The Draft National Education Policy: A Distressing Attempt to Redefine India

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Abstract
After thirty three years of the former national policy document on Education was commissioned by the Government of India, the Draft National Education Policy (NEP), 2019 was anticipated to empirically evaluate the accomplishments and catastrophes of the preceding National Policy on Education, gauge the new challenges that got materialised in the intervening years, and articulate an apparition that could vigorously associated democratic aspirations and ground realities to Constitutional directives in this substantial zone of nation-building. In its place, we have before us a document that frustrates these expectations. Momentous initiatives have been left unassisted and as a consequence, stand diluted. This paper presents the loopholes in the draft NEP, 2019.

Introduction
A noticeable inadequacy of the NEP lies in its failure for identifying and addressing the socio-economic challenges that have deterred India’s educational advancement. While the outlay of eminent education endures to upsurge, growing number of students drop out before finishing compulsory education. Scientific temper is deteriorating and civic standards are facing rancorous assaults from an atmosphere that is vigorously endorsing obscurantism, extending social detachments and encouraging counterattack against the already marginalised sectors. Educational establishments are incapable of retaining academic endowment and secure an even-handed and equitable milieu for pupils, teachers and researchers. Student suicides rates are increasing. Religious education is booming even as the Government commands the termination or unification of public-financed pre-primary and primary schools. Municipal schools are being leased off to private corporate organisations while the well-heeled classes have started preferring home-schooling in contrast to the institutional nurture of regular schools. Instead of halting this, the draft NEP recommends its further escalation by amending the RTE Act.

Despite the fact that the draft NEP gives greater prominence to research and higher education than has up till now been given, it builds castles in the air as an alternative of evaluating the influence of mounting privatisation and commercialisation at this level of education. It establishes an ambitious GER target of 50% by 2035 on the other hand, it anticipates that the bull’s eye would be targeted without binding the Government to funding assurances. Its policy sanctions are grounded on one-sided analyses derived completely from the action agenda Niti Aayog. It duplicates presently acknowledge dills by encouraging greater than before private investment, unvarying assessment and regulatory parameters for public-funded and private HEI’s, private-funding of institutional setup through corporate benevolence, capital markets and CSR, better possibility in teaching engagements and career headway leading to added
professional iniquity and insecurity, and the closing down of huge affiliating type universities, therefore contradicting the potential to group resources and advance the standards of affiliated colleges.

The greatest perplexing attribute of the NEP is its seizure to identify the well-defined Constitutional allocation of equivalent powers to the centre and the states on education. Educational policy has been a privilege of states, bearing in mind the multiplicity of regional needs and interests. The Constitution was modified to incorporate education in the Concurrent List, providing the responsibility of synchronisation and fund allocations among states to the Centre. The NEP has essentially raided the states of their supremacy and granted superlative powers to the Centre. It has accomplished this by crafting an exceptionally centralised composition of power and conferring predominant authorisations with the Prime Minister led Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog. States are anticipated to functionsimply as local level divisions of the RSA without possessing the authority to set up their own priorities or position themselves critically contrary to the policies of the Centre. The RSA’s hierarchy of making decisions is an insult to the federal charisma of the Indian Constitution and its evidently expressed association of the states to the Centre.

The NEP is insistent on global challenges and emerging position of India in the knowledge society. Hitherto, it overlooks contemporary research on the non-viability of MOOCs and online learning as substitutes to the customary classroom interaction between pupils and teachers. Its eagerness for the application of digital technologies in education is not reverberated globally, even though the digital infrastructure in various countries across the globe is much more advanced than it is in India. The unspoken agenda in its endorsements on online distance learning appears to be concentrating on the dual objectives of cost-cutting and expanding enrolment exponentially without creatingample physical infrastructure and appointing more teachers.

