quality education to all student irrespective gender, socio-economic background, or physical abilities.

NEP2020 promotes the idea of encouraging the career prospects of students by helping them their life skills. In conclusion we can say that the new National Education Policy 2020 is a good policy which aims at making the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned to the needs of 21st century and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

REFERENCES

1. Kumar, Alok (2021). New Education Policy (NEP) 2020: A Roadmap for India 2.0. Advances in global education and research. Vol.4. pp.1-8. USF M3 Publishing.
2. B. Venkateshwarlu (2021). A Critical study of NEP 2020: Issues, approaches, challenges, opportunities and criticism. International Multidisciplinary Educational Research. Pp 191-196.
3. National Education Policy 2020. Government Document New Delhi: Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020.
4. Soni, Rachan (2022). Challenges and Issues in National Education Policy 2020. International Research Journal of Modernizational in Engineering Technology and Science. pp 13-16.
5. Iniesto, Francisco, Bernardo Tabuenca, Covadonga Rodrigo, and Edmundo Tovar (2021). "Challenges to Achieving a More Inclusive and Sustainable Open Education." Journal of Interactive Media in Education 2021, no. 1. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1342176>
6. Nandini, ed. (2020). "New Education Policy 2020 Highlights: School and higher education to see major changes".
7. Giffard-Lindsay, K. (2007). Inclusive Education in India: Interpretation, Implementation



and Issues. Sussex: The Consortium for Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) Available Online at http://www.create-rpc.org/pdf_documents/PTA15.pdf

8. MHRD (2005). Action Plan for Inclusive Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities. Available on <http://www.education.nic.in> Ministry of Human Resource Development. National Policy on Education (PoA-1992). New Delhi: Government of India.
9. NCERT (1998). Sixth All-India Educational Survey. New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training. N
10. Singh, J.D. (2016). Inclusive education in India- Concept, Need and Challenges.