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Role of National Education Policy 2020 in making India Self-Reliant

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Abstract

For any country to develop and become self-sufficient, the role of education sector becomes most important. India since beginning has produced scholars of repute that have made tremendous contribution to various fields. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a concentrated effort of the government to transform its education sector drastically so that the country regains its position of Vishwa guru. The paper covers the core strength areas of the country that through integration with NEP can help making the country self-reliant, the required support system for NEP, and the role of various types of educational institutions in effective implementation of NEP. The study also focuses on the areas that require taking care of for successful implementation of NEP in achieving the target of making country self-reliant.

Introduction

For any country to become self-reliant there is a strong need to unleash the potential of its people particularly the young talent. Education plays a key role in it and the role of technology becomes paramount here that ensures the effective dissemination of knowledge to every learner. India being one of the most emerging and promising economies of the world has produced scholars par excellence in the past and was considered as Vishwa Guru. The time now has come to embrace the traditional roots of Indian knowledge through upskilling of the youth to make them future-ready. The National Education Policy introduced in 2020 has at its core the skill enhancement of the youth in a manner

that India is able to make itself a country that is self reliant and is a market and world leader in terms of technology and development.

Some strength areas that support Government's urge for Self Reliant India

Hon'ble Prime Minister used this term in his speech in May, 2020 where he called the nation that it is the right to make India a self reliant nation and at the same time he stressed upon the call for "Vocal for local" that is we need to export more and import less that would be a strong step in this area.

India has some possible advantages over other countries that can help it in becoming a self –reliant nation, some of them are as follows:

- The Make in India movement launched in the year 2014 has already created an atmosphere of ease of doing business and giving stress to production of goods in the country which match global standards and also able to meet the growing demand of the country with little or less dependence on foreign goods.
- India has a blessing of variety of climatic conditions and also a large pool of natural resources to facilitate various kinds of production and manufacturing activities.
- India has world's largest pool of young population which if given right kind of training can help India become an empowered nation having biggest pool of skilled workforce that if deployed in various sectors of the economy can help India become world leader.
- The already existing infrastructure can also help in providing necessary support for making India a manufacturing hub.

The five pillars of Self-reliant India

The government in order to achieve its objective of making country a five trillion economy has taken self–reliance as one of the most important effective tool. India with right investment and infrastructure can play a dominant role in supply of not only consumer goods in the international market but can be a big supplier of industrial goods also for which we are still depend on other countries. This is possible through taking self-reliance in the mission mode. Keeping that in mind the following five pillars have been identified that can play dominating role in making country self-reliant.

The five pillars of self-reliant India as declared by Hon'ble prime Minister are as follows -

Economy: ‘that does not make incremental changes but makes quantum jumps’. Indian economy because of its growth in almost all three sectors viz. primary, secondary and Tertiary has a strong possibility that if given right environment can become self-reliant very soon.

Infrastructure: ‘that becomes the ideal of modern India’, right infrastructure is the most essential element for ensuring growth, thus we need to have infrastructure that caters not only the present needs but has the potential of serving the future necessities as well particularly the young generation as future work belongs to them.

System: ‘no longer past system based but having system that is technology based’, modernization and being technologically advanced is the most important requirement for the country like India which is in the path of becoming a fully digitalized nation with bringing all its essential services on digital platform.

Democracy: ‘having the biggest and vibrant democracy in the world that serves as our strength and a source of energy for efforts of making India atmanirbhar.’ India being the largest democracy in the world enjoys co-existence of both public and private sector that together ensure the growth of the nation

Demand: ‘the cycle of demand and supply is an asset that needs to be fully utilized.’, India is in high ranking when it comes to consumption along with regularity in supply, this has possibility of further exploration as self-reliance also promotes going vocal for local that is the demand and supply both can be met domestically in the country through production and consumption.

Rationale for Self-reliance through NEP

If we see the most innovative economies of the world we will find countries like Germany, Sweden, US, Japan taking a lead but if we look at the position of India we have remained far behind in terms of research, development and innovation, where as the fact is that future belongs to skills in areas like automation, AI, Solar Energy, Robotics etc and these require skills of world level to keep a pace with the emerging Innovative economies of the world. Here, the role of Education becomes most important and the NEP, 2020 focuses on the skill up gradation of the students in these future skills. The skilling of students in these areas will also address the demand supply gap of the country and thus, India’s youth that has proved its mettle in the Software and IT industry of the world will also become in huge demand in the world market for these emerging sectors.

