

VOCATIONALIZATION OF INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM THROUGH NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

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Abstract

Government of India launched The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to promote the India centered education system to contribute directly to transforming our nation sustainably into a fair and vibrant knowledge society, by providing quality education. Vocational training courses has been focused equivalent to the non-vocational courses in order to enhance the employability skills as well as to make the youth's self-dependent. The main thrust of National Education Policy 2020 is to raise the standard of school education system in India at par with global standards through various comprehensive measures such as revamping of the curriculum, examination structure, regulatory regime, teacher education, etc. Different reforms are introduced in the school systems like in curriculum pedagogy, governance, technology etc. Unfortunately, most fail to achieve the substantial improvements in student achievement that their advocates hoped for and, overall. Vocational Education and Training is an important element of the nation's education initiative. Vocational Education is based on occupation and employment and it is the need of the hour for a country like India. It can be defined as skilled based education. Vocational Education helps in Economic growth. The India education system recognized the role of education and particularly Vocational Education. National Council for Vocational Training, an advisory body, was set up by the Government of India plays its important role in implementation of Vocational Education in India. This study is basically conducted to see the different vocational education provisions in the recently introduced NEP,2020 and also to find out the challenges in the present context. This study is conducted mainly based on secondary literatures and conclusions are made based on the analysis of the secondary data.

Keywords: Vocational Education, Occupation, Skill Development, Economic Growth, Pedagogy, Self-dependent etc.

Introduction:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 implemented by the Govt. of India aims to overcome the social status hierarchy associated with vocational education and suggests the integration of vocational education

into mainstream education in all educational institutions in a phased manner over the next decade. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 also highlighted that there is a need to 're-consider the epistemology' of vocational education afresh by bridging the gap between academic and vocational streams and the curriculum should provide space for learning beyond subject boundaries so that children and young people can make connections between different areas of learning.

Different studies have revealed that access to quality education is the ultimate solution for continued growth in economy, social justice and equality including scientific advancement as well as cultural preservation. At the same time, the present education system has tremendously failed to produce skilled workforce to cater the huge demand in the job market. Therefore, it has been realized that vocationalization of the present education system is one way to cater the demand of the job market by producing skilled and qualified professionals for the Indian as well as the global job market. Vocational training is the instructional programme that prepares one for an occupation that requires a specialized skill, such as a technician, artisan, or tradesperson. It may involve imparting classroom instructions, hand-on training, or a combination of both. At secondary level mainly in class XI and XII we have few choices for the students on different vocational trades, but still in many places it is not functional due to different factors like, no enrollment, unavailability of teaching staff, absence of required infrastructure facilities etc. One may also undergo vocational training directly as an apprentice or a diploma. One may also undergo vocational training directly as an apprentice or a trainee with or without any formal qualification. Initial Vocational Education and Training prepares young men and women with the relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes to successfully enter the world of works or to continue higher education. It is education that prepares people to work as a technician or to take up employment in a skilled craft or trade as a tradesperson or artisan. It is sometimes referred to as career and technical education.

While preparing the model framework of the National Educational Policy, 2020, the need of a formalized and accessible vocational education system has been realized for which we can see some provisions of vocational education in the present education system. Vocational development is not only important in providing employment opportunities to individuals but also helps in enhancing the productivity of firms. Vocational curriculum comprises all skill transfers, formal and informal, which are required in the improvement of productive activities of a society. Vocational education will be integrated into all school and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next decade.

Vocational education is becoming more and more important today because it can provide the right knowledge and skills to the youth and ensure their maximum skill development which in turn can bring development in the country economic and social development. Through Vocational education students will be specialized and therefore they have more chances of employment. It also assist all young people to secure their own future by enhancing their transition to a lot of opportunities and acquaint themselves with different avenues of work.

Objectives:

1. To study the different provisions made by the Government of India to offer vocational education with the mainstream education system under the purview of the NEP,2020.
2. To study the opportunities and challenges in implementing the provisions of the NEP,2020 in terms of vocational education.
3. To understand the role of educational institutions in successful implementation of NEP,2020 in the field of vocational education.

Methodology:

The researcher have selected descriptive research design for this study. Secondary information has been collected from different sources like the policy document published by Govt. of India, journal articles and

research papers published by different authors etc. A systematic review has been done and all the discussions and findings are presented after analyzing the secondary data of these published materials.