In its overall endorsement of state promoted privately spreading out of education and modular curriculum and courses, the NEP destabilizes democratic access to education and social equity. It hinders critical, unconventional thinking and unrestricted enquiry by tethering value education with a Vedic belief system which is not in consonance with the constitutional principles and the contemporary times and by yet again permitting a centralised National Research Foundation (NRF) to identify, approve and fund all research topics and projects. It insists on an outcome based model which transfers the emphasis from assertion on minimum standards and inputs to a mechanical efficacy in resource consumption and superior financial accountability of institutions. Through this NEP enforces homogeneity and one-size-fits-all solutions on a variety of learning prerequisites and situations that necessitate nuanced policy reactions.

Even though the NEP is capacious enough for provoking generous debate and discussion, its share is squeaky in comparison to its idiosyncratic enunciation of what is anticipated. As a public policy document, NEP enigmatically abandons the fundamental responsibility of public funding out of its range, instead, counting on the illusory magnanimity and staunchness of the government. As such, it simply abandons itself to be taken up as a series of guidelines rather than actionable policy which is obligatory for the government.
Challenges to NEP

The draft National Education Policy (NEP), 2019 contains some well-conceived suggestions, but on the whole it has many drastic recommendations that would damage, rather than improve, the entire fabric of education system. The policy does not make a compelling case for why radical alterations need to be carried out to the fundamental structure of the education system in the country. At multiple places, the draft policy contains prescriptions and assertions that need a revisit and re-evaluation. While the policy is so long, it lacks the depth and context necessary for a policy of such national importance to be implemented. The major challenge to NEP include:

1. Examination System
At present, the entire education system has become subservient to success in public examinations, such as the school-leaving examinations, or the entrance tests for seeking admission to institutions of higher or professional education. These examinations, by and large, are only rewarding short-term memory and basic learning of concepts per se is compromised. The focus of the policy should have been on minimising such limitations of the examination system. Also, the introduction of semester system in schools, clubbing last four standards starting with 9 into one slab and imposing the three-language formula on below the class of 6 is not worthwhile.

2. Value Based Education
The hodgepodge of ethical tradition in our country makes it perplexing to scrutinise traditional Indian ethical standards for the classroom. The tussle is exaggerated by the reality that these values time and again have erratic elucidations across religious societies or are inconsistent with each other. Likewise, the conflicting revelations exist within the ethically appropriate ideals of the manifold religious convictions. The conventional Indian ethics are a blend of universal ideals of diverse religions. The value education that NEP strives to establish in the classroom necessitates provincial editions. An attention concerning an accountable rendezvous with the Indian tradition, an attention towards the constitutional assurance and an attention for an outstandingly democratic classroom involvement, necessitates thoughtful reconsiderations in the NEP 2019. Value education evokes discerning thoughts and is not in consonance with a contemporary democratic and secular character. The moral and ethical reasoning constituents point toward a constrained moral extent wherein figures and ideas are invoked selectively. The Indian Constitution has been provided a short shrift. Principles of Socialism as well as those of Secularism have been left out in order to portray an incompleterepresentation of the Indian democratic character. Despite the fact that India is a diverse and traditionally developing entity, the discernment of its historical stages of advancement has been muddied amidst meagre thematic orientations of ancient India.

3. Missing secularism
The omission of secular principles impoverishes the learning experience. The thrust of controversy is the endorsement by NEP of Hindi being commanded as one of the three languages in the school. In contradiction of the policy convention of respecting secularism as a fundamental Indian value for devising Indian education, the exclusion of the words “secular” and “secularism” is incongruous. The lack of an unequivocal devotion to secular ideals solely doesn’t assure that the further epitomes of heterogeneity and multiplicity would be comprehended. The suggestions for integrating values, ethics and moral doctrines in school education clarifies that NEP creates explicit room for employing religious contents in the classroom.
This creates a departure from the prevailing paradigm of secular education in the country and violates constitutional assurance.

