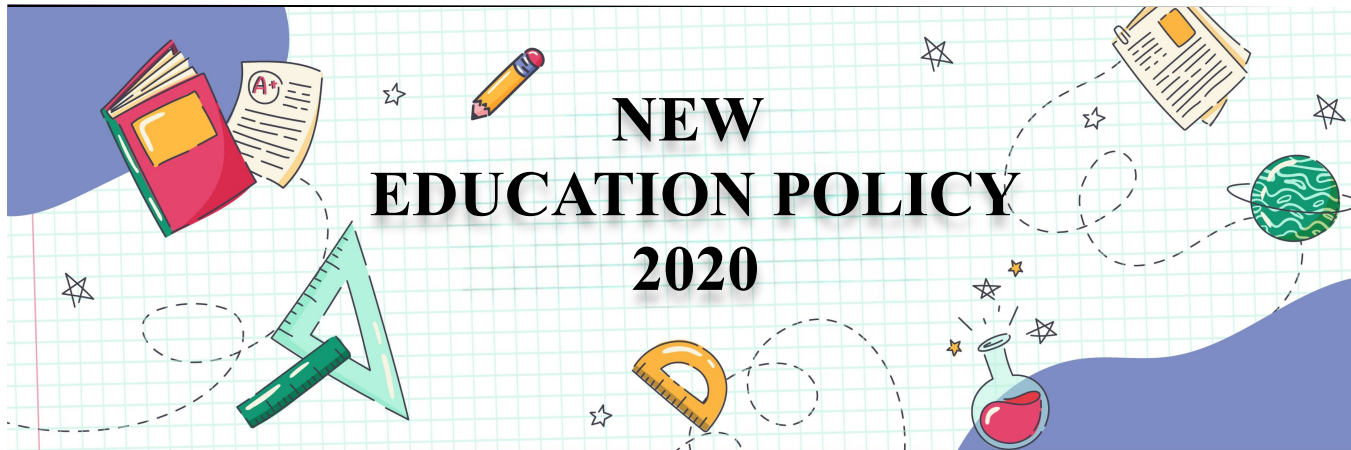


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Saturday, 1st June 2024

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OVERVIEW- OF THE NEW EDUCATION POLICY:

-VidyarthiMitra News Desk

- **Scheme Name:** New Education Policy 2021 (NEP)
- **Ministry:** Union Cabinet Minister for Human Resource Development, Government of India
- **HRD Minister:** Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank
- **Launched by:** Central Government of India
- **Beneficiaries:** Students across India
- **Major Benefit:** Implementation of New Reforms and Infrastructure in India's education sector
- **Launch Date:** 29 July 2020
- **Scheme Objective:** Reforming the Education System
- **Scheme under:** Central Government
- **Coverage:** Nationwide (All India)
- **Post Category:** Scheme/ Yojana

Official Website: www.mhrd.gov.in



VISION- OF THE NEW EDUCATION POLICY:

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The NEP envisions transforming India's educational landscape by fostering an equitable and knowledgeable society through the provision of high-quality education to all. It aims to instill national pride, develop essential skills, and nurture responsible citizenship among students.

INTRODUCTION: NEW EDUCATION POLICY (NEP)

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The New Education Policy (NEP) is a landmark reform introduced by the Indian government to overhaul the education system. It's aimed at transforming the existing framework to meet the evolving needs of the 21st century. With the last major policy reform dating back to 1986, the NEP was long overdue. Its inception in 2020 marked a significant step towards modernizing education in India. The Union Cabinet of India approved the New Education Policy (NEP) with the aim to revamp India's education system by streamlining school curriculums and discontinuing MPhil programs.

The policy emphasizes fostering both theoretical knowledge and creative potential among students, prioritizing practical learning and skill development for overall individual development.

WHAT IS NEW EDUCATION POLICY?

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The original National Education Policy (NEP) of India, drafted in 1986 and last revised in 1992, prompted the government to recognize the limitations of the outdated policy. Thus, a new education policy was devised to modernize the education system. In July 2020, the Union Cabinet sanctioned the New Education Policy, envisioning India's transformation into a global knowledge superpower. In response to the New Education Policy, the Ministry of Education underwent a renaming process. The policy's framework is structured to align with the 2020 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is founded on the principles of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability. The policy aims to foster the comprehensive development of students, encompassing areas such as sports, creativity, and science. It introduces a departure from the traditional stream structure, allowing candidates to choose subjects based on their individual interests rather than conforming to predetermined streams.



OBJECTIVES OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY:

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1. Universalization of Education:

One of the primary objectives is to ensure that every child in India has access to quality education from early childhood to higher education. This involves not only increasing enrollment rates but also focusing on retention and completion rates across all levels of education.

2. Quality and Equity: The NEP aims to improve the quality of education while reducing disparities in access and outcomes. This includes enhancing infrastructure, teacher training, curriculum development, and teaching methods to deliver a more robust and equitable education system.

3. Flexibility and Multidisciplinary Learning:

Recognizing the importance of holistic development, the NEP promotes a flexible and multidisciplinary approach to learning. It encourages students to explore diverse fields of knowledge and develop a range of skills beyond traditional academic subjects.

4. Promotion of Indian Languages and Culture:

The policy emphasizes the preservation and promotion of India's rich linguistic and cultural heritage. It advocates for the use of mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction in early schooling to ensure a strong foundation in language skills.

