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# **New National Education Policy: Indian Insights And Holistic Approach**

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## **Introduction**

The New National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces sufficient flexibility, providing students the opportunity to choose curricula that align with their interests in their mother tongue. This policy encompasses a broad range of subjects including science, social science, arts, humanities, languages, as well as technical and vocational subjects. It aims to imbue students with intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, creativity, a sense of service, and the competencies required for the 21st century by integrating various ethical and constitutional values.

The NEP reflects Indian insights and comprehensiveness, advocating education that fosters thought, reasoning, analysis, and knowledge acquisition. Swami Vivekananda emphasized the need for education that supports both character development and intellectual growth, aiding in becoming self-reliant. Self-reliant education requires that the essence of self be highlighted within the education system.

Higher education plays a crucial role in nurturing human consciousness and upholding the fundamental spirit of the Indian Constitution. It contributes to the creation of a democratic, just, socially aware, cultured, and welfare-oriented nation, ensuring quality employment-oriented education for all while maintaining freedom, equality, fraternity, and justice. With India emerging as a leading nation in knowledge creation and global development, there is increasing aspiration among Indian youth for higher education.

To fulfill youthful aspirations and develop 21st-century skills, the objective of high-quality education should be to nurture creative and self-reliant individuals. A key feature of the new education policy is its reflection of a holistic vision. Indeed, the vision of comprehensiveness is genuinely an Indian perspective.

According to Indian perspective, a human being is a free and sensitive entity, not merely a means of production. Education is a powerful tool for holistic development. Sri Aurobindo believed that every individual possesses divine potential, and education should help in recognizing, developing, and reaching this divine element. True and comprehensive education should align with the child's inherent nature and temperament, aiming for holistic development through balanced growth in physical, vital, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

The NEP 2020 gives balanced importance to both traditional knowledge curricula and vocational subjects. It incorporates arts, music, crafts, sports, yoga, and community service as part of the curriculum rather than as supplementary or extracurricular activities. This approach mandates that both academic and non-academic areas contribute to the overall development of each student, and it includes provisions for increasing awareness among teachers and parents to enhance each student's inherent capabilities.

Students should be aware of their own inherent abilities. Similarly, teachers and parents should understand their capabilities and interests so that learners can determine their pace of learning. The NEP provides flexibility allowing students to choose curricula suited to their interests, which will support appropriate career paths. It directs that a student should be enabled to study in-depth in one or more specific areas. Multi-disciplinary education and research universities, as well as a National Research Foundation, could positively contribute to this vision.

By integrating various ethical and constitutional values into subjects like science, social science, arts, humanities, languages, as well as technical and vocational studies, the NEP will cultivate intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, creativity, a spirit of service, and the capabilities required for the 21st century. The Academic Bank of Credits will create a foundation for autonomous and self-paced learning, allowing students to use credits for learning and career choices if they need to leave education temporarily.

Higher education in any country should be designed to structure knowledge, provide individual achievement awareness, and enable students to contribute to national economic development as skilled citizens. The new education policy, by conceptualizing holistic education, makes skills and value development a primary goal at all stages from early to higher education. The policy will include life skills in students' report cards to facilitate a 360-degree assessment. Post-school, every student will have minimum life skills to start working in their area of interest. Teacher training is crucial in any education system, and the new policy emphasizes the quality of teacher education.

A significant aspect of the NEP 2020 is education in the mother tongue. According to Vygotsky, "Children's thinking begins only with their language; language is crucial for cognitive development." In a multilingual country like India, this policy embraces the mother tongue, mandating instruction in the mother tongue, local, or regional language up to at least the fifth grade, with the option to extend this to higher grades. Foreign language studies will commence from the secondary level, but learning in the mother tongue and local languages is not compulsory. The fundamental philosophy of the NEP 2020 is to foster social sensitivity, civic sense, and capable individuals, with mother tongues and local languages serving as foundational elements.

The NEP emphasizes balanced importance on quality teaching and research. Quality research should align with national, societal, and local needs, leading to the provision for a National Research Foundation. This institution will regulate research in India, integrating subjects related to science, social sciences, arts, and humanities.

In summary, the NEP 2020 balances traditional Indian knowledge traditions with modern technical education, developing e-curricula in regional languages, forming virtual labs, and establishing a National Educational Technology Forum. Vocational courses will be introduced after class 6, and life skills will be included in students' report cards to move beyond rote learning. Thus, the NEP 2020 aims to foster a well-rounded individual who will contribute as a cornerstone in building a self-reliant India.

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