



Mains Practice Question

Q. National Education Policy 2020 is in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal-4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. Critically examine the statement. (UPSC GS-2 Mains 2020).

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Approach

- Start the answer by briefly discussing the envisaged goal of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- Discuss the significance of NEP.
- Discuss the associated issues with NEP
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

In order to transform India's declining education system, the government of India has launched the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP). Apart from fundamental literacy and numeracy and overall cognitive development, the NEP envisions imparting 21st-century skills, well-rounded character building, critical thinking, holistic, inquiry-based, discovery-based, discussion-based and analysis-based hands-on learning.

Body

Implementing SDG-4: SDG -4 envisages ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. The NEP through the following provisions strives to achieve these targets.

Significance of NEP

- **Recognizing Importance of Formative years:** In adopting a 5+3+3+4 model for school education starting at age 3, the policy recognizes the primacy of the formative years from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future.
- **Multi-Disciplinary Approach:** Another key aspect of school education in the new policy is the breaking of the strict division of arts, commerce, and science streams in high school.
- **Education and Skills Integration:** NEP introduces vocational courses with an internship. This may nudge the vulnerable sections of society to send their children to school.
- **Making Education More Inclusive:** The NEP proposes the extension of the Right to Education (RTE) to all children up to the age of 18.
- **Effective Regulation:** The policy also seeks to establish a super-regulator for education which will be responsible for standards-setting, funding, accreditation and regulation of higher education in India.
- **Allowing Foreign Universities:** The document states universities from among the top 100 in the world will be able to set up campuses in India.

However, on many issues, the **NEP falls short** in identifying what exactly ails India's Education system.

- **Marks Dominated Education System:** Until marks or grades dominate the education system, it would be challenging to bring transformation as envisaged by NEP.
- **Persistent Inequity & Inequality:** The NEP falls short in addressing the two main problems that plague our society and education system — inequity and inequality.
- **Knowledge-Jobs Mismatch:** There is a persistent mismatch between the knowledge & skills imparted and the jobs available. This has been one of the main challenges that have affected the Indian education system since Independence.
- **Federal Angle:** Though education is a concurrent subject in India's federal structure, yet the NEP approach is suggestive of over-centralization.

Conclusion

Though the NEP 2020 seeks to bring a holistic change in the education system of India, its success depends on the will and way in which it will be implemented.

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