4. Role of Gender And Caste
The NEP evokes the significance of gender equivalence in general and not explicitly in the context of the religious subservience of women. NEP proposes a sternly restricted bearing to the matter of caste. There exist no curricular endorsements for making the students aware towards the prevailing caste intolerances in India. Contemporaneous India has witnessed a razor-sharp intensification in caste and religious pugnaciousness, the pedagogic and curricular methods undoubtedly have a paramount responsibility to perform in unravelling caste and religious predispositions in the society. The challenge is to unearth new and innovative methods of constructing young intellects to comprehend these challenging social veracities. The exclusion of secularism as a guiding principle unbolts multiple perilous susceptibilities for numerous caste, religious and tribal communities in the country. NEP thwarts a gratifying recognition of their citizenship involvement and also diminishes the learning proficiency of every one of and of course impairs Indian culture. NEP propagates gender discrimination. Conspicuous by its absenteeism in the NEP are the gender associated ideas and endowments amidst the curriculum and the failure to comprehend gender as a converging conception. NEP in unsuccessful in recognizing that gender is not merely an issue concerning girls and women, it also relates to men, boys along with the LGBT community and the in-built prejudices equally in policy and its execution. Also there is mismatch among genders and the minimal number of women in higher education and research is also not remarked in the NEP.

5. Ignorance towards People with Disabilities
The reality of the people with disabilities has been ill-conceived in the draft NEP. It does not recognise the Rights of persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, which madeprovisions for people with disabilities. In the draft, the concept of access has not moved beyond the exigency of ramps and handrails for students and teachers with disabilities. It lacks a sense of meaningful inclusiveness of students with disabilities. There is a need for inclusive education to counter stigmatisation and discrimination of persons with disabilities in society. The recommendations in the draft also lack inclusiveness in terms of access, facilities at school, teaching methodologies, funding and programmes for students and teachers with disabilities as well as their caregivers. The principle of universal access is missing.

6. The Underrepresented Groups (URG)
   a) Madrasas & Other Religious Institutions
The way NEP addresses the Madrasas and Gurukuls represents the supremist mind-set that has become so common in today’s India. NEP identifies Madrasas and Gurukuls as ‘religious schools’. The policy makers begin with speaking of how Muslims are under-represented in schools across the country and how it is the duty of the country to correct that. They propose the setting up of ‘excellent’ schools in Muslim dominated neighbourhoods. According to NEP, Madrasas ‘may’ be encouraged to continue with their traditions and pedagogical styles, while they ‘must’ integrate the curriculum suggested by the NCF and that the teachers in the Madrasas ‘will’ be upskilled to teach science, math, social sciences and languages through the pedagogical practices set up under the NEP. The use of the words, ‘may’, ‘must’ and ‘will’ are telling and cause great concern that goes to the root of everything that our Constitution stands for. While many may say that it is a good step, the imposition and the manner of the imposition is highly disturbing.
b) Tribals, LGBQ And Others
NEP speaks separately of tribals and correctly identifies that the prescribed curriculum needs to be contextualized in order to make it more relatable for them, however what is missing is how the rest of the students in the system should relate to the tribals. Missing out on this important piece of putting in the effort to harmonize the opportunities and acceptability of the underrepresented with the represented is unacceptable given the lack of trust that already exists in our country. A similar approach of making exceptions for the URGs while ignoring steps for promoting inclusiveness is rampant throughout the policy. Transgenders find mention, but the LGBQ don’t. These examples have the unfortunate and hopefully unintended impact of making the policy’s focus appear to be to segregate and not integrate.

7. Confusions in the Liberal Arts
The Liberal Arts method anticipates pupils to cultivate an amalgamated and multi-disciplinary viewpoint on the concerns and design their own progression of study. The Liberal Arts method necessitates a cultural and an academic atmosphere that fully engages pupils and meticulously involves them to their maximum capacity. Regrettably, the real-world situation in most Indian colleges and universities relating to the dearth of hostel amenities, substantial distance between pupils’ residence and campus and scantiness of infrastructure hinders the maximum engagement of pupils into demanding scholastic programmes. The prevailing “Choice-based Credit System” in undergraduate education has by this time prolonged the regular schedule for pupils across the colleges and universities and learners are encountering practical challenges in dealing with the hardship of CBCS.

