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Implementing NEP 2020: Strategies for Restructuring School Curriculum and Pedagogy for Learners

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ABSTRACT: The National Education Policy 2020 gears the Indian Education System for a paradigm shift. This paper presents the systematic strategies that needs to be adopted for restructuring curriculum and pedagogy and its implementation in schools. A qualitatively study has been adapted to analyse the views of the participants/subjects/panellists gathered through focused group discussions. The findings reveal that the restructuring of curriculum must be from the grassroot level and gradually it will shift in a spiral form through constructivist pedagogy. This will help the stakeholders to adopt restructured curriculum and apt pedagogy to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

KEYWORDS: school curriculum, restructuring, pedagogy, holistic development, learning outcomes, future readiness.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is the basic need for the development of people and their country. Any country's success is defined by the quality of educated population and the policy on education has been instrumental in this process. India, having a population of approx. 140 crore , is heading towards becoming a superpower and a knowledge hub. It is crucial that the youth is competent enough to confront the challenges to match the global standards of education. School education will pave the way to achieve the bigger goal. Holistic development means the all-round development of the learner: physical, emotional, psychological, and moral. It aims for the cognitive development, character building, and problem-solving skills. According to Henry S. Commager, "Change does not necessarily assure progress, but progress implacably requires change. Education is essential to change, for education creates both new wants and the ability to satisfy them" Sahoo, B. et.al. (2019). NEP 2020 is a steppingstone for the change in the Indian education system under the chairmanship of Dr. Kasturirangan.

In earlier times the Indian education system had been revised according to the need of the society, but the basic framework remained the same. Now, NEP 2020 has envisioned a 360 degree turn in Indian education system. The recommendations given are for all the different levels and aspects of the education system. It will acquaint the learners with 21st century skills. Many studies have been conducted which also bring out the importance of engaging learners and developing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. As cited by Ridho, et.al. (2020) the learning process for students can be strengthened by incorporating elements of affective skills and adaptive behaviour (Jollands, Jolly, & Molyneaux, 2012). Restructuring of curriculum and pedagogy will get the desired outcome as per NEP 2020.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this study is to document the strategies given by the school principals and administrators for restructuring school curriculum and pedagogy. Thus, the research objectives are as follows:
1. To explore the critical areas to be emphasized while Restructuring School Curriculum and Pedagogy for Holistic Development of Learners
2. To find out the strategies to restructure the curriculum and pedagogy for holistic development of learners.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

To understand the work done earlier in the area of restructuring of school curriculum and pedagogy, the researchers reviewed the related literature.

As mentioned by Muralidharan, et.al. (2019) the Indian education system in its current form is perhaps more like a filtration system rather than an education system. It filters the students based on their intelligence, economic status and reach to education because of which other students remain unaddressed. Gouëdard, P., et al. (2020) said that due to global trends, countries have increasingly considered reviewing the curriculum as a way to equip children with the knowledge, skills and competences needed for tomorrow. Saavedra and Steele (2012) consider curriculum in a broader sense, including issues that would have an explicit impact on how the curriculum is designed and realised, such as teaching methodology, class size, learning hours allocation, learning objectives, assessment, and examination practices. Brinkmann, S. (2015) said that like many developing countries, India has been attempting to bring a paradigm shift from 'teacher-centred' to 'learner-centred' classrooms for decades, through various reforms such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, and the Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009. Gouëdard, P., et al. (2020) emphasised that competencies such as self-management, knowledge-information, creative thinking, aesthetic-emotional capacities were regarded as ways to cultivate young people. Brinkmann, S. (2015) has pointed out that Indian teachers' traditional pedagogy is grounded in deeply rooted cultural attitudes like gender, caste, social inequality, etc. that make it difficult for existing practices to change. According to Fullan (2015), curriculum implementation corresponds to the means to accomplish desired objectives, and for the new curriculum to bear fruit, it needs to be translated into classroom practices. This future oriented approach aims at adapting academic requirements and envisioning what a student should acquire through the educational system. Dutta, P. (2007) concluded that the main factors that leads to the deprived teaching methods are, shortage of teachers, the curriculum and the instructional methods are not well developed. The challenge of translating the vision of equality into a curricular framework has remained unanswered, and as reflected in the series of Curriculum Framework documents (NCERT 1975, 1988, 2000) (Position paper 2.3). Gouëdard, P., et al. (2020) stated that the impact of these shifts for curriculum reform are important to understand and elucidate. However, there is limited research or comprehensive analysis of implementation focused on curriculum reform from the perspective of policy making Thus, this study enquires into the implementation strategies of National Education Policy 2020.

Research questions
1. How can educators and schools reconfigure curricular and pedagogical structure to suit the developmental needs and interest of learners at all the four stages of student development?
2. What are the various initiatives schools must take, to help children leap forward and to increase their learning trajectories as they proceed to higher grades?

Research Methodology:
For the present study the Qualitative approach was adopted. A Focused Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted in the panel discussion of the National Conference on 'Strategies for restructuring school curriculum and pedagogy for effective implementation of NEP2020 and holistic development of learners. The principals and educationists across the country were engaged in a discussion to answer some pertinent questions on restructuring curriculum and pedagogy and focus areas which was done with the intention of implementation of NEP 2020.
Purposive sampling was done to gather the data. 52 principals of various government and private schools and educationists took part in the discussion and shared their views. Semi structured questions were asked to the panel to get the practical suggestions. For further probing and effective outcome, the views of teachers were also taken.

