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National Education Policy and Language Policy and Planning

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Abstract

The whole development scenario of the country is directly dependent upon quality education which helps in developing the required knowledge and skills among the masses and improves the overall working quality of the nation. Implementing the National Education Policy 2020 successfully will help meet the challenges of quality education, innovation, and research and will contribute to making the country a knowledge superpower. National Education Policy 2020 is built on access, equity, quality, and accountability's foundational pillars. NEP expects to change the educational landscape of the country by preparing the youth of the country to meet the various present and future challenges. Educational language policy- variously referred to as language education policy, language-in-education policy, and language policy in education refers to a focus on the educational context within language policy and planning research, but might also include informal education activities and socialization in homes and communities. This work is focused on how language policy creation, interpretation, and appropriation in school's impact educational processes and pedagogy with particular attention to opportunities for minority and indigenous language users. Educational language policies have been defined as official and unofficial policies that are developed across various layers, even though language policies affect the form, function, usage, or acquisition of language more generally. The National Education Policy 2020 proposes the early implementation of a three-language formula to promote multilingualism at the school level. The present study is to find out why and how far the National Education Policy 2020 was necessary to prepare. How the education policy is an important initiative towards ensuring the all-round development of Indian society. The language issues in the document and how multilingualism and the power of the language of the NEP document can play a vital role in the holistic development of the students from primary to higher education.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Educational Language and Planning

Introduction

The creation of an equal society and the realization of human potential are believed to be essential elements of national development. According to the NEP2020, the key to India's sustained rise and global leadership in terms of economic process, social fairness and equality, scientific development, national inclusion, and cultural preservation is universal access to high-quality education. Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which India endorsed in 2015, is to "ensure high-quality education is accessible to all and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by the year 2030. NEP2020) As a result, embracing the "National Education Policy- 2020," the Central Government has proposed a roadmap for the transition from basic education to higher education based on the suggestions of the committee established under the direction of Dr. K. Kasturirangan. A goal has been established to support possibilities for lifelong learning and to guarantee high-quality education. In comparison to the previous two policies, the National Education Policy 2020 has raised hopes for success with exceedingly ambitious and far-reaching outcomes. This is because the policy was released after approximately five years of planning. This is the first national initiative since independence where the power of language is valued and Indian languages are taken into account holistically.

The policy's emphasis on language can be understood from the fact that there have been 206 uses of the word "language," including 126 in the plural and 80 in the singular. The word "plural" here denotes that the diversity of all Indian languages—rather than just one language—is the focus of this document. If we look at the bigger picture and try to comprehend it, we will see that languages are very important in tying our society together. The use of language in the teaching and learning process is particularly important. The dominance of English is promoted in the existing educational system, which slows down learning and prevents children from developing their personalities. According to psychology, a youngster learns in his mother tongue or a regional language rapidly and readily. The new education policy discusses fostering and safeguarding. Language variety is promoted and preserved in the new education policy. The four main components of the educational system are students, teachers, curriculum, and physical facilities. Considering these four, the new educational system seems to have a lot of potential. To help children grow in the field of education by keeping them connected to their mother tongue (home language) and culture, the new education policy emphasizes the use of their mother tongue or vernacular for the medium of elementary education. Planning and policy are crucial for education. Learning is a process that can be accomplished through language.

Choosing a language to teach when living in a multilingual and multicultural nation like India is the main challenge. In a bilingual country, education is one factor that can promote national cohesion. We are somehow connected to our speech and language through linguistic discourse. Children must have the chance to acquire multilingual proficiency throughout their academic careers, from elementary school through post-secondary education, if we are to maintain our multilingual society. Additionally, our kids are unable to develop fundamental language abilities at the classroom level. Many schoolchildren struggle with reading, letter recognition, writing, and other skills. These kids don't show much interest in language and literature courses when they attend colleges and universities.