The eclecticism endorsed by liberal arts is not just unreasonable, but it also possibly antagonises the learners with a mystifying array of vocational and academic preferences that are guaranteed to perplex the learners. The Liberal Arts method necessitates the expansion of the prevailing 3 years degree programme in the sciences and arts to a 4th year. The additional year will impose additional financial burden on students. A four-year Bachelor in Liberal Arts will undervalue the prevailing B.Sc., B.A degrees. The draft NEP relies on the fact that a obligatory liberal arts education will assist India double the figure of candidates in higher education and the GER in the next 1½ decades. However, antagonistic to conventional policy astuteness, it recommends a large-scale unification of colleges and universities in the country lowering the aggregate number of HEI’s. NEP also presupposes an unbearable standardisation of local social situation throughout the institutional frameworks, and envisages a doubling of pupil intake by quartering the number of institutions.

8. Deterioration of Science Education
The NEP is unsuccessful in accounting for the policy inadequacies which have resulted in the waning science education. The schools have shortage of staff and are compelled to operate with insufficient funding. Universal investigations for ensuring adequate necessities for school laboratory are missing. The NEP overlooks the mounting crisis in science education. It doesn’t speak of the antagonistic spells on the scientific temperament. Hostility and obscurantism against scientific temperament is being encouraged at all levels of culture. Public offices representatives are repeatedly endorsing unscientific values and ideas. NEP is anticipated to deal with the disparity between scientific thinking and people by practising rigorous science advocacy. The NEP overlooks the mounting threat to the scientific temperament.
9. Economic Concerns
Draft NEP strongly vouches for making an increase in public share in the education sector. In higher education, the percentage of public expenditure is expected to triple over the subsequent decade. The draft NEP conjures up an increase of 10% in the tax to GDP ratio in the subsequent decade. Regarding cess imposition; the cess gathered in higher and secondary education, the cess gathered since 2006-07 lies unexploited and unallocated. Considering these economic statistics, the recent liberal arts departments being enforced upon colleges and universities would have to recover the expenses by means of hiking the fees for students or through contractualising their faculty. The concept of “graded autonomy” proposed by the UGC enforcing grading of institutional ‘performance’ on the basis of rankings has been vetted by NEP. The tiering of HEIs would end in diversified destinies for diverse institutional settings. Correspondingly, the unsuccessful attempt of the government to write off the UGC and establish a dummy regulatory organisation in the “Higher Education Commission of India Bill, 2018” has been re-established in configuration as well as in essence.

The draft NEP supports a departure of supervisory controls from funding authorities in higher education. But in entirety over all such powers will reign the centralised “Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog” (RSA), the apex body determining, scrutinising and controlling all stages and procedures that are related to the dissemination, generation and advancement of educational competences and resources. The concurrent equality between states and the Centre continues to be ignored in the NEP. Consequently, the suggestion to converge complete authorization on RSA is constitutionally not adequate and is also unsustainable. Whilst advancing mammoth centralised authority with RSA, the NEP doesn’t render it to be held responsible for any appraisal by the public. The RSA neither respects the federal character of the Union nor is it exposed to any checks or balances critical of conceivable authoritarian invasions and excesses.

The NEP creates a paradigm for considerable intensification in public expenditure. However, draft NEP doesn’t formulate any constraining on the Government to oblige itself for increasing public expenditure. Indeed, it judiciously discharges the Government from entirely responsibility on this account by anticipating that its endorsements are accepted all across. The critical facet of public bankrolling is excluded from the realm of the draft policy.

10. Research Undermined
The “National Research Foundation” (NRF) is atop to down and a centralised model for governing research inventiveness in Higher Education that is laden with numerous tribulations. NRF is a national level apex organisation endowed with the power to determine research primacies and earmark financial support to projects. This central ladder destabilises the HEI’s autonomy in establishing their identifiable research primacies, recognizing research potential and fostering distinctive competences. The NRF is potentially open to political and ideological policing and is sanctioned to scrutinise and sanction every single research proposal. The NRF is constrained to give precedence to commercially alluring research proposals over those that are socially valued judgementally predisposed research. Furthermore, the NRF’s objective and central temperament may emasculate the importance of establishing targets and custom-made supervision in research. It would herald parched and mechanical type of efficacy that downgrades research to professional throughput at the cost of individualistic quest for knowledge.