The Indian Economy has undergone several structural and other changes in the previous years’ like rapid rise in population, economic liberalization, rising demand, innovations, technological developments etc. These changes both structural and economical have brought about changes in

the requirements of the students also in terms of Educational degrees. Now, there is a strong need for practical driven education that meets the demand of the students in requiring courses that offer practical training in latest fields of learning.

Literature Review

Sood Meenakshi, Singh Balwinder and Singla P.K.(2020) In their paper highlighted that NEP has removed the boundaries between curricular and extra-curricular activities. Yadav Shachi(2020)in her article highlighted the importance of NEP as it is focusing on multidisciplinary education rather than the stand alone professional universities that would promote holistic and globally competitive education. Gupta Vikas(2020) in his article stated the importance of academic institutions in creating workforce that is innovative along with building its industrial strength. Sugandha Sapna (2020) in her article stressed upon the importance of NEP in transforming the education system of India and has an aim of creating opportunities for edupreneurs. Sahoo Bijaya (2020) article highlights that NEP would transform the education sector in the country as it focuses on making education accessible, equitable, inclusive but only if implemented at all levels. Bose Asok(2021) in his paper mentioned that rural area also has a strong potential of growth in the areas where India is putting efforts to become self-reliant and this calls for strategies made and implemented properly for both urban and rural areas together. Sheikh Sameer(2020) in his article mentioned that NEP 2020 if realized well has an unlimited potential to contribute towards making our nation self-reliant. Pradhan Ramakrushna (2021) appraised NEP as a methodological, futuristic and sustainable policy that if properly implemented will certainly give way for Atmanirbhar Bharat. Kuhad RC (2020) in his article focused on role of NEP in skilling the youth which is of prime importance in making the country self-reliant as the policy has skill development at its core. Srinivas YL (2020) mentioned in his article that NEP with its thrust on Research and Development and Robust Education System paves way for Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Objective of the study

- The paper aims to analyze the role of NEP 2020 in making India a self-reliant nation.
- It also aims to focus the core areas of India that may contribute in achieving self-reliance through integration with the NEP 2020.

Methodology

Nature of the study: the present study is analytical in nature in which efforts have been made in analyzing those sectors of the Indian economy that have a potential of transformation into strength and the role that NEP can play in further strengthening of those sectors.

Source of information: the study has been made using secondary sources of information that includes articles, papers, reports, web sources and other published sources.

Required Support- system for Self-reliance

For any economy to grow and develop and ultimately to become self-reliant requires strengthening of three areas, which are as follows:

Innovation: the countries like Japan, Germany and Sweden have grown tremendously that has become possible because of innovation taken place in these countries at a wide level. They have proven themselves in the emerging technologies. This shows that for growth and becoming self-reliant we need to grow in terms of innovations that can cater not only our needs but of the world at large.

Education: It forms the base for of both innovation and entrepreneurship as through education only the young population of the country can be imparted new skills that can help them in developing innovative products, techniques and services that help a country to reach high levels of growth. This requires designing and developing an environment where the natural talent of the children can be groomed further while he is taking education. It also requires having a curriculum that matches the need of the industry.

Entrepreneurship: for any country to attain the level of self-reliance, a strong supply chain system is required at the same time the country should be capable enough to produce the goods which are required for consumption by masses. This is possible only through entrepreneurship. Education and innovation together help in scaling up the entrepreneurship in the country.

The catalyzing role of institutions in making India Self-reliant:

Strengthening of all three areas for making India self-reliant viz. Innovation, Education and entrepreneurship is possible through the set of institutions working in the country particularly the institutes offering higher education. The NEP covers a whole range of institutions that will play key role in its implementation and will act as a catalyst in bringing about necessary changes that can help India in becoming self-reliant and ultimately the world leader:

Technological institutions: If we consider the growth of the Indian IT industry we can surely say that it has shown significant growth and various cities of India are turning to be IT hubs serving international clientele at large level. The Indian software engineers have also contributed a lot to the growth of The US IT industry and thus, here comes the role of our technological institutions in designing their curriculum in a manner that the child is able to learn the future skills of technology

like AI, Bloch chain etc. so that India becomes one of the largest suppliers of human force with the specific set of skills.

