Indian National Educational Policy 2020 Fallout on Tier-II Institutions

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Abstract : National educational policy (NEP) 2020 framework impacting Tier-II institutions in India is a case of study for this communication. This article presents the status of Tier-II institutions in India and the way out as a result of the educational policy rollout. It systematically looks at NEP and states how well it can be implemented considering some basic criteria of sustainability? Reading this paper the scholar and teacher can identify what needs to be done as a major stakeholder. The simple idea of checklist, introspection, the best path, do's & don't, global perspective and strategy are used to conclude. Finally, some parallel is drawn as how other author sees this document from an implementation point of view? The author stresses the need for transformation of Tier-II as they are a major stakeholder.

Keywords : National educational policy; Tier-II; Implementation; Framework; Stakeholder

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1. Introduction

National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 is rolled out as a panacea to the Indian old inflexible and robust educational system. It is a policy document to completely revamp the educational system both administratively and operationally but the focus of this article is to look into the avenues of improvement in higher education systems only and not for the school education system. The main purpose of NEP 2020 is to increase the gross enrolment ratio (GER) from the present 27 to 50 providing access to all through holistic multidisciplinary education with multiple entry/exit options. The national testing agency (NTA) is envisaged to offer a single entry system to all the students who wish to get into a higher educational institute (HEI). The present inflexibility of the educational system is set off by the provision of an academic bank of credit offering a path to lifelong learning and re-training. The robustness of the present educational system is set to be replaced with light but tight regulations. The single major structural change; the way education is offered will change from brick and mortar concept to an aggregator approach is predicted here. It is set to dismantle the multiplicity of educational systems' authority be it constituent college, affiliated college or autonomous college. HEI is proposed to fall either into the category of research-led teaching university or teaching led research university or into an autonomous degree-granting institution which can be either a research-led or

teaching led institution. It proposes to do away with the affiliating system and ask HEI to be degree-granting institute building a brand for sustainability. Govind R (2020) proposed a contrasting view stating that NEP2020 is an ambitious visionary policy statement given the current state of affairs of the education system crying for freedom, autonomy, and revamping. Gupta, B. L., & Choubey, A. K. (2021) has stressed the need to follow the path of quality, accreditation and autonomy and multidiscipline. Menon (2020) and Dixit (2020) share fears with us that a bold document like this requires a very safe and secure hand to implement the policy. The idea of 'light but tight' regulation proposed in NEP is not in alignment with most other developed nations globally which rely on market and peer regulations to monitor the quality of education is articulated by Tholath, D. I., Ramasubramaniam, M., & Xavier, M. J. (2021), so this communication evaluates the capacity of Tier-II as a major stakeholder. Globally, education is recognized as a tool to enhance mental ability through the initiative of educationalist, NGOs and intergovernmental organizations. The global education approach seeks to undo the focus of curriculum embedded in subject knowledge and national culture with education common a social contract. Instead of this, it seeks to work on building alternative educational rationale and alternative future. The modern international education seeks to build on globalization as identified Standish, Alex (2014). Globally four vertical identified for education are vocational, conservative, liberal and progressive stream. With the adoption of NEP 2020, Indian education system is set to leave the garb of conservative to being more skill based and progressive. The tall order to be either a research university or teaching university is systematically dealt with in this article offering some checklist, introspection, the best path, do's & don't, some global perspective and strategy to deal with it giving a framework for implementation for social sustainability.

2. Higher Educational Institute Mandate

The baseline for the discussion on NEP 2020 is taken from the policy document by the Government of India (GOI), the recommendation of the vibrant Gujarat educational summit 2022 and the draft policy document National Higher Educational Qualification Framework (NHEQF). The methodology for this article is based on internal discussion, opinions, commentary, and recommendations of various committees. The discussions are reflection as a part of internal quality assessment cell (IQAC) minutes. As a brief plan for data collection & collation is made out to the Board of Governance (BOG), this communication is chalked out for wider communication. Abstraction of these data is presented in the conclusion section as a discussion. HEI in India is typically categorized into two classes:

Tier-I: Institutions of National importance, National Institutes of Technology, Central Universities, State Universities, Private Universities, Deemed-to-be-Universities, Institutions declared as Autonomous constitute tier-I. (These institutions have the freedom to design, develop and update curricula and also have complete academic autonomy.)