The government needs to clear the cloud around the creation of NRF as the NRF mentioned in the draft NEP and
that in the Union Budget do not appear to be synchronous. Clubbing the research funds available with all research agencies under the NRF, is not a good idea as bringing all funding streams under a single monolithic umbrella is fraught with problems.

11. Denial of the Existence of the Shadow Economy

The NEP doesn’t investigate into the roots for the seizure of government-run schools. Despite the fact that the private sector governs the education in schools, government-run schools have considerably deteriorated in terms of their eminence and enrolment and are displaying distressing dropout rate. Government schools have turned out to be ostracised and ineffectual as mechanisms for a vigorous enactment of the RTE Act. The reasons for this general deterioration haven’t been examined in the NEP. As an alternative of investigating the malfunctions and proposing tangible means of supporting government-run schools, the NEP encourages multiplicity and Public-Private collaboration.

The NEP is filled with statements and suggestions that seem to suggest that the consequence of this policy is going to be a shot in the arm for the private sector in more ways than one. It is also concerning that the policy makers have gone on to implicitly define education as ‘formal’ education without acknowledging the rampant shadow economy which fearlessly runs education as a for-profit business. In fact, the policy does quite the reverse, by making suggestions which may possibly promote and legitimize this shadow economy.

Pre-Primary and Primary Education

One of the key objectives of the NEP is to make education compulsory. This policy fails to recognize the role that private pre-primary education centres play in this regard. This omission suggests that they favour the status quo of them being privately run as for-profit enterprises. However, it enforces a diktat for all children to enter into pre-primary centres, without speaking of the current dichotomy. History teaches us that irrespective of government initiatives the private sector will inevitably be dominant, especially since in this case they can legally run these pre-primary centres for-profit.

Malnutrition hasn’t been accorded the considerateness it warrants. There are no surveillances on the inadequacies of the “Mid-day meal scheme” or the scantiness of budgetary allotment towards it. It is reprehensibly quiet on the necessity to designate sufficient public resources and endeavours to eliminate the challenge of malnutrition. The intangible way of thinking has diminutive association with ground actualities and distinct challenges.

“Three-Language formula” at the primary level is disproportionate, unreasonable and overstrainsthe pupils. Although language competences are fundamental to the advancement of cognitive capacities, the imposition of three languages at the foundational level is disproportionate and will overstrain the pupils.

Secondary Education

The NEP hasn’t evaluated the influence and inadequacies of the NLM. As a consequence, literacy targets are not coordinated by a representative and workable roadmap that could be executed to make sure that levels of literacy are elevated amidst social groups, communities and social classes. The NEP doesn’t accord ample consideration to the challenges confronting the NLM.
Embracing ‘Multiplicity’ is anerraloneousmoveas it vanquishesethe “Equal Outcomes” ideaof the NCF and inspires teachingfactories. The NEP is ill-considered in embracingmultiplicity in education. It cites numerousdiversetypes of schools comprising schools that deliver explicit religious instructions and at the same timehome-schooling as potentialsubstitutesto the scarcity in public-funded schoolset-up. Manifoldcategories of schools whichcomprisesethe madrassas, the gurukulas, home-schooling etc. would causeinconsistencyin the pedagogical pursuit of learning outcomes and emboldenfurtherprivatisation. It would also destabilise the “Equal Outcomes” objective of NCF 2005. The NEP misses the markto endorse minimum standards which are indispensable in making the RTE acteloquent.

“National Tutor Programme” (NTP) and “Remedial Instructional Aides Programme” (RIAP) are contemptuous of eminent teachingparameters. The NEP’s proposalto institutionalise RIAP and NTP in schools by extractingthe outstanding pupils into ‘para-teaching’ is anerraloneouseffort to enhance the performance of pupils who are not at par with their peers. To substitute trained teachers with para and peer - tutors is to overlook the issueof quality teaching for such pupils.