NEP 2020

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a comprehensive framework for the transformation of the education system in India. It was approved by the Government of India in July 2020 and aims to address the evolving needs of the 21st-century education landscape. The NEP 2020 focuses on several key areas of education reform. Here are some of its salient features:

1. **Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education:** The NEP 2020 emphasizes the importance of a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education, integrating various domains such as arts, humanities, sciences, sports, vocational skills, and more. It aims to reduce the emphasis on rote learning and promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities.

2. **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):** The policy recognizes the significance of early childhood education and aims to provide universal access to quality ECCE for children in the 3-6 age group. It focuses on developing age-appropriate curricula, well-trained educators, and the integration of play-based learning.

3. **School Education Reforms:** The NEP 2020 proposes several reforms for school education, including the restructuring of the school curriculum to promote conceptual understanding and reduce the content load. It also advocates for flexible and multidisciplinary education paths, integration of vocational education from the secondary level, and promotion of digital literacy and technology integration.

4. **Multilingualism and Language Education:** The policy emphasizes the importance of multilingualism and mother tongue-based education. It encourages the use of the

mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, while also promoting proficiency in other languages. The goal is to preserve linguistic diversity and enhance language learning outcomes.

5. **Higher Education Reforms:** The NEP 2020 proposes several reforms in higher education, including the establishment of a National Research Foundation (NRF) to promote research and innovation, the introduction of a flexible credit system, multiple entry and exit options, and the integration of vocational education with mainstream education. It also aims to internationalize higher education and enhance the quality and autonomy of universities.

6. **Teacher Education and Professional Development:** The policy emphasizes the importance of teacher education and continuous professional development. It aims to revamp teacher education programs, promote innovative teaching methods, and provide opportunities for career advancement and professional growth.

The NEP 2020 envisions a learner-centric, flexible, and inclusive education system that prepares students for the challenges of the future. Its implementation involves collaboration between the central and state governments, educational institutions, educators, and various stakeholders. The policy seeks to transform the education landscape in India and make it more equitable, inclusive, and relevant to the needs of a rapidly changing world.

National Education Policy & Language Policy and Planning

National education policy and language policy and planning are two interconnected areas that focus on formulating and implementing strategies and guidelines related to education and language usage within a country. Let's discuss each of these concepts in more detail:

1. **National Education Policy**: National education policy refers to the set of principles, objectives, and strategies formulated by a government to guide the development and improvement of the education system in a country. It outlines the goals, priorities, and reforms necessary to enhance the quality and accessibility of education at all levels, from early childhood to higher education.

National education policies typically address various aspects, including curriculum development, teacher training, infrastructure, assessment and evaluation, educational technology, inclusion and equity, and vocational education. These policies are designed to

promote educational excellence, address societal needs, and prepare individuals for future challenges and opportunities.

2. **Language Policy and Planning:** Language policy and planning involves the decisions and actions taken by governments or other authorities to regulate and manage the use of languages within a particular context. Language policies address issues such as official language designation, language in education, language rights, language preservation, and promotion of multilingualism.

Language policies can have several objectives, such as promoting linguistic diversity, ensuring equitable access to education in different languages, preserving indigenous or minority languages, enhancing language proficiency for economic or diplomatic purposes, and fostering social cohesion in multilingual societies. These policies often involve decisions on language-in-education models (e.g., bilingual education, immersion programs) and the allocation of resources for language teaching and learning.

The connection between National Education Policy and Language Policy and Planning: Language policy and planning are integral components of national education policies. They determine the language(s) of instruction, curriculum development, and assessment frameworks within the education system. Language policies can significantly impact educational outcomes, linguistic diversity, cultural identity, and social cohesion.

In multilingual countries, language policies must address issues related to language choice, language rights, and balancing the need for a common language of instruction with the preservation and development of other languages. Effective language policy and planning require careful consideration of linguistic, social, cultural, and educational factors to ensure inclusive and quality education for all.

