

# NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY - 2020, PERFORMANCE INDICATOR, ACCOUNTABILITY AND THEIR CHASM

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## ABSTRACT

“...of all the different factors which influence the quality of education which possess competence, capabilities, skill and ethics; the common factor is a Teacher”

- Kothari Commission (1966)

*National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) is addressing a series of challenges and concerns which the first National Educational Policy of 1968 did not quite face. A cursory study of the NEP 2020 reveals a pattern that focuses on faculty as its central theme. Core of the central message to faculty is performance indicator. These performance indicators commonly referred as Academic performance indicator will undergo a change. Most of the indicators that measured faculty performance indicator may not be relevant and would require tweaking major or minor in an age of NEP-2020. The study is on how the academic fraternity is building on improvisations during the last three years or so. This paper is an attempt to list down those changing paradigms and trace gaps in performance and evaluation of faculty.*

**Keywords:** Faculty, API, NEP-20, Performance Indicators

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Education in India mostly concentrates on rote memory and there is an undue importance towards examination based approach. This has been the case since colonial British era. Not much change has happened even after 70 years of Independence of India. Education in India is supported by public enterprises and private entities. As far as education is concerned, the subject is in concurrent list, which means both central governments of India and state governments can frame their rules and laws to

manage and regulate education in India. There are multitude of articles which allow for education and provision of the same as a fundamental right to citizens. Since most Universities are provided by either state or central government, there is more scope adhering to basic tenets as provisioned in our Constitution.

During the ancient times, India practiced a Gurukula based system of education. Here a student who wished to learn reached out to a master or Guru and taught subjects which the



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Guru was familiar with ranging from languages like Sanskrit, to holy scriptures, metaphysics to mathematics and metallurgy. Students usually served the master and were with the master as a residential occupant until all learning completed. Interestingly, most of the learning or perhaps all learning had its own pace and intricately associated with nature. However, modern system of education brought about in 19th century by Lord Thomas Macaulay in 1830. This form of education constrained itself to modern subjects such as science and mathematics; while metaphysics and philosophy were considered unnecessary.

The schools structure is a primary edifice of education in India. This has since the NEP 2020 been called as “10+2+3” system of education. This is given to mean that first decade of children schooling is a child right and also mandated according to the Directive Principles of state policy. In India most children begin the schooling by 5 years and go to primary school when they are six. According to the right to education, children are mandated to education until the age of 14. Post this, they may choose to halt education. It shall be noted here that the public educational institutions to private educational institutions is at a healthy average of 7:5. Until the year 1976, most of educational reforms and laws were determined under legally framework of individual states. By the 42nd amendment in 1976, subject of education was brought under concurrent list. This change made a formal involvement of centre and states towards education, where both shared, investment, funds and responsibility in uplifting education in their respective spheres of influence. India is a large country with 28 states and 8 Union territories. There are as many and perhaps more number of languages as states and myriad cultural complexities in framing education and policies. Policies and Initiative can vary between states and regions.

National Education policy 2020 is a guideline to help state governments make informed choices and set the strategic priorities according to National vision on education. Decades of hard work and intelligent policy making has resulted in 73 percent males as literate – according to 2011 census. National Statistical commission on its routine surveys estimated literacy levels of 77 percent for males and 70 percent females in the year 2019, while the gross enrollment levels stands at 26.3 percent. But compared to global standards, this Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is very less and needs vast improvement in years to come.

The central and most state board uniformly follows the 10+2+3 pattern of education. In this pattern 10 years of primary and secondary education is followed by 2 years of higher secondary education and then three years of college education for bachelors’ degree. The ten years is divided into 5 years of primary education, 3 years of upper primary or middle school, 2 years of high school. This pattern originated from the recommendation of education commission in 164-66.

India is home to over 800 universities in different spheres of competence and approximately 45,000 colleges. This is going to make students and other stakeholders find hard to examine and arrive at a choice for the institution. Academic Performance Indicators (API) as it is commonly referred was suggested by the University Grants Commission in 2010 as an index to measure teacher, student and institutional complex. Students who scored more than seventy five percent were allowed to evaluate their teachers and grade them according to their teaching prowess. However, there were some challenges where, experts found that mere teaching abilities were grossly inadequate to measure a teachers progress and it needed more than them viz. research,

publication and consultancy. The topic of API has been quite contentious since the day it was introduced. From the teachers perspective there are few points to be noted:

- Students evaluation of teachers to be reviewed
- Not all students are permitted to evaluate a teacher
- In a teaching-learning-research metric, an Assistant Professor is expected to record a 100 point while Associate Professor must have 90 points and Professors 80 points.