Findings and Discussions:
A rigorous discussion took place in which the speakers gave suggestions for restructuring the curriculum and pedagogy. They deliberated and discovered contemporary assessment methods aimed to continuously improve learning of students with a focus on individual development and achievement of learning outcomes. It was also discussed to identify and develop options for optimal utilization of resources and infrastructure for creating learning environments suitable to promote flexible, multilevel and discovery based education. Session chair, who was the official representative from CBSE said that there are 5 major areas where CBSE is going to focus on. They are:

- **Key Stage Assessment**
  - The assessment will be done in class 3rd, 5th and 8th. It will not tag students as 'pass' or 'fail' but it will help the teachers to work on the weak areas of students and lead them towards holistic development.
- **Technology intervention**
  - Teaching must include ICT, so that best possible strategy can be applied by the teacher to teach.

- **Teachers' Capability Development**
  - The principals and teachers must be convinced and equipped with the new ways of teaching.
- **Holistic development of learner**
  - Everyone needs attentions including the schools so they always project number of students qualified, NEET, JEE, CLET etc. The students who fail or score less marks are left behind. We need to look for the development of these students as well so small intervention is required to restructure the school system for holistic development of learners. It will boost self-confidence in students.
- **University System of Education Intervention**
  - There may be some drawbacks in school system, so it is the responsibility of universities to intervene. The time spend in university for higher education must give direction to learners to make them future ready. NEP 2020 is focusing on making the University education effective by engaging all the stakeholders in the process of delivering education.

Panellist 1 who is a Principal said that the focus should be on making foundation level strong. She emphasised on various pedagogy and curriculum interventions at ECCE level. According to her, at foundation level the teaching should be through infotainment. Audio-visual should be made available at root level through Angangwari centres. To bring all the students of the country at same level and make them progress it was advised to have rural-urban school peering system. Educational peer groups should be formed so as to exchange information, class recordings, bilateral exchange.

Another Speaker, an academic advisor emphasizes on experiential, inquiry based, competency based, activity based and integrated learning with an example of palm tree. She explained that through one live project connections in various subjects can be established and students will get connected to what they are learning. Activity based learning should be emphasized. She said that students should be engaged in 5 Es – Elaborate, Engage, Explain Explore and Evaluate. Her focus was on integration of art in mainstream subjects. Storytelling technique best suits this situation.

Panellist 3, Sr. Consultant (HR & Training), suggested that the choice of subjects should be as per resources availability. There should be collaboration between nearby schools for sharing faculty and other resources like library, laboratories etc. She, being a consultant, suggested the role of counsellors to guide and support students in choosing the subject. According to her there should be integration of interdisciplinary approach, project based approach, flipped learning and research based learning. Regarding curriculum, she said that the textbooks should focus on high order thinking, analytical skills and emotional, psychological and spiritual abilities.

Panellist 4, the Principal of a private school focused on multilingualism. Learning local language by native students and students from or states was discussed. According to her, students who get the opportunity to live in different cities also get exposed to different language. They must learn those local languages as this will help them in future.

Panellist 5, Principal of a school, ponder upon choosing their own trajectories. She said that the textbook should not be over taking on learners. Assessment should be of learning and not learners. Hybrid method of teaching was emphasised. This will include online and offline both way of teaching. Collaborative projects should be given to students and adoption of Socratic method of teaching was suggested.

Suggested Strategies & Recommendations:
From the above discussions and deliberations, the following strategies were concluded:
1. Focusing on the foundation years, the training of students should be through the inculcation of arts and games, infotainment, paly-way method and activities.
2. Bilateral learning and giving away pen and paper for classes 1 & 2.
3. There should be focus on communication skills, creative skills, cognitive, emotional, psychological, psychomotor development of learners.
4. Inculcate human, ethical, and spiritual values through storytelling method.
5. Empowering teachers through proper training.
6. Innovative pedagogy like Storytelling, role play, pay-way method should be adopted by the teachers. Learning should be outcome based.
7. Arts integrated and sports integrated pedagogy is emphasised.
8. Experiential Learning- to inculcate social awareness, collaborative learning, exploring and deep understanding through application of knowledge by giving live projects to students.
9. Reframing the school textbooks with focus on high order thinking skills, analytical and application-based questions should be there.

10. Evaluation should include more oral questions rather than written exams.
11. Restructuring tried and tested pattern of teaching and give freedom to teachers to be innovative in their teaching.
12. Capacity building of teachers by providing them adequate training so that they are equipped to engage the students using new pedagogies.

Implications:

The following are the implications of restructuring curriculum and pedagogy:

1. There will be complete reformation in pedagogy, thus the role of NCTE becomes crucial. The teacher training programs will be restructured which will include knowledge of ICT in education, training in multidisciplinary and integrated teaching and teaching core subjects through arts, music, dance and sports.
2. Only qualified and training teachers will get the opportunity to teach.
3. Teachers will need to keep themselves updated with the latest information and use of technology.
4. School infrastructure will be redefined as per the need of foundation level learners which include play school and grade 1 & 2. Learning friendly environment will be designed.
5. Finally, the role of stakeholders will increase and changed. Principals, Teachers and parents will have more responsibility to understand the child and help them to go through this transition phase.

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