5. Global Integration: While preserving India's cultural identity, the NEP also seeks to integrate Indian education with global standards. It encourages internationalization, collaboration, and exchange programs to expose students to diverse perspectives and experiences.

6. Identify and nurture each child's unique potential:

The policy aims to recognize and cultivate the individual talents and abilities of every student, ensuring that they receive personalized support and guidance to excel in their areas of strength. creativity, problem-solving skills, and logical reasoning abilities.

7. Foster literacy and numeracy skills development among children:

Providing a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy is crucial for students to navigate

various academic and real-world challenges. The policy emphasizes comprehensive strategies to enhance these fundamental skills.

8. Offer flexible learning options to accommodate diverse needs:

Recognizing that every student learns differently, the policy advocates for flexible learning approaches that cater to diverse learning styles, abilities, and interests, ensuring that all students have equitable access to quality education.

9. Invest in a robust public education system:

The policy prioritizes significant investments in public education infrastructure, resources, and teacher training to ensure that every child, regardless of socio-economic background, has access to high-quality education.

10. Prioritize the delivery of quality education:

Quality education is the cornerstone of the policy, focusing on rigorous academic standards, competent teaching staff, and effective teaching methods to ensure that students receive a meaningful and impactful learning experience.

11. Instill in children a strong connection to Indian culture:

Recognizing the importance of cultural heritage, the policy seeks to instill pride in Indian culture and traditions among students, fostering a sense of identity, belonging, and respect for diverse cultural perspectives.

12. Promote excellence in research endeavors:

Encouraging research and innovation in education is vital for advancing knowledge and addressing societal challenges. The policy promotes a culture of inquiry, critical thinking, and problem-solving among students and educators.

13. Foster responsible leadership and empower students:

The policy aims to develop students into ethical, responsible leaders who can contribute positively to society. It emphasizes the cultivation of leadership skills, ethical values, and civic engagement among students.

14. Establish a transparent framework for education policy:

Transparency and accountability are essential for effective governance in

education. The policy essential for monitoring advocates for clear, student progress and transparent policies and informing instructional processes that promote decisions. The policy accountability, stakeholder emphasizes the development participation, and continuous of comprehensive improvement. assessment frameworks that

14. Emphasize the effective measure diverse aspects of utilization of technology: student learning, including Leveraging technology can academic achievement, skills enhance teaching, learning, development, and socio- and educational outcomes. emotional growth. 16.

The policy encourages the Introduce instruction in integration of technology multiple languages: into classroom instruction, Multilingualism promotes teacher professional cognitive development, development, and cultural understanding, and educational administration to communication skills. The improve access, efficiency, policy advocates for and effectiveness. instruction in multiple

15. Implement robust languages, including regional mechanisms for evaluating languages, to support student performance: linguistic diversity and Effective assessment proficiency among students. practices are

REQUIREMENT OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY

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The 2020 New National Education Policy aimed to address deficiencies in India's education system, focusing on issues like rote memorization and varied pedagogical approaches. It aimed to bridge the gap between formal and informal education, emphasizing vocational skills and de-prioritizing traditional subjects. The policy envisioned a comprehensive and efficient education system, fostering creative development and aligning curricula with interests.

- Infrastructure Development: To support the goals of the NEP, significant investment is required in building and upgrading educational infrastructure, including schools, colleges, libraries, laboratories, and digital resources.

-Teacher Training and Development:** Teachers play a pivotal role in the success of any education system. Therefore, the NEP emphasizes the need for comprehensive teacher training programs to equip educators with the skills and knowledge required to deliver quality education.

-Curriculum Reforms: The curriculum needs to be updated and revised to make it more relevant, contemporary, and aligned with the needs of the 21st century. This involves incorporating new subjects, skills, and teaching methodologies to prepare students for the challenges of the future.

-Technology Integration: In today's digital age, technology can play a transformative role in education. The NEP advocates for the integration of technology in teaching and learning processes to enhance access, engagement, and effectiveness.





EDITORIAL

Unveiling Epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org Empowering Students Through Knowledge

-VidyarthiMitra News Desk

In today's dynamic world, where information overload is a common challenge, VidyarthiMitra.org proudly introduces its epaper—a beacon of knowledge, guidance, and empowerment for students. As a Pune-based education consultancy, we understand the importance of accurate, up-to-date information in shaping academic and professional journeys. With this mission, we've created a newspaper that serves as a comprehensive resource for students, parents, educators, and all education stakeholders.

Our Vision and Mission:

At VidyarthiMitra.org, our vision is clear: democratize education access and empower every student to reach their full potential. We believe education is key to progress, ensuring everyone can pursue their dreams confidently. Through epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org, we bridge the gap between aspirations and achievements, equipping students with essential tools and support for success in today's competitive world.

The Journey So Far:

VidyarthiMitra.org is the result of years of dedication and expertise in higher and professional education. Starting as a search engine for educational content, we've evolved into a comprehensive platform offering mock exams, career assessments, and admission guidance—all aimed at empowering students through knowledge. Now, with epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org, we're taking this commitment further, bringing together our best services and expertise in an accessible, informative, and inspiring format.

What Sets Us Apart:

What distinguishes Epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org is not just its extensive information but also the depth of insights it provides. From editorials by educators to inspiring student success stories, each section is curated meticulously. Whether you seek guidance on admissions, scholarships, or careers, you'll find it all in the pages of Epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org.