And from the students' perspective, there are few alterations expected as follows:

- Co-curricular and research work must be considered
- Reducing complexity of evaluation process
- Green fields for inclusion such as NSS, NCC for evaluation

According to University Grants Commission (UGC) the API is measured on the following indicators and weightage. There are three categories in which faculty are measured. On category I deal with teachers' contribution in class, learning and other evaluation based activities. Impetus is provided on class room teaching, seminars, workshop, tutorials and practical; besides outside activities related to subject. Paper setting, invigilation duties, evaluation fall under sub category which attracts points on weight.

The second category measures co-curricular and field based work. These are done extensively in consultation with outside agencies and include works through NSS and NCC. Further, corporate communication and personality development activities are expected to be incorporated in curriculum to boost employability skills of students.

In the third category of measurement, teachers' academic research contributions are measured. The teachers attending conferences, workshops, faculty development programmes and symposium adds weight. Further their publications in referred and non referred journals add to API points. Writing books that are reference, contributing chapters have advantage in terms of attracting more points.

## **II. NEED FOR THE STUDY**

Faculty accountability has been a subject of discussion and contention for a long time. UGC prescribes clear Academic Performance Indicators (API) but have past its date for utility. Presently, NEP-2020 suggests quite radical changes in deployment of faculty in institutions, who are more of facilitators than teachers. NEP 2020 further recommends project and real time based learning with more quotient of study outside structured curricula. Therefore it has become imperative to redefine academic performances among faculty members. As old values give way to new ones, similarly old practices and measures will eventually provide way to new approaches in measurement.

## **III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To understand NEP 2020 from a generic perspective
2. To examine role of NEP 2020 in measuring new academic performance indicators
3. To study the role of faculty accountability in an era of NEP 2020.

## **IV. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The idea of performance measurement is common across all spectrums of formal and informal activities. That which cannot be measured cannot be controlled. Since the

resources we need to operate are becoming scarce; there is onus on all of us to bring about a measure for controlling. This is applicable to teaching faculty as well. Members of faculty must be measured against their academic performance through variety of indicators. Extant literature provides ample measures across cultures and continents in support of the same. Academics like the government organizations have been for long been in protective mode with intention of nobility. But students across platforms are being more demanding than ever before. Hence, there are reasons why performance must not be correlated to market measures (Dill, 2004)

Institutions are waking to reality of prominence in research. Faculty positions provide time, tenure and temperament ideally suited for innovations and research. Abubakar, A., Hilman, H., & Kaliappen, N. (2018) However, except in some developed nations, most other countries are hardly publishing, patenting and more. If this trend were to be checked, higher educational institutions must strive for bringing impetus and focus on research leading to innovation.

There has been confusion over many institutions and Universities having varied scales of measurement. This has been a point of contention for long among academic fraternity. Some of the measures are too rigid and others fragile. However, the measure is a must and ranking or measuring based on set criteria is an indispensable part of University set up (Marmolejo, 2015). It is always better and suggested that a generic and uniform basis to evaluation serves more in longer run than being discrete and ad hoc structures of measurement. While there seems to be presentation of these facts and figures, there must also be justification to the stake holders present. This will also benefit when stake holders themselves

are able to come forward in providing guidance to assessment process and procedure. Performance normally gets mixed and intertwined between both individual and on collective bases. Kaplan and Norton (2005) discuss on financial and non financial measure and also a combination of both these measures when it comes to organizational measure. However, these studies have specifically pointed to corporate structure of evaluation and may not be fully applicable for academic based higher education. However, there are finer points which can be considered and adopted in the process. Badri and Abdulla (2004) incorporate measure normally adopted by corporate to academic higher educational institutions. This is similar to incentivizing and rewarding research and development careers in Organizations. They have proposed teaching and research indicators as vital to evaluating or setting performance indicators.

Extensive literature has shown some counter or alternative view points as well. Education criteria for Excellence in performance - a forum which measures particularly in assessing indicators towards excellence at work provide counter inputs in this subject. Besides providing attention to academic and research work, it also talks about tangential indicators such as reputation of the institution, graduate employability, kind of ratio of teacher students, awards and excellence achievements by their faculty members etc. In fact, these form an important pillar of assessment when it comes to evaluate for QS World University ranking. There are other agencies such as Academic ranking worldwide which intelligently integrates faculty development credentials with achievements such as Nobel Prize, field medals etc. The assessment remains largely neutral and emulative with right mix of subjectivity and objectivity. Exploration of Epistemic understanding and influence of it on academic



performance indicators with special references to life sciences study (Müller, R., & de Rijcke, S, 2017). Performance is a quintessential part of all organizations and institutions. They are either rewarded or punished for performance or otherwise. There are two kinds of performance. One is an institutional performance and other individual performance, here teacher/ faculty performance. Despite importance attached to both performance, in this paper we are restricting our scope for faculty performance.