Agricultural Universities: being an agrarian economy and with about 57 percent of population engaged in agriculture and is their primary occupation, there is a strong need to strengthen research in the field of agriculture particularly in those items in which India has the potential of becoming world class producer supplying them to almost the whole world. India has a large number of agricultural universities including Central and state Universities. So far, these Universities have done good research in agriculture but there is a strong need to discover new ways of agriculture that would fit the changing environment and are as per the future requirement of the country. The NEP has given due recognition to agriculture under its vision document and has been included as one of the subjects that needs to be at the core of skill development.

Central Universities: they need to play a significant role in redesigning their syllabus of traditional courses in a manner that they are able to offer at least basic knowledge of the important subject at each level of entry and exit. The restructuring of traditional courses also is being done at large level and many institutions have started implementing the new courses under NEP. This is to be taken on a mission mode and it needs to be ensured that the Universities implement courses under NEP at their earliest that too in a proper planned manner in order to derive its benefits in future.

Skill hubs: as there is a large gap between demand and supply of skilled workforce and to fill this gap, the NEP has emphasized on introduction of Vocational education so that country's education system can produce a work-ready human capital, the Ministry of Skill Development and entrepreneurship in consultation with Ministry of education has brought the 'Skill Hub Initiative' under Pradhan Mantri kaushal Vikas Yojana. The initiative aims at skilling the people at different levels.

In the initial stage 5000 such skill hubs will be identified in the country from across the education and skill eco-systems.

These Skill Hubs are Nodal skill centers identified to provide skill development and vocational training opportunities to target population segments that includes from class 6-8th, 9th to 12th, school dropouts and out- of-education people.(pmkvyofficial.org)

All these set of institutions together can play a major role in bringing the required change in the education system through application of NEP and can help in achieving the main goal of these reformatory changes that is making India self-reliant and the global leader.

Role of NEP in 2020 in making India self-reliant

India being an agrarian economy right from beginning has shown remarkable performance in the other sectors of the economy also. The NEP, 2020 has been introduced with a mission of making India a super power of the world in the coming time and this is possible only by making youth learn those skills while taking formal education in a manner that once they complete their education they have one or more skill sets with them to earn and return to the society.

As per the report of skill India, majority of the graduating youth lack necessary skills that are required by the industry and potential employers leading to a huge gap between the demand for specific skill sets and its supply. The employers are able to see that skill gap that exists in India where the candidates are lacking necessary future skills. In the time to come there would be a strong need from the parts of the candidates to re-skill and up skill themselves in order to be future ready. This issue has been taken care of very importantly as the policy has Skill development at its core and because of that skill development has been given important place at both the school and higher education levels. The holistic development of the child will begin right from the schooling of the children and by the time the child completes schooling will have at least one vocational skills that can be honed further to boost his employability when he enters the higher education system.

Promising sectors for Self-reliant India and contributing role of NEP

According to a report by the Centre for Economic and Business Research, India will overtake Germany in 2031 and will become third largest Economy of the world with a GDP of more than US\$ 6.8 Trillion. This is possible through the usage of production capabilities that India has along with using its large working population that is properly skilled and industry-ready, this further will help India in resolving its employability issues and also it will help to have a lower cost of production as because the availability of cheap and skilled workforce will help India to be at a competitive edge with that of China and countries like Bangladesh which are emerging as global producers and suppliers of many goods in the world because of availability of cheap and skilled workforce.

As per the data of PIB, India has a huge potential to become self-reliant with a proper investment, infrastructure and availability of skilled workforce in some of the following Sectors:

Heavy Engineering

With the combined efforts of both central and state government, the heavy engineering sector is gaining momentum. India's heavy engineering sector is manufacturing a variety of products both electrical and non-electrical machinery. The sector has immense potential of growth but still some of the services of the sector are outsourced which needs to be taken care of and this calls for

availability of skilled engineers that can help country in reducing country's dependence on others in manufacturing as well as services. The NEP that particularly focuses on honing the sector specific skills of the students like AI and Automation will surely benefit the sector in terms of manufacturing and availability of right skilled personnel as per the demand of the sector.

Electronics and Technology Products

The Indian Electronics industry that relies heavily on imports now is in line of becoming self-sufficient but the industry faces a severe shortage of skilled force workforce which is capable enough to have updated knowledge and has the capability of doing entire activities that industry requires. Apart from that, new digital technologies witnessing a spurring demand include Artificial intelligence, Robotics, Big data Analytics etc. but there is severe gap in terms of supply in India. As per an article published in Mint this fact has been highlighted as "The number of workers in India requiring digital skills will need to increase nine times by 2025 and the average worker in India will need to develop seven new digital skills by 2025 to keep pace with technology advancements and demand, according to a recent report commissioned by Amazon Web Services Inc."