Discussion and Finding:

The NEP 2020 and Vocational Education in India

Vocational education has been integrated in the education system at secondary level offerings of all secondary schools in a phased manner over the next decade. The development of vocational capacities will go hand-in-hand with the development of 'academic' or other capacities. To achieve this objective, secondary schools will collaborate with Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), Polytechnics, Local Industry, etc. Skill labs will also be set up and created in the schools in a Hub and Spoke model, which will allow other schools to use the facility. Higher education institutions will offer vocational education either on their own or in partnership with industry and other institutions. Vocational Education can be defined as the education that is based on occupation and employment. It prepares people for specific trades, crafts, and careers at various levels in all spheres of life. It involves various practical activities. It is also referred as technical education because the students develops expertise in a particular group of techniques. Vocational education consists basically of practical courses through which one gains skills and experience directly linked to a career in future. It helps students to be skilled and in turn, offers better employment opportunities. Following are some of the major reforms proposed in the latest NEP,2020 with regards to the vocationalization of the Indian education system to develop employability skills as well as self-employment skills of the youths of the country.

- It has been proposed that by 2025 at least 50% of learners going through school and higher education system will have proper and sufficient exposure to vocational education.
- All educational institutions will be integrating vocational education programs in the ongoing mainstream education in a phased manner.
- To make the vocational courses available for students enrolled in all bachelor's degree programmes including 4-year research focused holistic bachelor's programmes.
- Higher education institutions will also allow to conduct short-term certificate courses in various skills including soft skills for enhancing employability.
- Incubation centres will be set up in higher education institutes in partnership with industries to provide hands-on training to the undergoing students.
- Higher education institutions to offer vocational education either on their own or in partnership with industries keeping in mind the demand of the job market.
- Focus areas to be chosen based on skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities and technical and vocational will be part of larger version of holistic education.
- "Lokvidya" knowledge develops in India will be made accessible to students through integration into vocational education courses.
- The Ministry of Education will constitute a National Committee for The Integration of vocational education (NCIVE), along industry participation, to oversee this effort and should also embark budget for promoting this integration.
- A General Education Programme (GEP) shall be set up to frame expected learning outcomes for higher education programmes also refer to as 'graduates attributes'".

According to NEP 2020, by 2025, at least 50% of learners shall have vocational exposure through school and higher education. Every child will learn at least one vocation and will be exposed to several more. The NEP 2020 stated that there will be 'no hard separation' between the 'vocational and academic streams as the students can study these vocational courses along with their regular curriculum. The policy also gives emphasis on universal access to all children of the country to quality holistic education-including vocational education from preschool to class XII will be ensured with chance to select subject of their choice. School

students will have 10 bag less days in a year, during which they will be exposed to a vocational learning from Grades 6 to 8. Every student will have to take a fun course during Grades 6 to 8 which will give hands on experience of vocational crafts. In order to achieve this the Vocational education system of the country will be reintegrated under National Skills Qualifications Framework for providing training to the dropouts also. Bachelor in Vocation (B.Voc.) programme also proposed to be offered by higher education institutions is to be expanded and a credit-based framework will facilitate mobility across general and vocational education. At the Secondary stage i.e., for students of ages 15 to 18 years of Grade IX to XII, can be used not just to expose a student to different vocations but to help him/her to progressively build a considerable degree of expertise that a particular student takes should be left entirely to them. Even NEP 2020 has laid emphasis on recruiting adequate teachers of vocational subjects to schools as well as hiring local eminent person or expert as master instructor in various subjects, such as traditional local arts, vocational crafts, entrepreneurship, agriculture, or any other subject where local expertise exists to benefit students and help preserve and promote local knowledge. The proposed “National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE)” will undertake this exercise of carefully detailing the National Skills Qualification Framework further, as suggested in the NEP 2020. While doing so, it is also necessary for this committee to simultaneously correspond with National Higher Education Qualification Framework for viable horizontal credit transfers and equivalence.

A recent article titled reimagining Vocational Education and Skill Building published by Dr. R.K. Pathak has highlighted some of the challenges the new policy will face while integrating the vocational education with the mainstream education in the country. In the same article the author also highlighted some of the actions as mentioned in the NEP,2020 to address these challenges. Some of these challenges and proposed actions as mentioned in the NEP,2020 are mentioned below:

1. One major challenge has been identified as “Overcoming social hierarchy associated with the Indian vocational education system”. To overcome this challenge the following actions are proposed in the NEP,2020:
 - Organization of awareness programmes to change the general perception and attitude towards vocational education.
 - Vocational exposure to children from Grade VI onwards in all secondary and higher secondary schools.
 - Information, education and communication (IEC) and media campaigns.
 - Preparation and distribution of brochures/leaflets/pamphlets and video shows on vocational education and courses.