Governments and educational authorities often collaborate with linguistic experts, educators, community representatives, and other stakeholders to develop language policies that align with national education goals and aspirations. Regular evaluation and review of language policies are crucial to adapt to changing societal needs, linguistic dynamics, and educational research.

Languages

To fully develop Indian kids' personalities and to take into account their cultural interests, the mother tongue was for the first time established as the primary level medium of instruction. The goal of incorporating Indian languages into the educational system is to preserve and strengthen them, which will breathe new life into the languages that are on the verge of extinction and keep kids engaged with their art and culture.

Language as Power: Language holds immense power and influence in various aspects of society. Here are a few ways in which language can be seen as a source of power:

1. Communication and Expression: Language is the primary means of communication, allowing individuals to convey their thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Effective communication empowers individuals to articulate their needs, assert their rights, and influence others. The ability to express oneself eloquently in a particular language can enhance personal and professional relationships, enable effective advocacy, and drive social change.

2. Access to Information and Knowledge: Language acts as a gateway to knowledge and information. Proficiency in a language provides individuals with access to a vast array of resources, including books, academic materials, media, and online content. The power to understand, interpret, and disseminate information through language empowers individuals to make informed decisions, engage in intellectual discourse, and contribute meaningfully to various domains such as academia, politics, and media.

3. Social Mobility and Economic Opportunities: Language proficiency can significantly impact social mobility and economic opportunities. Fluency in languages widely spoken in business and professional settings, such as English, can open doors to better employment prospects, international collaborations, and career advancement. Mastery of a dominant language in a particular region or industry can provide individuals with a competitive edge, enabling them to navigate social networks and access higher-paying jobs or entrepreneurial opportunities.

4. Identity and Cultural Preservation: Language plays a crucial role in shaping individual and collective identities. It serves as a vessel for cultural traditions, values, and heritage, allowing communities to preserve and transmit their unique identities across generations. Language empowers individuals to connect with their roots, express their cultural nuances, and participate actively in cultural, artistic, and literary endeavors.

Preserving and promoting indigenous or minority languages can empower marginalized communities, enabling them to reclaim their cultural heritage and assert their rights.

5. Influence and Persuasion: Language is a persuasive tool, capable of influencing people's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Skillful use of language, rhetoric, and storytelling can sway public opinion, mobilize support for causes, and shape political discourse. Individuals who possess linguistic prowess can leverage their communication skills to inspire, motivate, and lead others, thereby wielding power in various domains, including politics, media, and public speaking.

6. Negotiation and Diplomacy: Language plays a critical role in diplomacy and negotiation. Fluency in multiple languages enables effective communication, understanding, and collaboration across cultural and linguistic barriers. Skilled diplomats, translators, and interpreters who possess linguistic competence hold considerable power in facilitating dialogue, resolving conflicts, and fostering international cooperation.

Language Teacher:

The establishment of language departments at higher education institutions, whose duty it will be to train language instructors, is mentioned in this chapter. The country's numerous schools will employ trained educators from this institution. This text also mentions the demands placed on language teachers professionally.

There will be an upsurge in demand for teachers of Indian languages nationwide. Teachers will be able to find work thanks to this. Children will develop their linguistic abilities, notably their ability to communicate verbally and in writing.

All Indian languages will be developed and preserved, according to this document. To enhance traditional Indian languages and literature at higher education institutions, special plans would be made under this. Pali, Prakrit, and Persian languages will each have their national institute formed. If we strive to grasp everything, we will see that multilingualism and language education teaching have received special attention at the policy level. In addition, there are plans to train professional instructors, advance their efficiency, which is connected to ongoing professional development programs, and improve them as educators. This document presents positively on the level of planning, policy, etc.

If a child receives early schooling in the language that he or she uses to communicate with their mother, family, and environment, their mental development will be improved. Rutherford made the following observation, which is very important: "There is at least one characteristic that's common to every successful language-learning experience we've ever known, and that is that the learner is exposed to an adequate amount of the information of the language to be learned through one method or another."