The concept of multi disciplinary education and research under NEP will provide opportunities to higher education institutions in designing new courses that would be highly demanded in future at global level. The establishment of National Research Foundation will promote research at all levels in Higher Education institutes across India Particularly in the field of technology. This ultimately will benefit the technology sector of the country in becoming self sufficient in production through its highly skilled workforce.

Textiles

India is the sixth largest producer of technical textiles, with a 6 per cent global share. The textile industry of the country is the second largest employment provider industry after agriculture and it employs more than 100 million workers directly and indirectly. The sector's role in realizing the goal of self-reliance is an important one as it contributes to country's employment and growth both in large manner. The government has recognized the growth potential of this sector and has announced series of measures to boost it further that includes setting up of seven mega textile parks and also a greater amount of incentives for the sector worth Rs. 10683 Crores in the coming five years. (Agarwal Vikash)

The customized courses under NEP may definitely focus this sector of the economy as this will help the country in becoming country the largest supplier of the world.

Food Processing

India being the second largest producer of food in the world and is leading exporter of many food items in the world. But when it comes to food processing only 2 percent of the food is processed in the country. Major food items are exported as raw and later they are processed in other countries. The food processing sector has huge potential for growth as it not only contributes to exports but is the largest employment provider of the country also. The sector has potential for attaining the stage of self-reliance, due to which the government has not only identified it as sector with growth potential; and has invested heavy amount for its growth but also has been given important place in the skill development sector.

Even though many courses related to food processing under skill development are being run at present also but seeing the huge demand of Indian food products, the NEP through skill development centers and skill hub can take this sector at priority and many new courses may be launched to further promote it.

High efficiency Solar PV Models

The government after seeing the potential of growth in the sector and also in order to reduce country's dependence on imports of Solar PV cells and modules has invested huge money in its research and has also introduced *The National Programme on High Efficiency Solar PV Modules*, so that the country becomes self-sufficient and self-reliant in this area.

Since India has growth potential in the sector, the NEP through research and technological development can help in devising right technology through cutting research in the institutes to further strengthen it.

NEP that focuses on skilling the youth at different levels of education and training will help in achieving self-reliance through its provision of beginning the internship right from beginning level that will continue till a student continues its higher education in his area of interest. The provision of academic freedom and institutional autonomy in designing curriculum as per the need of the industry will further strengthen the Higher education system in developing right kind of courses. Thus, the abovementioned areas if properly integrated with the curriculum under NEP can help the country become self-reliant as well as it would be a big support for various initiatives taken so far by the government.

Focus areas for enhancing efficiency for successful implementation of NEP

- Enhancing rural penetration for reducing digital divide: the NEP has its focus on strengthening the employability skills of the students and this is possible through making students

technologically upgraded for that The rural areas of the country need to be well connected with internet facilities and efforts need to be made to increase connectivity in even the most remote village.

- Up gradation of skills of teachers: the successful implementation of the policy is possible when the teachers who are the most important pillar of the policy need to be trained properly as they are the ones who are responsible for its execution in a time bound manner.
- Timely implementation: the policy needs to be implemented in a time bound manner as its execution across the country will take a little longer time so there is a strong need to implement the policy across the country as early as possible that to by giving a proper timeline so that its results may be received in the time to come.
- Designing of appropriate curriculum: the most essential part of the policy is designing of appropriate curriculum as per the guidelines which are capable of offering the learner the essential subjects of learning that can help him to meet the objectives of enhancing employability skills and make of ready for future demands of the market.
- Infrastructure: there is need to improve the existing infrastructural facilities for implementing the policy as the appropriate and proper infrastructure is required for its timely implementation.

Conclusion

India has the power to become superpower which is possible mainly through self-reliance as well as by being a global manufacturer, this needs to focus on boosting those areas that have immense potential of growth and this is possible only when the right kind of eco system is available that offers innovation, investment, infrastructure and above all a strong education sector that is able to produce quality personnel that fits to the requirements of the industries and different sector. With the government's promise to make India a Five trillion economy and global leader it can be hoped that NEP would play a crucial role in achieving this target , that further would help the country in achieving self-reliance in almost all sectors of the economy. The changes that will take place in the Indian Education system through NEP will definitely transform not only the education sector but this will also transform the entire economy that is capable of self-sustaining in all aspects of growth which is regular, continuous and inclusive.

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