Performance is an important measure for all progress, particularly in the area of teaching and research. It is a fundamental plank on which progress and development can happen. Performance in the age of digital divide looks into the aspect of inclusivity. The approach is stake holder approach where all participate to determine and define aspects to avoid ambivalence. Governments, parents, research institutions and others play a vital role in bringing about transparency and efficiency in the system. Though student is a very important stake holder, we still are not making good use of their perceptions and feedback. Performance can be of two types, one primarily a market driven approach and accreditation based approach. Market based approach is a fully market driven idea, where institutional funding and research grants play a vital role in determining quality of institutions (Dill & Soo, 2004). On the other hand, we are also hooked up with University and approving bodies scale of measures which existentially inform us to stay compliant on parameters not necessarily driven by market forces. Altbach & Balan (2007) discuss on market based performance indicator as one where there is surplus research flow grants and higher placement ranking among other institutions. Isn't this that is required for an institution to flourish? Is this not enough to convince students and parents – important stake holders in deciding the

institution of their choice? Looks convincing on paper, however, non market based structure seem to have a different story to tell. The approving and accrediting agencies are not merely satisfied with high performance in area of funding and money, but also look into the aspect of inclusivity. Whether, teachers are able to bring in inclusivity within the system, and are able to morally and ethically vouch for the same. Income is truly one of the areas where institutions are tempted to adopt a market driven approach. Specifically in the post COVID-19 scenarios where there is twin challenge of survival of not just fittest, but also the survival of fastest is norm of today. Moreover, more funding and money within an institution provides competitive edge to organizations over others which they never had in past (Herbst, 2007).

## **V. FACULTY ACCOUNTABILITY**

Researchers in the last three decades have sought to identify and make a difference in effectiveness in their learning outcomes. Murane (1975) found that verbal scores of teachers are significant in making a teacher more effective than those with low scores. There is also debate on whether teacher education has a role to play in improving quality of education as against those who have not pursued their teacher education.

Faculty members use pedagogical trainings which in addition to course work area vastly improve students performance reporting and performance and perform better on standardized tests (Hammond & Sykes, 2003). The individual teachers and their unique characteristics, performance, perceived preparations or length of teaching experience matters in teaching experience and performance of students.

There is much yet to understand about how teachers and faculty members' effectiveness

with students depend on characteristics and quality of institution as a work place. Some of the recent studies have shifted from examining faculty quality out of context while considering effective teaching content where teachers work. These studies have shown clearly that work place can enable or constrain good teaching. The other factors that influence are institution building, infrastructure and facilities, equipped libraries and laboratories, good support systems and services.

## **VI. NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020: A GLANCE**

National Education Policy comes with a twin objective of Inclusion and Excellence. There is inclusion in learning and excellence in administration of education. Further it would want to minimize exclusion and marginalization. There is quite an amount of disparity and inequity within the system which begs immediate attention. These vulnerabilities can be made good of through partnership, collaborative learning, access, retention and communication of learning deliverables.

It is interesting that the new policy on education attempts to look at education from a holistic perspective. India has always been a home for education. Taxshashila and Nalanda Universities existed over two thousand years ago attracted students from all over the world is a testimony to impetus to education. Present Education policy looks to improve the Gross Enrolment ratio (GER) for school children to almost 100 percent by 2030, while the higher education target stands at 50 percent by 2050. Though these targets looks ambitious, it's possible with will and conviction to bring education into mainstream economic activity.

The First National Education Policy in 1968 came from suggestions provided by the Kothari Commission. However, in 1986, the National Education Policy was renewed with vigor

incorporating various features viz. redefining role of education, creating a national system of education, bridging gaps in education, re-organization of education and formatting the process of education. However, the present NEP 2020 brings about some sweeping changes in the system. The present education policy NEP-20 discusses on four important aspects viz. the school level education and its modernization, Higher education in India, Other related area of focus and scheme for smooth implementation and execution of NEP-20 over a period of fifteen years.

NEP -20 stands on some robust principles. If and when it's adopted, surely, it shall be a game changer for every stake holder. Below are some of the key principles and edifice on which entire NEP-20 stands to differ from previous versions and interestingly will put the ball back into a system which has for long opposed rigidity in all forms.