No one can avoid English altogether in the age of social media and online education. He can continue to learn it as he sees fit in the future. The education policy now bears some of the system's accountability. Unlike Spanish, Russian, and German, English is not a typical foreign language. The advantage of using one's mother tongue or native language as a medium is that early hesitance, fear, and anxiety are eliminated.

Multilingualism:

With the emphasis on multilingualism in the National Education Policy 2020, the changes that are proposed in the schooling system are likely to emerge in the multi-faceted personality of the students. In this context, the document is a systematic and practical effort towards the new construction of modern India and the upgrading of the Indian education system as per the twenty-first-century requirement. Early childhood care and education have been included in the education policy keeping in mind the all-round development of children. Along with this, a meaningful initiative has been taken to use the mother tongue or regional language for primary and secondary education. Eliminating the imperative of English as a medium of primary-level education and widespread use of Indian languages will see far-reaching results in basic education. This will pave the way for the advancement of native languages, as well as help in the development of the spirit of Indianness and national unity. Prof. Hans Raj Dua (2008: 44) believes that such thinking and its implementation had two far-reaching effects on Indian society. On the one hand, English got a big boost and thus the economic interests and ideas of the economically influential elite were nurtured, on the other hand, the social status, functions, and model for the development of local languages suffered a lot. Thus, the principles of monolingualism hampered multilingualism and the destruction of minority languages. Education through mother tongue and Indian languages will increase the chances of employability and we will be successful in building a confident future generation. Instead of insisting on securing marks, emphasis has been given to self-reliance and understanding the concept as well as the desire to create a new generation with all-around development in this

document. By acquiring knowledge of Indian languages one can make the imagination of nation-growth possible by rising above the feelings of caste, religion, regionalism, and communal ism.

Importance of Mother Tongue:

On a practical level, the difference between any two languages is social or political rather than linguistic. In this way, the mother tongue or regional language can express its social values and knowledge in the entire occultation to the new generation through elementary education. Thus, if a language represents a region or a particular society, it will be easy for any child coming from the background of that society to understand the basic education in their language. Govindraj Ethiraj rightly said, "The closer the school language is to the language that the child is familiar with that what is going to build a robust". Many world-famous language scientists and academicians like Steven Pinker, Chomsky, Peter Trudgill, etc., have made it clear that the language closest to the maternal language or student's social language is that the most useful language for education. Consistent with sociologist Peter Trudgill, "Language as a social phenomenon is closely engaged with the social organization and value systems of society.

In this way, if a language represents a region or a particular society, then it will be easy for any child from the background of that society to understand the basic education in their language. But to make these languages educative, there is an urgent need to strengthen them at the structural and conceptual level i.e. without standardization and technical terminology, there will be difficulty in making these languages a medium of instruction and producing textbooks. Along with this, the new education policy has suggested several measures to improve the quality of teaching along with the educational use of Indian languages. Towards training of continuous professional development for teachers; Use of technology platforms such as SWAYAM / DIKSHA will be available to train teachers through online mode.

Classical language:

Looking at the possibility of better teaching and research on the art, history, and tradition of the country, Indian classical languages (Tamil (2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), and Oriya (2014)) it has been suggested to connect institutions with various universities. Apart from this, emphasis has also been laid on creating new institutions for Pali, Prakrit, and Persian languages. At the same time, it has been proposed to create an independent institute with a special emphasis on translation so that the culture of multilingualism and comparative studies of the country can be promoted. With the

establishment of the National Institutes for Persian, Pali, and Prakrit', it was suggested to strengthen the language department in higher educational institutions and promote the mother tongue / local language in the form of institutions in higher languages.