A Glimpse Into Our Offerings:

Our Epaper is more than just a newspaper—it's a treasure trove of knowledge and inspiration. Here's a glimpse into some of the key sections and offerings you can expect to find:

Current Affairs: Stay updated on the latest news and events relevant to students.

Entrance Exams Updates: Get information on upcoming exams, application deadlines.

Admission Guidance: Access articles on admissions procedures and interview strategies.

Scholarship Opportunities: Explore listings of available scholarships, eligibility criteria, and deadlines.

Courses Spotlight: Discover trending courses, career prospects, and skill development programs.

Jobs & Career Opportunities: Receive updates on job openings, career advice, and industry insights.

Government Schemes for Students: Learn about government initiatives, scholarships, and educational policies.

Student Success Stories: Be inspired by stories of students who have achieved success through dedication and hard work.

Educational Resources & Reviews

Join us at epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org in our journey of empowerment and enlightenment. Whether you're a student, parent, educator, or education enthusiast, there's a place for you in our community. Thank you for your support, and here's to a future filled with knowledge, growth, and opportunity.

Sincerely,

Mr.Ravindra.Kamtam

Editor-in-Chief

Epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org

IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEW EDUCATION POLICY

-VidyarthiMitra News Desk

- **School Education:** The NEP introduces several reforms in school education, including a renewed focus on foundational literacy and numeracy, flexible curricula, vocational education from the early years, and a shift towards competency-based assessment

- **Higher Education:** The policy envisions a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to higher education, with flexible undergraduate programs, integration of vocational education, promotion of research and innovation, and autonomy for colleges and universities.

- **Teacher Education:** Teacher training programs will be revamped to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching. Continuous professional development will be promoted to ensure that teachers stay updated with the latest pedagogical techniques and subject knowledge.

- **Language Policy:** The NEP emphasizes the importance of multilingualism and encourages the use of mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction in early schooling. This is seen as crucial for promoting better understanding and retention of concepts.

1. Early Schooling Initiation:

- The new education policy extends formal education to 12 years, integrating three years of Anganwadi/pre-school education.

- It replaces the 10+2 structure with a 5+3+3+4 curricular framework, emphasizing Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

- New Curriculum Syllabus for Pre-School and Anganwadi Children: Focus on foundational literacy and numeracy skills to build a strong educational foundation.

2. Medium of Instruction:

- The NEP underscores the use of mother tongue as the primary teaching language but doesn't mandate compulsory language learning.

- It recommends utilizing the native language until Grade 5 or 8, transitioning to it as a subject thereafter.

3. Unified Higher Education Oversight:

- The establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) as a singular governing body for all higher education institutions, except medical and legal education.

- HECI is responsible for regulating, accrediting, and setting academic standards for both public and private higher education institutions.

4. Streamless Education System:

- The NEP eliminates traditional distinctions between science, arts, and commerce streams, promoting a multidisciplinary approach.

- Students can choose from a range of subjects across various disciplines, including vocational training starting from sixth grade.

5. Flexible Undergraduate Programs:

- Undergraduate degrees will have a duration of three or four years, with options for certificate exits or



diplomas.

- The policy enables colleges to award certificates, diplomas, or bachelor's degrees after one year of study in a specific field, reducing dropout rates.

- 6. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN):**
 - States are directed to integrate FLN into primary school curricula by 2025, emphasizing experiential learning and 21st-century skills.
 - The policy targets increasing the graduate enrollment ratio to 50% by 2035 and reducing student dropout rates through multiple exit options.
- 7. Enhanced Open and Distance Learning:**
 - Efforts to elevate distance learning programs to the standard of regular courses, incorporating measures such as online courses, digital repositories, and enhanced student services.
- 8. Technological Innovation in Education:**
 - Establishment of the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) to facilitate the integration of technology in education, enhancing classroom procedures, teacher development, and education planning.
- 9. Internationalization of Indian Education:**
 - Promotion of global collaborations between Indian and foreign institutions through faculty exchange programs and support for international universities to establish campuses in India.
- 10. Education as an Investment:**
 - Collaboration between central and state governments to raise awareness and investment in education, aiming to allocate 6% of GDP to enhance educational infrastructure and accessibility nationwide.
- 11. More Focus on Vocational Studies in School-Level:**
 - Every student is required to learn at least one vocational craft, promoting skill development and metacognitive abilities. By 2035, the policy targets ensuring that at least 50% of students have exposure to vocational education.
- 12. Mission to Ensure Numeracy and Literacy Skills by 2025:**
 - Targeting universal fundamental literacy and numeracy by 2025 through targeted policies and curriculum.
- 13. Redesigned Class 10th and 12th Exams:**
 - Exams redesigned to focus on core capabilities rather than rote memorization, reducing stress on students and parents.
- 14. No Hard Separation of Streams for Students:**
 - Removal of rigid differentiation between science, commerce, and arts streams, providing flexibility in subject choices.
- 15. Reduced Exam Frequency:**
 - Instead of annual exams, students will only sit for exams in classes 3, 5, and 8, promoting competency-based learning.
- 16. Regular Health Check-ups for School Students:**
 - Implementation of regular health check-ups and meal plans to prioritize students' physical and mental well-being.
- 17. Utilization of School Complexes for Adult Education:**
 - School complexes to be utilized for adult education courses and community engagement activities after school hours.