Dearth of perseveranceon ideasis in contradiction to the benefits of teachers and learners. By abscondingthe concern for contributions of the monitoring parameters, the NEP demonstrasonslimitedconcern for an adequateand secure learning atmosphere that teachers and learners are entitled to. Monitoring can’t be achieved exclusively on the foundation of outcomes measurement. The prerequisites and sources fordevianceor failure must be inspected thoroughly and asserted upon, both in strategic guidelinesand in regulatory practice.

**Higher Education**

NEP has done a splendid job of being an enabler, alas for an industry that does not find mention in the policy at all. The draft proposes entrance tests through the National Testing Agency (NTA) for admissions in universities. Enfeeblement of Board Examinations and substitutionwith NTA-conducted tests complements the academic and financial burden on learners and embolds commercialisation. The children would be dependent on coaching centres for these entrance tests. Hitherto, coaching centres are notoriously for-profit and thrive on the gigantic divergence between school and entrance exam curricula. After explicit instructions to public HEIs to use the NTA, the policy makers in the same breath give HEIs the autonomy to decide their own criteria for admission, making it another example of how the NEP makes autonomy a catch phrase left to differential interpretation.

Furthermore, the policymakers through the NEP had the chance to explicitly penalise ‘profit-making education enterprises’, sending out a strong message that they shall not be tolerated. Yet, the NEP only hints at the existence of for-profit educational institutions and effectively stops there. The need for regulatory intent is severely missing from the text of the NEP.

NEP envisions an “Authoritarian andAnti-Federal”formof governance. Even thoughtit recognises the necessity for considerableupsurge in public expenditure and synchronised determinations to boost the GER to 50% by 2035, it overlooks the predicaments triggered by consecutive governments who have preferred to pledge to liberalise higher education as a tradablepackage. The immediateaftereffectofsuch measures has been comprehended in the capricioussqueeze in resources predestined for employing more teachers andpersonnel, the deterioration of Higher Education as a public commodity, the decrease in facilities for learners, suspensionsor cutbacksin research grants and the general deterioration in the career advancement and service conditions of the academicians across the HEI’s.
Public financed HEIs have been exposed to a sequence of interferences and superfluous intrusion from the UGC and the Union Government primarily in the form of the obligatory ushering in of the “Semester System”, “the CBCS” and the infringements formulated by the ministry on the financial autonomy of the HEIs. None of these pronouncements have been assessed or examined empirically. As a replacement of focussing on crises, the NEP advocates banishment of teachers from decision-making forums, centralisation of power, and formation of managerial authority grounded on the corporate archetypes predominant in the private segment and exclusion of democratic representation of teachers from statutory organisations. The operational policy underscored in the NEP inspires commercialisation and automated resource efficacy at the expense of social justice, equity and academic meticulousness. The NEP is silent on the internal democratic formations of HEIs. The NEP also does not comment on representation of pupils and teachers in institutional ascendency. Correspondingly, the acknowledgement of nominated representative bodies is a facet of the in-house democracy within the HEIs. This feature is also neglected by the NEP.

The NEP should have recognised the reality that public funded HEI’s have performed an indispensable role in accommodating the distinctive local public necessities, rendering HEI’s democratising and all-encompassing in its procedures of governance. Regardless of their steadiness and dedication to education as a public commodity, these establishments have not acted in response to the international grading parameters as these parameters have inclined to overlook the distinctive prominence on equity and access in the performance of the public financed HEI’s and demand on homogenous quality standards. The NEP imitates this inconsiderateness in recommending the identical monitoring ideologies for both private and private establishments.