The creation of academies for all Indian languages, including those on the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, is another aspect of the new education program. In addition, it is suggested to gather manuscripts, conserve them, translate them, and promote their study. To allow pupils to develop their own creative, artistic, cultural, and intellectual qualities, language, culture, and the arts have been integrated into this new educational policy. Indian languages will be extremely helpful in containing the symbols and sources of their lost glory if these language decisions and provisions are authentically followed in the future. India will emerge from this with inhabitants who are proud of their language, culture, custom, and heritage, and India will be progressing towards a new level of knowledge.

In India today, there are a lot of pupils that have disabilities. The development of instructional resources and infrastructure is emphasized in the new education policy tailored to their requirements.

Other Languages:

Students will also have access to a wide range of Indian classical languages and literature in schools, including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Pali, Persian, and Prakrit. This strategy places value on dialects in addition to languages.

Additionally, making them a teaching tool is emphasized. These ancient languages should be updated if necessary. Where classical language is linked to religious traditions, like in the Arab world, this may be very problematic. Fortunately, India does not experience this. All Indian languages, which have rich oral and written literature, cultural traditions, and knowledge, will undergo similar attempts.

Indian Languages:

By altering the priority of the mother tongue, the new education strategy has also taken into account the significance of the Hindi language. Along with Hindi, the significance of Indian languages should also be emphasized, and English's hegemony should be overthrown. It places unparalleled value on the mother tongue. The new education strategy emphasizes the development, restoration, and dissemination of Indian traditions, culture, and languages in addition to being founded on Indian ideals of life, making it crucial in helping India become a

strong, gloried, and independent nation. For the flourishing of the nation, all the great thinkers of the rich language tradition have held that it is essential to establish a native language environment in which all languages have equal access to high-quality education.

Conclusion

Our nation's education system places a high priority on language instruction since it is crucial to fostering a strong social fabric in general and educating young people in particular. However, no local or regional language in India has been granted significance or superiority over other languages due to the country's current federal structure and linguistic variety. The policy document's three-language formula will undoubtedly improve our educational system and eliminate social inequality. The majority of the NEP 2020 measures are greatly appreciated. Changes should be made to current circumstances and for the benefit of society. The secret of human existence and social change is education. The NEP 2020 with its new vision will undoubtedly bring about positive changes in our educational system since changes in education should be good for the development of society. A key strategy for supporting the holistic development of Indian society is the education policy. It seeks to encourage the development and preservation of all Indian languages. To better serve the needs of the Indian population, the mother tongue was for the first time used as the major educational medium. Incorporating Indian languages within the educational system also aims to preserve and strengthen them. Vernacular language instruction will revitalize endangered languages and keep young people engaged with their culture. Of course, this will result in a qualitative improvement in the kids' creative abilities. Establishing India's cultural and social magnificence in the minds of the younger generation is crucial, and this can be done by educating them in their mother tongue, or local language. Without knowledge of and study of one's mother tongue, all behavior is regarded as meaningless. Any nation must have an education policy that takes into account its historical context, current needs, and potential future developments. Ironically, when the first education program was implemented in 1968 and the second one in 1986, the governments disregarded education. Hindi as well as other Indian languages has been given importance. In this document, democracy and the majority have both been respected.

According to the demands and challenges of the country as well as the ambitions of the population, a new education policy for 2020 has been announced. The application of technology in machine learning, artificial intelligence, and translation has been included in a policy statement for the first time in the nation. Sanskrit, classical languages, and Indian

languages have all received a lot of attention. The educational texts for schools will be translated. Institutions for translation and interpretation have been established, propaganda has been distributed, people have been reached, and the corpus vocabulary of the Indian language has been expanded. It will have a large impact if it is implemented correctly and well-coordinated with other policies. "No one knows at whose beckoning call how many streams, of humanity came in indomitable waves from all over the world, over the millennia and mingled like rivers, into this vast ocean and created an individual soul, that is called Bharat," Rabindranath Tagore said in his poem "Bharat Teertha." Hope that the National Education Policy 2020 will reach the milestone Gurudev Rabindranath envisioned in the epic poem BharataTeertha with its diversified linguistic perspective.

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