EXAM STRUCTURE AS PER NEW EDUCATION POLICY

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The NEP advocates for a ongoing feedback to students fundamental shift in the and teachers. This approach exam structure, moving aims to promote deeper away from the traditional learning, critical thinking, emphasis on rote and problem-solving abilities memorization and high- among students. stakes examinations. Instead, Technology will play a it promotes competency- crucial role in the new exam based assessments that focus structure, with the use of on evaluating students' digital tools for conducting understanding, application, assessments, analyzing data, and analytical skills. and providing personalized Continuous and feedback. This will enable comprehensive evaluation is more efficient and effective encouraged, with a greater evaluation processes while emphasis on formative also ensuring greater assessments that provide transparency and fairness.

Revamped Examination Structure:

The New Education Policy adopts a 5+3+3+4 structure, dividing education into stages and fostering a holistic learning environment. It also aims to reduce assessment pressure by transitioning to three milestone assessments at the end of classes 2nd, 5th, and 8th.

Importance of Mother Tongue:

The policy emphasizes education in one's mother tongue up to class 5, possibly extending to class 8 in certain schools. This initiative aims to improve students' understanding, communication with teachers, and cultural ties, fostering language proficiency and bridging cultural gaps.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum:

Encouragement of interdisciplinary and multilingual education to foster a flexible curriculum nurturing diverse skills and promoting seamless knowledge acquisition.

Coding and Experimental Education:

Introduction of coding as a crucial curriculum element in 6th grade, focusing on practical and experiential understanding through hands-on learning methods.

Focus on Students' Health:

Expansion of the mid-day meal scheme to include breakfast and incorporation of counsellors and social workers to enhance students health and mental well-being.

Multidisciplinary Bachelor's Degrees:

Introduction of a flexible 4-year undergraduate program with multiple exit points (certificate, diploma, bachelor's) to facilitate skill development.

Discontinuation of M.Phil. Courses:

Elimination of M.Phil. courses in universities and colleges to introduce futuristic and career-centric educational programs.

Establishment of Higher Education Commission:

Formation of a Higher Education Commission of India to regulate and manage higher education, focusing on enhancing enrollment ratios and academic standards.

Regulatory Councils:

Establishment of a National Higher Education Regulatory Council and a Higher Education Grant Council to oversee and financially support higher education institutions.

**International Collaboration:**

Encouragement of international collaboration, allowing foreign universities to establish campuses and educational centers in India, enhancing student exposure.

Fee Regulation:

Implementation of regulated fees in both private and public universities to ensure equal access to quality education and better learning opportunities for all students.

College Affiliation:

Phasing out of college affiliation within 15 years, granting colleges autonomous status to provide high-quality education.

District-level Universities:

Aim to establish at least one high-quality multidisciplinary institute of excellence in every district by 2030, expanding access to education.

Multidisciplinary Universities:

Transformation of Indian universities into major multidisciplinary institutions by 2040, equipped with high-tech classrooms and diverse curricula for holistic education.

CHALLENGES REGARDING NEW EDUCATIONAL POLICY:

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High Enrollment Targets:

The New Educational Policy aims to double the gross enrollment ratio by 2035, necessitating the development of a new curriculum. However, crafting a comprehensive curriculum poses a significant challenge for many educators.

Lack of Qualified Teachers:

India faces a shortage of qualified teachers who are adept at implementing the new pedagogical approach required by the revised curriculum. Recruiting and training a substantial number of skilled educators is essential for effectively implementing the upgraded curriculum.

Lack of Financial Resources:

Adequate funding and resources are essential for the successful implementation of the New Educational Policy. However, not all educational institutions have access to the necessary financial resources required to effectively execute the policy's initiatives.

Lack of Adaptive Mindset among Educators:

Many educators are accustomed to traditional teaching methods and may struggle to adapt to the innovative approaches advocated by the New Educational Policy. Hiring educators with versatile skill sets and a willingness to embrace diverse teaching methodologies is crucial for fostering holistic student development.

Implementation: One of the biggest challenges is ensuring effective implementation of the policy at all levels of the education system. This requires coordinated efforts from government agencies, educational institutions, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders.

Resource Allocation: Adequate funding and resource allocation are essential for the successful implementation of the NEP. The government needs to prioritize education spending and ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to support the ambitious goals of the policy.

Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, and students, is critical for the success of any education reform. Effective communication, consultation, and collaboration are needed to address concerns, gather feedback, and garner support for the NEP.

Addressing Disparities: Socio-economic and regional disparities in access to quality education remain a major challenge in India. The NEP must address these disparities through targeted interventions, inclusive policies, and equitable resource distribution.

VidyarthiMitra.org: Comprehensive Educational Services

- **Extensive Database:** VidyarthiMitra.org offers a comprehensive database of top universities, colleges, and courses in Maharashtra, India, and abroad.
- **Detailed Insights:** Provides detailed information about each institution to facilitate well-informed decision-making.
- **Streamlined Admission Process:** Offers step-by-step guidance and a comprehensive government document checklist for clarity and organization.
- **Up-to-date Information:** Keeps users informed with the latest updates on entrance exams, including mock tests and detailed syllabus.
- **Study Materials:** Provides a rich repository of study materials, including mock tests, solved papers, and comprehensive study material to enhance exam readiness.
- **Cutoff Trends and Fee Structures:** Offers insights into cutoff trends and fee structures for strategic college selection and financial preparedness.
- **Personalized Career Guidance:** Provides tailored support through career assessment tests and admission assistance.
- **Study Abroad Services:** Facilitates seamless transitions into international education.
- **Educational News Portal:** Covers current affairs, entrance exam updates, admissions, and scholarship opportunities through an empowering educational news portal and e-paper.
- **Holistic Services:** VidyarthiMitra.org is a transformative educational ecosystem dedicated to empowering learners and shaping futures, inviting users to embark on a journey toward academic excellence and success.