There is no transparency on challenges facing “Access, Equity and Social Justice” in higher education. According to NEP inequality in access to higher education and discriminatory situations materialise from disproportionate regional development and NEP recommends a concentrated initiative to set up HEI’s in backward and secluded districts. Social demarcations based on gender, caste, disability, class and religious distinctiveness are significant determining factors of access in consort with disproportionate regional development. The draft NEP has retained an intimidating and fraudulent muteness on how these demarcations may possibly have a bearing on the scholastic requirements and panaramas of those segments that are marginalised on the basis of these groupings. Henceforth, there is no conversation of the accomplishments or the challenges in executing the Reservation Policy on employments and admissions, empowering institutional interventions and procedures in inequitable circumstances, institutional righteousness for teachers and learners belonging to marginalised segments or the housing the requirements of learners with disabilities. The NEP is absolutely mute on the challenges confronted by learners with disabilities in getting into and pursuing higher education.

Autonomy continues to be captiveto enigmatic and antagonistic formulations. The NEP does recognise that ingenuity and innovation in the education system have been muffled by the dearth of academic sovereignty. It reduces academic autonomy of academicians subservient to a profoundly bureaucratised arrangement of institutional “Boards of Governors” (BOGs) and “Institutional Leaders”. Teacher’s autonomy is additionally smashed by the absenteeism of any democratically nominated representation of the academic fraternity in the decision-making sequence. The suggestion to get rid of democratic configuration is not only at disagreement with the loftier democratic standard of influencein
public establishments, but furthermore deteriorates the expression of the academic fraternity by substantial means.

12. Critical Thinking treated as a Consequence not a Skill Set
While the policy makers have made positive remarks around the type of holistic education that should be imparted in schools and colleges, their assumption that the same is enough to develop a culture of critical thinking and liberal thought is only the first step of what should’ve been a more robust and thoughtful strategy deployed keeping in mind the existing curriculum and student capacities to inculcate the same.

13. Tiers Not Types of Higher Education Institutions
The policy makers claim to have divided HEIs into three different “types” whereas what they have really done is create a hierarchy and tiers of HEIs. Three-tier institutional arrangement overlooks the multiplicity of learning requirements and local urgencies, but also persuades wastage of resources. Even though suggesting an exclusively top-down succession of decision-making and authority, the draft NEP overlooks the multiplicity and organic requirements of institutions. Furthermore, in endorsing the shutting down of affiliated colleges and affiliating-type universities, the draft NEP fails to notice the optimistic potential in these kinds of establishments which permits amalgamation of resources and helps in inhibition of work replication and resource wastage. Colleges also acquire a forte from the worth of the university, consequently drawing academic endowment and learners’ interest.

14. Turning Professional Colleges to Being Multi-Disciplinary Institutions
The policy makers have deemed it appropriate to turn all professional institutions into multi-disciplinary institutions, thereby diluting the very essence of a professional course. For the policy makers to ignore these gigantic efforts as well as the globally established reasons for professional colleges to be standalone, seems to bring to question the objectives that we as a nation have earmarked as being critical for India’s future.

15. Post-Graduate Education Only for Teachers
A pricking concern emerges from the treatment that post graduate education receives at the hands of the policy makers. There are constant references towards pushing “outstanding” students towards teaching. The best case scenario for a nation is for its entire population to have received the highest level of education possible before they enter into the working world by ensuring affordability, parallel earning opportunities and societal acceptance for the same.

Undergraduate research ventures are indispensable but can’t be anticipated to satisfactorily make ready the learners to embark on doctoral research. In 4 years of undergraduate education, learners can’t be anticipated to cultivate the mellowness and academic proficiency obligatory to embark on novel research. Therefore, the suggestion to accordadmissibility for entrance to Ph.D. to a graduate of liberal arts is whimsical and laden with hazardous outcomes. Ineffectual comprehension of the realistic repercussions of the liberal arts method has taken the lead to the suggestion for an over-aspiring and unreasonable plan that will endorsed discrimination.

16. ICT and Digital Online Learning
NEP erroneously promotes over dependence on ICT and online digital learning. There is squeaky indication to recommend that online courses and digital communication can function as a
feasibleoption to classroom based teaching-learning. While digital technologies can undoubtedly supplement the routine classroom and laboratory work, it can’t substitute the wholesome ambiance of teaching-learning in the classroom. The NEP’s prominence on ODL and “Massive Online Open Courses (MOOC)” are misdirected. Building development strategies on the amplified and widespread usage of ICT and e-learning platforms is naïve. The prerogatives of the draft NEP are empirically uncorroborated and appear approximating an impatient manoeuvre to tally the necessity to accomplish a magnificent GER mark with the exceptionally inadequate resources that governments have been enthusiastic to dedicate to such development.