2. Another challenge of the NEP,2020 in terms of vocational education is “ Integrating vocational education with general education focusing on social inclusion, gender equality and inclusive education.” To overcome this challenge the following actions are proposed in the NEP,2020:
 - Introduction of skill-based activities from pre-school to Grade XII.
 - Reforming curriculum through enhanced content of vocational knowledge and skills, better course alignment with skill standards and interdisciplinary content connections.
 - Developing workplace-related skills and attitudes through internships and on-the-job training.
 - Introduction of Vocational Interest Inventory in Grade VIII and Skill Based Aptitude Test (SBAT) in Grade X for guidance to the students in making informed career choice.
 - Ensuring that qualifications are relevant to perceived social and economic needs.
 - National Occupation Standards (NOSs) to be defined by agreed learning outcomes and applied consistently across all institutions.
 - Focus on good practices and innovations by teachers in teaching-learning.
 - Ensuring private sector participation and funding in VET.

3. Another important challenge has been identified as “Introducing *LokVidya* (indigenous knowledge and skills) in schools through vocational education” To overcome this challenge the following actions are proposed in the NEP,2020:
 - Identifying local vocational crafts for organising internships for students on indigenous practices.
 - Identifying local experts and conducting internship trainings for students.
 - Community and industry partnerships for vocational exposure through informal internship programme.
4. Another challenge is “ Facilitating horizontal mobility of vocational students in schools” and the proposed actions are:
 - Collaborating with Industrial Training Institutes, polytechnics, local businesses, industries, hospitals, agriculture farms, local artisans and NGOs through Hub and Spoke Model for imparting skills training.
5. “Promoting online and open vocational education” is another challenge identified as a challenge towards to implementation of the NEP,2020 for which the following action is proposed.
 - Introducing new learning methods and digital tools, like Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), Flipped learning and Virtual learning methods will be used for training teachers.
6. Another important challenge has been identified as “Developing and implementing a holistic assessment and evaluation system including vertical mobility of vocational students” and the proposed actions to address this challenge are:
 - Conduct interest assessment and aptitude test to measure special abilities or readiness for learning in various vocational areas.
 - Measuring the achievement of learning outcomes through various tools and methods, such as checklist, group work, peer assessment, worksheets, presentations, student portfolio, etc., for 360-degree assessment and evaluation of students.
 - The courses under National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) or National Higher Education Qualifications Framework (NHEQF) shall provide for vertical mobility to the students with vocational subjects at school level.
7. Another important challenge identified as “ Ensuring professional training for preparation of quality vocational teachers” and the proposed actions are:
 - Developing capacity of vocational teachers in use of innovative pedagogical approaches to teaching and training.
 - Pre-service training and short-term training courses for preparing Vocational Teachers/Trainers through online and offline mode to be offered through States Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT)and District Institutes of Educational Training(DIETs).
 - External trainers/ experts in various vocations to be invited to train teachers at Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs), Block Resource Centres (BRCs) & DIETs.
 - Ensuring that Vocational Training providers meet quality standards across Institutions based on common norms.
 - Fostering innovation in training of teachers through partnerships between the VET institutions and industry or research institutions.

These are some of the challenges have been identified to incorporate the vocational education system along with the mainstream education system keeping in mind the present status and condition of the Indian education system. This analysis has revealed that the Indian education system is still not ready to implement all the proposed curriculum in the ongoing education system as there are lots of gaps which needs to be bridged up before implementing the NEP,2020 with special reference to the vocationalization of the India education system. Lots of capacity building, awareness generation and infrastructural developments are required before implementation of the vocational education. Along with that lots of employment avenues are also needs to be created where the students will be able to get employment after completion of the course and also they will be able to do internship and skill trainings while undergoing such courses.

Conclusion:

There is no doubt that vocational education program has played a major role in providing quality education including education which really can fulfill the needs of human beings. This is high time where we should think for producing quality human resources so that they can become self-reliant and also get success in their professional as well as personal life. Many youths of present generation are dropping from mainstream education because this age old education system has failed to fulfill their needs and they are not getting any motivation to continue this traditional education. Here the vocational education can really bring them back and this can develop their employability skills along with self-employment skills and finally they can get meaningful employment in whichever field they are interested in. this NEP,2020 have covered all these aspects and it has been argued that for successful implementation of the policy the gaps needs to be bridged up and there should be actual implementation, then only the objectives of NEP,2020 will be achieved and the programme will be successful. NSQF and NHEQF should aim at including higher level skills and the government should facilitate the same by introducing ways to acknowledge them.

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