For more information, visit [VidyarthiMitra.org](https://vidyarthimitra.org).

Important Links

1. <https://www.education.gov.in/nep/about-nep>
2. <https://www.muugadmission.samarth.edu.in>
3. <https://www.ugc.gov.in/>
4. <https://dhepune.gov.in/>





CLUSTER UNIVERSITY: A TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH TO HIGHER EDUCATION

-VidarthiMitra News Desk

What Is Cluster University?

Cluster University is a new initiative designed for students eager to explore and learn across various fields, regardless of their discipline. This concept aims to enhance the current state of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) by adding more value to student learning.



1. The Present Condition of HEIs

- **Single-Stream Education:** Currently, most educational institutions follow a single-stream structure. Students majoring in a particular subject can only study related subjects, limiting their learning opportunities.
- **Restricted Learning:** This system restricts students' ability to broaden their thinking and learning capabilities. Students often have a desire to learn beyond their major to enhance their knowledge and foster out-of-the-box thinking, which is the essence of education.

2. Cluster University for Future-Ready Campuses

- **Multidisciplinary Approach:** Cluster University aims to eliminate the single-stream teaching approach. By 2030, HEIs, including professional degree institutions, will be transformed into multidisciplinary HEI clusters or "knowledge hubs."
- **Student Flexibility:** Cluster University will accommodate 3,000 or more students, allowing them to choose subjects and courses that interest them.
- **Diverse Institutions:** The university will include various types of institutions, such as:
 - Teaching-intensive universities
 - Research-intensive universities
 - Autonomous degree colleges
- **Passion for Innovation:** This structure will enable students to explore their passions without stress.

Key Benefits of Cluster Universities

1. Enhanced Student-Teacher Collaboration

- **Better Interaction:** Merging HEIs into larger units will create more opportunities for student-teacher collaboration, leading to improved learning outcomes as students genuinely interested in particular courses come together.

2. Development of Leadership Qualities

- **Confidence and Skills:** Students will gain confidence by pursuing their chosen subjects, allowing them to polish existing skills and develop new ones. This process will naturally inculcate leadership qualities.

3. Accelerated Institutional Networking

- **Networking Opportunities:** The multidisciplinary nature of Cluster Universities will enhance institutional networking, providing broader opportunities for collaboration.

4. Efficient Use of Resources

- **Increased Outcomes:** With 3,000 students learning under a single entity, outcomes will improve with comparatively fewer resources

5. Enhanced Career and Placement Opportunities

Passionate Learning: As students engage more passionately with their studies, their chances of securing top-level placements will increase.

Conclusion

The Cluster University concept is seen as a transformative approach to enhance student strengths and empower them with valuable careers. It offers a one-size-fits-all educational framework to help students achieve their highest potential. To facilitate this transition, institutions can implement e-learning software provided by MasterSoft, which aligns with the NEP 2020 policy. This software enables students to:

- Access extensive e-content for enhanced learning
- Collaborate and communicate with faculty to clear doubts
- Learn at their own pace

For more insights on the National Education Policy 2020, you can refer to one of MasterSoft's previous blogs.

GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING CLUSTER UNIVERSITIES IN MAHARASHTRA

-VidarthiMitra News Desk



Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the need to overhaul the existing affiliation system in higher education and promote innovation, multidisciplinary education, and flexibility. Recognizing the potential benefits of innovative governance structures, Maharashtra is taking steps to establish cluster universities. These universities aim to pool resources and strengths of high-performing colleges under a single administrative and academic umbrella, aligning with NEP 2020 objectives. Currently, Maharashtra boasts three functioning cluster universities, reflecting its commitment to academic reform and quality education.

1. Rationale for a Cluster University:

Cluster universities offer a transformative approach to academics, administration, and governance, alleviating the burden on affiliating universities. They promote innovation, interdisciplinary studies, and rapid adaptation to evolving educational landscapes. By fostering collaboration and expansion, these institutions create a conducive environment for academic excellence.

2. Requirements for Formation:

To establish a cluster university:

- Engage a minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 colleges under a single management.
- Lead college must have a 20-year track record and enrollment of 2000 students; combined enrollment of all colleges must be 4000 students.
- Ensure physical proximity of participating colleges within a 25 km radius.
- Meet land and construction criteria as per government guidelines.
- Uphold academic standards, including NAAC scores, research centers, and research capacity.
- Maintain digital infrastructure, offer courses in local languages, foster industry collaboration, and provide



- Maintain digital infrastructure, offer courses in local languages, foster industry collaboration, and provide Ph.D. programs and IT/start-up centers.
- Adhere to UGC and state government guidelines, ensuring strong governance structures and reservation policies.

3. Process of Formation:

The formation process involves:

- Inviting managements to apply for cluster university status.
- Submission of Detailed Project Report (DPR) outlining proposed plans.
- Scrutiny of DPRs by a government-appointed committee.
- Recommendation and approval by Cabinet and the Hon'ble Governor.

4. Dissolution of Cluster University:

In the event of dissolution:

- Parent Body may dissolve with sufficient notice and reasons.
- Government may dissolve for legal or administrative violations.
- Assessment of liabilities and recovery from Parent Body.
- Dissolution after last batch completion.
- Affiliation to parent University post-dissolution with state government permission.