- Every student is different, and hence it's a necessity that each of them is being looked and nurtured differently. The system must capture unique peculiarities of all students and nurture their talents. The need of the day resides in holistic development and not merely skewed growth of children. Development must happen both academically and extracurricular wise that make students' a composite personality. The holistic education will include music, fine arts, social sciences, sports and introducing minor and major that lend credence to inclination and interest of students.
- Present system differentiates courses based on their nature of employment generation. If a particular course can fetch jobs and provide guaranteed employment, the courses have far higher value than other courses. For instance,

over three decades our constant higher education focus has been in engineering and medicine at the cost of basic science, technology, mathematics, arts and literature. This artificial separation of importance implanted into minds of young students makes them perceive things in a distorted fashion.

- Rote learning has for long dominated our system with its benefits and glaring deficiencies. Brought in as a colonial legacy, where British wanted clerks and super indents for their offices, any learning that promoted conceptual and technical learning was anathema. NEP - 20 however without discarding rote learning entirely, make room and space for improvised and committed learning. Here, students are well aware of intent behind every concept, their real time application, social benefits and individual responsibility. In this context, more projects based, curious and inquisitive learning is recommended; creating a generation of thinking engineers, doctors, lawyers and more who are self confident and would have skills to bring forth true potential at dire need.
- NEP-20 lays enormous emphasis on creative skill enhancement and importantly value of critical or lateral thinking. India is beset with huge population and depleting resources. In addition, there has been worsening weather conditions and impact of climate change is not far from reality. Such uncertain circumstances will require creative thinking. Thinking which comes from actual experience and understanding, that which comes from empathy and involvement - not found in colleges and books. Critical thinking promotes various skills. Some of them

include decision making, ability to solve problems creatively, defining and refining research skills, polishing ones creativity and stimulating curiosity.

- Alongside critical thinking and creative, there must also be accountability and ethical considerations. Even these aspects are largely covered in the form of cleanliness, upholding democratic principles, unity and integrity, adhering to constitutional principles and values.
- Conclusively, NEP-20 lays great thrust on Equity and accessibility. There is multiple entry and exit options for students, freeing them from rigid structure of extended education, unburdening parents and student alike from a relentless system.

## VII. DISCUSSION

The mandate of NEP-20 is quite revolutionary. While the skill set available and structural formats are not adequate to fully and truly recognize potential of teacher-student matrix. For instance, UGC regulations in measurement of Academic Performance Indicator (API) must undergo change. Presently the parameters which evaluate teacher accountability and measure of performance indicators are quite outdated and does not effectively measure what NEP-20 envisages. For instance, the API discusses on points that every faculty must score by attending to examination duties, being an invigilator and evaluation of answer scripts. Post COVID-19, new technologies have become a mainstay where we are looking at lesser involvement in documenting, but more on the application side of academics. Though the institutional approval and accrediting agencies are still not comfortable with the same, NEP-20 clearly envisages that we teach students overall 40 percent on Internet. Flip learning and blended learning has entered main

stream. Quizzes are conducted every week or end of a module and concurrent assessment through project and other internship activities is underway. In this context, such measures as quoted above seem archaic and need immediate attention.

Secondly, there are points for direct teaching. Conventionally teachers were expected to be teaching students in –person regular sessions. But cross university and cross border collaborations, student exchange programs, multi-verse concepts and universal accessibility enabled by internet has made direct teaching more or less a misnomer much less redundant. Thirdly there is a raging debate on how many hours an Assistant Professor, Associate or a professor spends in classrooms, the mini-max criteria being applied. NEP-20 requires faculty to be more student centric and engage them in innovative and creative ways. This requires more effort on part of the teacher. No amount of monetary incentive or waiving away certain provisions will help the cause. It's an inner motivations that faculty seem to contribute selflessly towards welfare of students. Thus these questions and many more gaps must be scrutinized and answered before NEP-20 and accountability of faculty take off in a way we expect and contribute gainfully for nation building.

#### **VIII. LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Though this study has defined and attempted to examine aspects with reference to its scope, still we cannot absolve it from limitations. The study relies on documents that accepts and eulogizes National Education Policy 2020. There are studies which could probably bring forth flip side of NEP-2020 weren't given much importance due to author(s) limitation to comprehend. Moreover, the study also suffers from lack of contrarian findings if any. Most of

the aspects are rolled out from extant literature and lacks verification through empiricist approach.

The scope for further study may be to develop and evolve a research model with setting of hypotheses. Empirical study on the above said constructs / variables will improve validity of our claims. Contextual inference of findings will add value to this research.

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