17. Recruitment and Service Conditions

NEP’s suggestion on “Recruitment and Service Conditions” of faculties and other employees would have a catastrophic influence on ability and self-confidence. The draft NEP does not focus on the time-honoured apprehensions and uncertainties of employees in HEIs. Temporary and contractual employment, indiscriminately immobilises long-lasting recruitment, reductions in pensions and other post-retirement remunerations, the removal of time-constrained professional advancement plans, quantified productivity, and the teacher’s marginalisation from academic policy-making have amalgamated into brand academics an unappealing profession. The deterioration in co-operative grievance redressal mechanisms, growing corporatisation of governance and the absence of academic democratisation have promoted brain drain in the academic world. The draft NEP imitates the corporate, antagonistic paradigm where the major segment of young academicians are hired in adjunct position, they lead unwarranted lives and are exposed to estranging service situations that drive the quotient of attrition soaring in the teaching profession which is incongruous with the contemporary requirements of the country.

The draft NEP permits institutional BOG’s total autonomy in fixing erratic pay and service settings for teachers. The absence of consistency in pay and service conditions, particularly in public-financed HEIs, is objectionable on numerous grounds. If authorities are conferred absolute domination over the pay and service conditions of teachers, institutions are guaranteed to destabilise the scholarly autonomy of academics, reprimand disagreement and embolden conformity. This would have a deleterious influence on the teachers’ self-confidence and hold back the ingenuity and intellectual audacity that is fundamental to the accomplishment of academic enterprises. It would also destructively influence the cooperative and interconnected essence of education. A scheme of guaranteed and time-bound promotions grounded on seniority is further beneficial to teachers and other employees. The conception of genuineworth this also idiosyncratic in the Indian context where profound social predispositions predominate and frequently have an effect on learners’ discernment contrary to teachers from the socially marginalised segments and castes. The draft NEP overlooks the social imperfections that may encroach on the objectivity of assessments and hinder career advancement for enormous segments of teachers.

Conclusion

The NEP is inclined towards structural makeovers more readily than an authentic evaluation of the capacity of the prevailing structure, or the necessity for renovation and to eradicate its shortfalls. This is made evident by its denial to connect with the ideas and suggestion sketched in previous pioneering documents related to the education policy of India, namely, “the Radhakrishnan Committee Report (1948), Mudaliar Committee report on technical education and the Kothari
Commission Report (1966)" that had evidently charted the public worth and objectives of education in liberated India's emerging stages of development. The NEP’s spasmodic rendezvous with budding challenges in the arena of education is discernible by a remarkable disparagement of federal governance, public conviction and democratic principles. It disregards the equilibrium of authority in the Indian Constitution and bestows the entire decision-formulating authorities to the Executive, leaving nothing for state legislatures and the Parliament and that have up till now been vigorously engrossed in establishing numerous institutions and resources which accommodate the educational necessities of people.

The consumerism of global markets appeared gigantic in the framework of the draft NEP that positions the education policy of India in synchronisation with the requirements of private ventures. The NEP misses the mark to harmonise with the catchphrase “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas”, and also of “Sabka Viswas”. The drafting committee has evidently taken advice from an extensive selection of experts but is shamefaced of disregarding combined aspirations epitomised by democratically nominated bodies of teachers and learners at all stages. The conclusion is oblivious and derivative to numerous unpretentious encounters that must be overcome in order to warrant a reasonable and assured contribution of the young population of India in its educational agenda. The NEP needs to be rejected in its contemporary form. The Government of India needs to authorise comprehensive discussions with diverse segments of civic society and political entities for contributions in the direction of a trustworthy and reasonable exercise in amending the draft NEP. Such a document needs to be made available in accessible formats in all languages.

References