STATE GOVERNMENT APPROVES GUIDELINES FOR CLUSTER UNIVERSITIES

-VidyarthiMitra News Desk

The state cabinet has endorsed the guiding principles for establishing cluster universities by educational institutions in Maharashtra. The decision has garnered positive responses from various educational institutions in Pune and other regions of the state.

The aim of promoting cluster universities is to alleviate the burden on state universities and establish a robust network of educational institutions to offer increased opportunities to students, as stated by an official from the state higher education department. The National Higher Education Mission has encouraged the transformation of educational institutions into cluster universities. Presently, there are three cluster universities in the state: Dr. Homi Bhabha State University, Mumbai; Hyderabad (Sind) National Collegiate University, Mumbai; and Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil, Satara.

Chandrakant Patil, the state higher and technical education minister, outlined the eligibility criteria for the premier college aspiring to become a cluster university. The college should have autonomous status for at least five years, or a minimum 3.25 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) rating from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) or equivalent National Board of Accreditation (NBA) score. Additionally, 50 per cent of the total courses should be accredited by NBA. Seven key positions, including the vice-chancellor and registrar, will be established to ensure the smooth functioning of the university. The state government will allocate ₹1 crore to the university for the first five years.

The purpose of promoting cluster universities is to alleviate the burden on

state universities and foster a robust network of educational institutions to provide enhanced opportunities for students, emphasized an official from the state higher education department. The Maharashtra state Governor will appoint the vice-chancellors of these group universities as the chancellor. These universities will retain their status as public universities.

According to the guidelines for cluster university formation, a leading educational institution or college aspiring for a cluster university should demonstrate high academic performance, possess adequate infrastructure, well-trained faculty, and the capability to coordinate towards establishing a cluster university. To form a group university, a minimum of two and a maximum of five aided or unaided colleges of the same management or educational institution must be amalgamated. All traditional and professional colleges, except those in agriculture and health sciences, are eligible for inclusion in the cluster university. The state government will evaluate more than five colleges or institutes for inclusion in the cluster university.

Collectively, these colleges should have 15,000 square meters of construction area, with four hectares required for divisional headquarters and six hectares for the rest of the state.

Rajesh Pandey, president of the Pune Education Forum, expressed optimism about the significant development, stating that it opens doors for educational opportunities, experimentation, and expansion. He anticipates increased participation from educational institutions in the cluster university scheme.

MAHARASHTRA WELCOMES SECOND CLUSTER UNIVERSITY

Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari, alongside Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, inaugurated Maharashtra's second cluster university. Three renowned colleges in Mumbai, part of the Hyderabad (Sind) National Collegiate Board (H(S)NCB), have united to establish the 'HSNC University'. Set to commence the academic year 2020 – 21, HSNC University will begin admissions after the Maharashtra HSC result 2020 is announced in July. The Governor emphasized the government's support for cluster universities, envisioning them as centers of excellence. He urged students to embrace 'Adhyatmik Intelligence', echoing Swami Vivekananda's teachings on self-realization. Chief Minister Thackeray highlighted the importance of art in life, with HSNC University offering diverse courses in Music, Dance, Art, and more. Higher Education Minister Uday Samant revealed plans to transform the Sir J J School of Art into a University and explore Vertical universities.





On August 1, 2022, the Press Information Bureau announced that the "Unified District Information System for Education Plus" (UDISE+) 2020–21 recognized more than 28 languages for instruction in grades 1–5. These languages encompass Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Konkani, Malayalam, Meitei (Manipuri), Marathi, Nepali, Maithili, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, English, Bodo, Khasi, Garo, Mizo, French, Hmar, Karbi, Santhali, Bhodi, and Purgi. The revised education policy follows a holistic structure (5+3+3+4), prioritizing student needs and fostering entrepreneurship over dependence on government employment. A notable alteration includes the introduction of a foreign language and the flexibility to select various academic streams post-Class 8.

Following the release of the policy, the government emphasized that the language provisions within the National Education Policy (NEP) act as overarching principles, delegating the execution to states, institutions, and schools. A comprehensive language strategy will be incorporated into the National Curriculum Framework by 2021. It was highlighted that certain institutions, such as Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, had embraced this language policy six decades ago. Moreover, both the Education Policy of 1986 and the Right to Education Act of 2009 advocated for the use of the mother tongue as a suggestive guideline.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

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The policy places significant emphasis on ensuring that all students achieve foundational literacy and numeracy skills by Grade 3. It states that the top priority of the education system is to attain universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary schools by 2025. It asserts that the success of other aspects of the policy hinges on this fundamental learning requirement, which includes proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic at the foundational level. Consequently, the Ministry of Education will establish a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy as a matter of urgency. In response, all State/UT governments will promptly devise implementation plans to ensure universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary schools, setting stage-wise targets and goals to be met by 2025, and rigorously monitoring progress. Subsequently, the NIPUN Bharat Mission (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) was launched on July 5, 2021, to realize this objective.