Tier-II: Non-autonomous technical institutions affiliated with a University, Government Colleges, Government Aided Colleges, Private/Self Financing Colleges constitute tier-II. (These institutions depend on the University for any Change in curriculum, its implementation and to examine the enrolled students for the award of degree)

These classes are clearly outlined by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) in its general manual (2019). As an indicator for a state like Gujarat, there are 412 Tier-I categories of HEI while 2539 are Tier-II HEI, refer to Fig 1. A similar figure at the National level is found as per the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) as 23:77. It means that the challenge is more tilted toward Tier-II HEI to meet the expectation of NEP2020. Moreover, it also means that Tier-II institute is transforming more numbers of students' life. So the impact of rollout of NEP 2020 on tier-II is more serious. On a long term basis for the tier-II the blessing of being affiliated will go away.
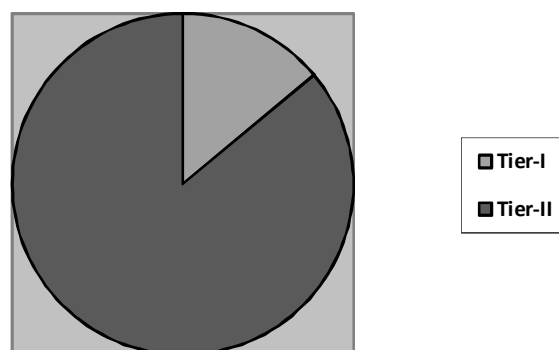

Fig 1: Typical distribution of Tier-I & Tier-II HEI distribution in a state of India

And onus to run academics on own will require higher responsibility and accountability. Government of Gujarat is first to form a focused group of honorable vice chancellors from the state and directors of self financing institute to dwell on the matter and come out with a recommendation which is partly reflected in this communication.

Tier-II is shouldering higher responsibilities based on the absolute number of students in general, but they have lower capability and capacity as the institution is operating under a no-profit no-loss regime. Higher spread and availability are the typical advantage of Tier-II HEI. Though NTA is envisaged as a central entry point to all HEI; it does not guarantee any unified admission policy for the self-financing Institute (SFI). Although the national institutional ranking framework (NIRF) attributes 25 marks for students from other states and 5 marks from other countries building higher diversity but many institute fall short to build required diversity. Saluja A. (2022) questions the silent arrival of NEP devoid of any political dialogue leaving a lot to ambiguity. So there is a need to have a simple checklist for Tier-II to identify the way forward. Interestingly UNESCO's report titled futures of education (2021) consider the educational policy as a social contract to correct the previous injustice and transform the future. By the year 2050, acquisition of knowledge needs to be part of common heritage beside ability to collectively create new knowledge and new possible future is articulated by UNESCO.

1) Checklist for Institutional development plan

This section provides a short and crisp list to make a judgment about the forward journey of HEI as per NEP2020 for a Tier-II institution. The answer using the checklist needs to emerge using Table 1 is to be either a university or an autonomous institute which can be either teaching lead or research-led. It is assumed that within a period of 10 years, the process of affiliation will completely phased out. The best way to use this checklist is to take one item from a serial number and circle the item in the column as applicable to your institute. For example: If for serial A; selection is teaching university; both an UG & PG course; then the recommendation is to be Research University. Likewise for other items abstraction of data can be made. Based on the maximum similar option available for the third column the decision could be made by the institution administrative body recommending which path to be followed.

