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Educational policy of India and inclusive education for disabilities

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Abstract

The policy encompasses elementary education to higher education in both rural and urban India. It is based on five fundamental pillars that are accessibility, affordability, equity, equality and quality. All these pillars are essential for promotion of inclusive education for person with disabilities. Children with disabilities have educational problems due to lack of accessibility, rigid curricula and pedagogy, inaccessible classrooms & schools, rigid assessment system, lack of information and communication technology in the classroom, negative and deficit mindsets that restricts. National Educational Policy ensures universal accessibility, curriculum and pedagogical structuring, vocational education, assessment reforms, open and distance learning, online and digital education, holistic and multidisciplinary approach.

Keywords: NEP, Inclusive education, disability

Introduction

The first NEP was formulated by the Government of India by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1968, the second by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986, and the third by Prime Minister Narendra Modi 2020.

The committee submitted its report on May 31, 2019 on July 29, 2020 union cabinet of India approved it.

The New policy aims for universalization of education from pre -school to secondary level with 100 percent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030 and aims to raise gross enrolment ratio in higher education to 50 percent and by 2025. NEP 2020 will bring two crore out of school children back into the main stream. The 10+2 structure of school curriculum is to be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) will develop NCPFECCE i.e. National curricular and pedagogical framework for early childhood care and education for children up to the age of 8. All students will take school examinations in grades 3, 5 and 8 which will be conducted by the appropriate authority.

The NEP 2020 to “deliver quality education

Resource centres and specialized teachers and trainers will be available to meet the various rehabilitation and educational needs of students with severe or multiple disabilities because children with benchmark disabilities as defined by the RPWD act 2016 will have the option of attending regular or special schools.

Under the NEP 2020, resources will be made available to include students with special needs and special educators who are qualified to teach them will be appointed.

History

To be quite honest, in India the education of disabled people still depends on nonprofit or non-governmental organizations (NGO'S). Since there are not many government run educational facilities, most children in rural areas are unable to attend school.

From the standpoint of a disability activist, there are several holes that need to be filled, one of which is the idea that schools be linked together to form a school complex. Even if terms like equality, equity and inclusion occur several times in the policy statement.

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The NEP states the school complex will have a secondary school as well as supplementary school and Anganwadis within a 5-10 km range. We don't know how special schools will fit into this scenario.

Disability Inclusion in NEP 2020

The finished policy takes into account a number of suggestions made by disability organisations for the 2019 draft. According to the NEP, students with disabilities will have equitable access to all aspects of the educational system. Recognising the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and its provision for inclusive education defined as a system of education where student with and without disabilities learn together is a significant accomplishment.

NEP, 2020 for the children with disabilities

- Neighbourhood schools, special schools and home-based education as option for the education of children with disabilities, as a step towards resolving ambiguities towards school choices which arose during the right to Education Act 2009, 2012 amendment of the RTE act and the RPWD Act, 2016.
- If a student opts for home-based education the education provided would be audited on the basis of norms in the RPWD Act, 2016. This provision was introduced due to the concerns raised regarding the provisions and quality of education provided to the students.
- To ensure the availability of adequate resources students with disabilities including resource centers and educators, school within a radius of 5-10 km will be consolidated within one school complex. This provision seeks to solve the aggravating problem of the shortage of special educators.
- NEP, 2020 has introduced short-term specialization courses to teach children with disabilities with the existing framework. The teacher will be given the freedom to choose different tools for teaching as per the need and requirements of the students.
- A flexible curriculum will be enacted according to NEP 2020. Curricular changes will be made in consultation with national institutes under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.
- Other provisions like non-discrimination in schools, accessible infrastructure, reasonable accommodation, individualized supports, use of Braille and Indian Sign language in teaching, and monitoring have been included in the NEP 2020.

Choice of the School

The prior two laws, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2016 and the Rights of Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009. Which ambiguously offered the children three options for receiving their education alternating between the three are Special Schools, Neighbourhood Schools, and Home-based Education. NEP supports special schools as a workable alternative to regulate schooling for children with benchmark disabilities in accordance with the Rights of persons with Disabilities Act 2016.

Special Educators

This provision made by the Social Justice and Empowerment Minister, Thawarchand Gehlot. And also

imparting knowledge and know – how to teach faculties on how to teach children with specific disabilities. However it's good to see that the new provisions are made in NEP which will favour the students with disabilities but there is still uncertainty about the large scale work which requires to be done especially for the children with disabilities.

As it is disappointing to see that there are only 1,20,781 special educators registered at present with rehabilitation council of India RCI also in the year 2011 around 7.62% of India's total population with a disability was children, at approximately 2.04 million children out of 26.8 million of disabled people. Now, the big question remains that when is the number of special educators which is a vital resource will make a rise to meet the ratio of children to be provided with the required education. A large number of dropouts in the section of students with disabilities because of various reasons like inaccessibility, cultural and social discrimination, lack of required resources be it man-made and human resources, etc is another big concern to be looked upon we yet remain hopeful that the policies of any NEP will be executed soon and the overall good of society.

Children with Disabilities

The right to Education Act 2009, in particular, has been beneficial in increasing enrolment in upper primary school (class 6- 8) between 2009 and 2016 the number of peoples in upper primary school rose by 19.4% across the country. Where inclusive development is being highlighted as the proper road to sustainable development the NEP 2020 mission focuses on implementing steps for the educational rehabilitation of impaired people development the NEP 2020 missions focuses on implementing steps for the educational rehabilitation of impaired people. Establishment of a cell for person with Disabilities/ divyang which will include representatives from the administration, instructors, and students. And also to extensive use of technology in teaching and learning to overcome language barriers and provide more opportunities for divyang students.

Non Discrimination

The finalized policy incorporates several recommendations of disability organisations on the 2019 draft. The NEP asserts that children with disabilities will have opportunity for equal participation across the educational system. Major victory is the recognition of the 2016 rights of person with Disabilities Act (RPWD) and its provisions for inclusive education defined as a system of education where students with and without disabilities learn together. These recommendations include non-discrimination in schools accessible infrastructure, reasonable accommodations, individualized support, use of Braille and Indian sign language in teaching and monitoring among others.

Special Educational Zones

One of the Noteworthy proposals of the NEP is to develop special educational zones in areas with significant numbers of members of Socio Economic Disadvantaged groups and in aspirational districts. Promoting education in India's most remote areas is the main objective to transform these undeveloped areas additional funding will be injected and many federal and straight plans and programmes will be coordinated. While the concept is new and has the power to improve educational access in the country.

Conclusion

Additionally it has done well in recommending a number of commendable policies, special educational zones, to address the structural problems associated with educating children in inaccessible locations. The policy largely views children with disabilities as beneficiaries of welfare and care in the form of Peer tutoring, open schooling, and one-on-one teaching going further is necessary in order to see disability as more than just a lack and to embrace it as a form of diversity. The NEP 2020 did well by emphasizing the difficulties faced by children with disabilities. It's time for people to change their mindset and see every disability as an opportunity.

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