The conventional "10 + 2" educational structure will be replaced with a more nuanced "5+3+3+4" model, which will be implemented as follows:

- 1. Foundational Stage:** This phase will be divided into two segments: three years of preschool or anganwadi, followed by Classes 1 and 2 in primary school, catering to children aged 3–8 years. The emphasis will be on fostering learning through activities.
- 2. Preparatory Stage:** Covering Classes 3 to 5 and ages 8–10 years, this stage will gradually introduce subjects such as speaking, reading, writing, physical education, languages, art, science, and mathematics.
- 3. Middle Stage:** Encompassing Classes 6 to 8 and ages 11–13 years, this phase will acquaint students with more abstract concepts in subjects like mathematics, sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities.
- 4. Secondary Stage:** Spanning Classes 9 to 12 and ages 14–18 years, this stage will be divided into two parts: Classes 9 and 10 forming the first phase, and Classes 11 and 12 constituting the second phase. These four years will emphasize multidisciplinary study, critical thinking, and offering multiple subject options.

Additionally, instead of annual examinations, students will undergo assessments at the end of Classes 2, 5, and 8. While board exams for Classes 10 and 12 will continue, they will be revamped, with standards set by an assessment body named PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development). These exams will be conducted biannually, allowing students up to two attempts and comprising both objective and descriptive components.

The policy seeks to lighten the curriculum burden, fostering a more interdisciplinary and multilingual approach for students. This means that students can blend subjects such as fashion studies with physics or explore the chemistry behind bakery. Report cards will offer a comprehensive view of students' skills. Additionally, coding will be integrated into the curriculum starting from Class 6, and experiential learning methodologies will be embraced. Furthermore, the Midday Meal Scheme will be expanded to include breakfast, with a heightened focus on students' health, particularly their mental well-being, through the engagement of counselors and social workers.



STEM



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HIGHER EDUCATION

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NEP 2020 introduces a 4-year multi-disciplinary bachelor's degree program in higher education with various exit options, including professional and vocational pathways, structured as follows:

1. Certificate upon completion of 1 year of study.
2. Diploma upon completion of 2 years of study.
3. Bachelor's degree upon completing a 3-year program.
4. Preferred option: A 4-year multidisciplinary bachelor's degree.

MPhil courses will be phased out to align with Western educational models. The establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) aims to regulate higher education and increase the gross enrollment ratio. HECI will comprise four verticals:

1. National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), overseeing higher education, excluding medical and legal fields.
2. National Accreditation Council (NAC), serving as a "meta-accrediting body."
3. Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC), responsible for funding universities and colleges, replacing several existing bodies.
4. General Education Council (GEC), tasked with defining "graduate attributes" and developing a National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF). Professional standard-setting bodies (PSSBs) like the National Council for Teacher Education will operate under the GEC. Other PSSBs include councils such as the Veterinary Council of India, Council of Architecture, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, and National Council for Vocational Education and Training.

The National Testing Agency will expand its role to conduct entrance exams for university admissions nationwide, in addition to existing exams like JEE Main and NEET. The policy encourages higher education institutions, including IITs, to diversify their teaching methods and aims to internationalize education by allowing foreign universities to establish campuses in India. Fees for both public and private universities will be regulated.



FOREIGN EDUCATION

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1. International Branch Campuses:

- NEP 2020 permits foreign universities to establish campuses in India and allows IITs to set up branches overseas.
- The policy aims to leverage international education to restore India's stature as a Vishwa Guru.
- Scholars have raised concerns about the effectiveness of importing foreign higher education institutions.

2. Teachers:

- By 2030, a 4-year Bachelor of Education will be mandatory for teaching.
- Efforts will be made to strengthen and enhance transparency in the teacher recruitment process.
- The National Council for Teacher Education will develop a National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education by 2021 and establish National Professional Standards for Teachers by 2022.

3. EdTech:

- NEP 2020 encourages the development of educational technology tools by providing guidelines and support to EdTech companies and startups.
- The National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) aims to facilitate discussions on technology's role in enhancing learning outcomes.
- In September 2021, NITI Aayog partnered with Byju's to offer free access to its tech-driven learning programs to engineering aspirants from 112 districts.

4. Indigenous Knowledge:

- NEP emphasizes the importance of India's native knowledge traditions.
- Various initiatives focusing on Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) have been initiated to guide research and promote understanding of indigenous knowledge.



Other Changes in NEP 2020

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1. Establishment of New Educational Bodies and Concepts:
 - National Education Commission, chaired by the Prime Minister.
 - Academic Bank of Credit, a digital repository of earned credits facilitating further education.
 - National Research Foundation, aimed at enhancing research and innovation.
 - Special Education Zones, focusing on underrepresented groups in disadvantaged regions.
 - Gender Inclusion Fund, supporting education for female and transgender children.
 - National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), promoting technology in learning.
 - National Assessment Centre, PAREKH, for standardized assessments.
 - National Curricular Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE).

Criticism:

1. Lack of Provisions for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes.
2. Failure to Address Reservations in Teaching Posts at Private Institutions and Research Institutes.
3. Promotion of a Centralized and Non-Consultative Policy Formation Model.
4. Concerns Over Medium of Instruction Impacting Underprivileged Children.
5. Criticism of the Three-Language Formula, Especially from Tamil Nadu.
6. Potential Difficulty for Rural Students in Accessing Technology-Driven Learning.
7. Risk of Widening Educational Inequality Between Urban and Rural Areas.