Table 1: Checklist For National Educational Policy Rollout In India

Sr. No.	Criteria for the goal to achieve	Evidence as Indicator present	Option to be
A	Teaching/Research led university or Institute	☐ Only UG course ☐ Only PG course ☐ Both UG &PG course	☐ Teaching University ☐ Research University ☐ Research University
B	University or Autonomous institute	☐ 5 or more faculty of study ☐ 5 or fewer faculty of study	☐ University ☐ Autonomous degree-granting Institute
C	Student enrolment	☐ >60 % (>3000 students on a campus) ☐ <60% (<3000 students on a campus)	☐ Build the diversity factor ☐ Work to build brand identify/merger
D	Research, Publication and Citation	☐ Only UG course ☐ Only PG course ☐ Both UG &PG course	☐ Teaching University ☐ Research University ☐ Research University

2) Introspection

NEP2020 has provided an opportunity although forced one to every HEI to review its strength, weakness, opportunity and challenge under major refresh to build a new India. It allows journey of education system from an entitlement base to outcome or performance-based student learning. The major impetus is on imparting skills to students, so that they are useful to society and are not just degree holders. It provides an opportunity for lifelong learning through the establishment of an academic bank of credit (ABC) and catering for better ways to drop out by providing multiple exits with a degree/diploma or certificate. The education is set to meet the expectation of individuals, as it will follow the

shampoo sachet model and not one size fit all. The concept of one class one channel will further percolate the offer of one unit or module, one master teacher followed up in a hybrid model by a local teacher. The present brick and mortar model will see the incorporation of digital offerings in various forms and the only interested student will be part of the learning instances as education can be both asynchronous as well synchronous. To increase the gross enrolment ratio (GER), there is a need to have a strong financial channel to make education affordable to the challenged section of society. It is suggested that each institution should have an institute development plan as a short term goal mapping 1 to 3 years, a midterm plan ranging from 4 to 6 years and a long term plan of 7 to 10 years as articulated in the International Conference on Education vision document titled "Implementation of road map of NEP2020" for the state of Gujarat (2021) by Government of Gujarat (GOG), refer Table 2. The recommendation as mentioned in Table 2 has emerged from workshop on Implementation Roadmap of NEP 2020 conducted by Government of Gujarat.

Table 2: Summary Of Implementation Phase

Time Frame	Initiative	Checklist
Short Term (1-3 years)	1. Research-intensive University or Teaching-intensive University 2. Institutional Development Plan (IDP) 3. Integration of Vocational & Academic Education 4. Improving Research & Innovation, Promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems 5. Internationalization, Academic Bank of Credit 6. Blended Learning mode with Seamless 'Ed-tech' Integration 7. Multiple Entry and Exit System 8. Multidisciplinary programs in HEIs & Credit-based courses 9. Making academic resources available through common facilities and collaboration 10. Student Assistance and Support	YES/NO
Medium Term (4-6 years)	1. Multidisciplinary Education & Research Universities (MERUs), Multidisciplinary Universities 2. Enhancement in GER 3. Accreditation and Graded Autonomy 4. Examination Reforms 5. Excellence in faculty recruitment, promotion and capacity building	YES/NO
Long Term (7-10 years)	1. Autonomous Degree-granting College (AC) 2. De-affiliation of Colleges 3. Amendment to University Act on Governance	YES/NO

3) Best path

The idea of this communication is to provide a handholding comfort to Tier-II institutions caught in midst of uncertainty with confidence in deciding which path to be taken. The best path for education is always to prepare for the future. I see the bright light ahead as what liberalization has brought to India; the same NEP2020 is set to bring to the education system in India. It will be a regime of more affordability, skill impartment, and path correction while navigating the goal of GER 50. There will be the development of at least two verticals: skill and training followed by certification. Students will be more ambitious, connected and responsible; institutions will be more accommodative, nurturing and collaborative while parents, government & non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will be the pivot to provide financial, social and emotional comfort to students. Regulators will be governed by the philosophy of being "tight and light" while teachers will be at the forefront to bear all the burden of uncertainty and need to realign them to teaching need of the hour. I also see an exodus to the city centre. So there is a need to provide some form of assurance to remote rural setting institutes to meet the desire of students in a phased manner and collaborate with Tier-I institutions for admission as far as possible. A concept of hardship allowance is muted by Van Pinxteren, B. et al. (2021) similar to service allowance as given to armed services in India to overcome the talent diversity across the country can be thought off. Inviting foreign national students will be an icing on the cake and India can reverse the brain drain by an equivalent number of students bridging the socio-economic gap.