Conclusion:

NEP 2020 signifies a substantial overhaul of India's education system, aiming for alignment with global standards and greater inclusivity, flexibility, and interdisciplinary learning. While applauded for its progressive aspects like emphasis on foundational literacy and holistic development, the policy faces scrutiny for potential gaps in addressing equity and access issues. Successful implementation hinges on collaborative efforts between the government, educational institutions, and society.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEP 2020 HAS SEEN SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ACROSS VARIOUS STATES AND INSTITUTIONS:

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- IN EARLY AUGUST 2021, KARNATAKA TOOK THE LEAD BY ISSUING AN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE NEP.
- FOLLOWING SUIT, MADHYA PRADESH PUT THE NEP INTO ACTION ON 26 AUGUST 2021.
- UTTAR PRADESH, UNDER CHIEF MINISTER YOGI ADITYANATH'S LEADERSHIP, ANNOUNCED PLANS FOR A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION BY 2022.
- TELANGANA COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTING THE NEP WITHIN THE STATE.
- MAHARASHTRA'S CHIEF MINISTER UDDHAV THACKERAY DIRECTED THE FORMATION OF AN EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR NEP IMPLEMENTATION.
- ANDHRA PRADESH'S CHIEF MINISTER Y.S. JAGAN MOHAN REDDY INSTRUCTED EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO ENSURE FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE NEP.
- RAJASTHAN, LED BY GOVERNOR KALRAJ MISHRA, OUTLINED A PHASED APPROACH TO NEP IMPLEMENTATION.
- ASSAM'S CHIEF MINISTER HIMANTA BISWA SARMA SET A TARGET DATE OF 1 APRIL 2022 FOR NEP IMPLEMENTATION.
- IN APRIL 2022, THE UGC APPROVED SIMULTANEOUS DUAL DEGREES, BOTH PHYSICAL AND ONLINE.
- BY OCTOBER 2022, THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RELEASED A NEW CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN AGED 3-8 YEARS AND ESTABLISHED A NATIONAL CREDIT FRAMEWORK IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE NEP.
- IN JULY 2023, THE NATIONAL DIGITAL UNIVERSITY WAS LAUNCHED, MARKING ANOTHER MILESTONE IN NEP IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS.





Principal's Desk

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If any college or institution wishes to conduct educational fair or career guidance seminars feel free to contact us. Join us at the Principal's Desk and be a part of the conversation that shapes the future of learning and academic excellence.

Sincerely, Mr. Ravindra Kantam Editor-in-Chief epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org

Student Corner

Your Voice Matters!

Dear Students,



Welcome to the Student Corner of epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org, where your queries, doubts, and voices find a platform to be heard and addressed.

If you find yourself grappling with questions about college admissions, entrance exams, reservations, government documents, syllabus for entrance exams, or anything related to education both in India and abroad, this is the space for you.

Your participation matters! The most frequently asked questions will be featured in the upcoming edition of our newspaper, with acknowledgment and credits will be granted to the students who posed them.

Submitting your work to the Student Corner is easy. Simply send your doubts and queries to our editorial team at info@vidyarthimitra.org, and we'll review them for publication in our next edition.

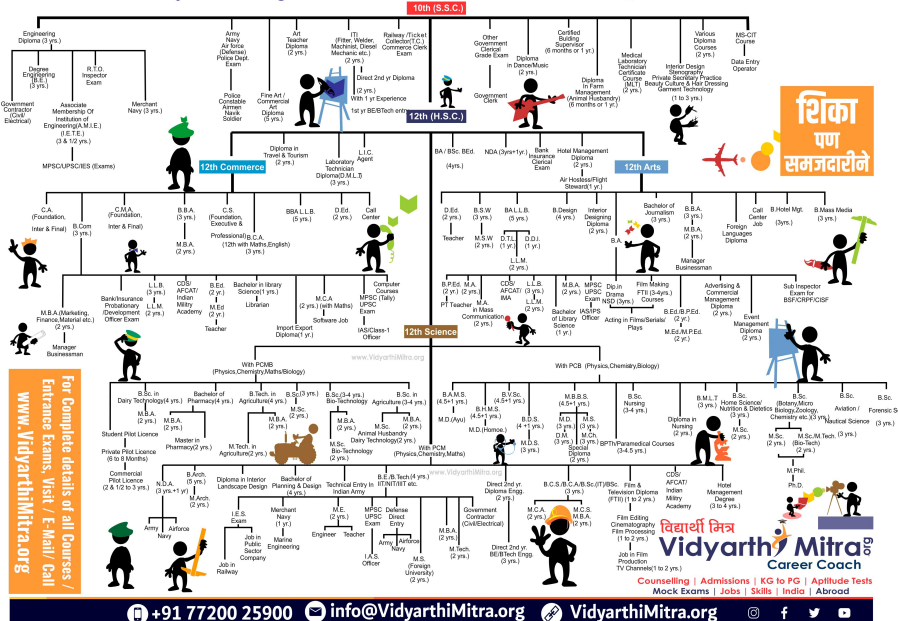
Engage with your fellow students and readers by participating in discussions, sharing feedback. The Student Corner is more than just a platform—it's a community where students come together to connect, collaborate and learn at the same time.

Remember, your education journey is unique, and we are here to support you every step of the way. So, don't hesitate to reach out, engage, and make your voice heard.

Best Regards, Mr. Ravindra Kantam Editor-in-Chief epaper.VidyarthiMitra.org

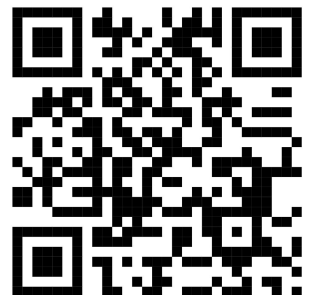


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