4) Do's & don't

As 2019-2022 is a turbulent time for all of us considering that education has taken a great blow by the corona virus (COVID19). With great difficulty lies a great opportunity! The same we have seen for the education system, as it has mustered the courage to be on the delivery side of education, engaging students with varieties of tools available. The quality of education significantly varies as uncertified and inexperienced teachers are employed in rural settings (Winkler and Gershberg, 2004). This gap is filled in NEP by having the skill and vocational courses. The teacher's difficulties were unprecedented during the corona period but their work is worth appreciating. Some simple dos and don'ts that need to be followed are identified in Table 3. These recommendations have come out of closed group consultation of internal quality assessment cell (IQAC) of our institution. It is assumed that an employable skill here refers to both soft and technical skill in a typical professional institute offering engineering course.

Table 3: Dos And Don't

Dos	Don't
Build attitude and behavior	Never relax attendance criteria
Impart technical and professional knowledge	Never relax performance criteria
Nurture employable skills	Never tolerate indiscipline and inhuman attitude

5) Global prospective

Globally the world got caught up in the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) situation as soon as NEP was announced. Humanity is witnessing unmatched volatility; all are working to find the correct answer to existence. There is uncertainty all around us for not having the appropriate assurance system. The complexity of world order from free trade to regional hegemony is taking its tall with newer conflicts. Relations are ambiguous as the difference between friend and foe is becoming difficult. It seems that Indian philosophy can only offer a panacea to the world through the route of Bhakti (devotion), Shakti (strength), Yukti (skill) and Mukti (freedom). Only wise mind can provide a soothing balm to the world better. Patil & Patil (2021) supports this view that Indian values will be able to provide all-inclusive eco-development opportunity to all. No doubt, education is a tool to create long term well being for individual, family and society.

6) Strategy

The only strategy which will work in coping with the requirement of NEP2020 is the principle of change management. This means; working to develop the request for the change among the stakeholders; doing an impact analysis for the decision made; developing a mandate for approval and rejection; followed by implementation of change, final report and do a full review. It requires a lot of capacity building, collaboration and spirit to work together. If one doesn't do this; HEI will get vanish in time for not meeting the expectation. The best strategy will be to go slow but steady for time waits for nobody. Opportunity lies in the hand of the beholder. There is a need to build better social security than ever before. Otherwise as highlighted by Chakraborty, S. K., & Krishna, T. (2022), there is a possibility to get lost in the "quotidian adversities" faced by the institutions.

3. Conclusion

This article clearly defines the Tier-I and Tier-II institutions in the Indian setting with a claim that more onus of transformation lies with the Tier-II institute, as they are a major stakeholder. No doubt, NEP2020 is a very ambitious policy statement given the current state of affairs of the education system in India. Education is in the concurrent list of both state and centre as per the constitution of India. Fresh ideas are highly needed to build a new India. There is a need to follow the path of quality, accreditation, autonomy, and multidiscipline which will come only through empowerment and not being just a degree-granting entity. A bold document like NEP requires a very safe and secure hand to implement the policy in India which is so magnificently diverse but united through a cultural legacy. The idea of 'light but tight' regulation proposed in NEP has become very popular as being the need of the hour. But it is countered by many authors that NEP is not in alignment with most other developed nations which rely on the market, peer regulations and not just monitor the quality of education. While in India education is considered more as a case of entitlement and not skill. This paper provides the checklist for future path to be followed by all the HEI and specially Tier-II institutions. It is time for introspection for all the HEI to build an institute development plan (IDP). This paper is suggestive in nature, to help identify the best path for HEI and need not be considered prescriptive in nature as implementation of policies needs lots of deliberation at various academic and executive body levels. Dos and Don'ts are identified as a measure of re-commitment while global prospective extol HEI and Tier-II institutions for the opportunity ahead of us. Finally, the strategy of change management is recommended to help the institute meet the fallout of NEP2020. Normally it is considered that setting up accreditation agencies is a key priority to uplift the educational ecosystem. The same is additionally beautifully assured through building engagement acquiring skills and getting employed through NEP2020.

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