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In Keeping With Nep 2020: Foundational Education In Himachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a landmark milestone in Indian education system. The present paper explores education at foundation stage in HP in keeping with NEP 2020. It is a matter of pleasure to observe that after a long time our education policy has been changed. Himachal Pradesh was the first state to implement NEP2020 in the year 2021, but nothing considerable and significant has been achieved so far at the Foundation stage. In Himachal Pradesh lack of clear-cut policy and implementation plan for pre-primary education and/ or ECCE as envisaged under foundation stage of NEP-2020 is a major challenge for the Government of Himachal Pradesh. Problems include: lack of education, training, proper recruitment, teaching quality, minimum qualification for teachers in HP for being eligible for an appointment in the Preprimary classes. NEP 2020 works to build proficient teachers for better networking.

So, it was thought worthwhile to study the challenges and problems for implementation of the same at foundation stage in the light of NEP-2020 and to put forth some concrete suggestions to help planners, administrators and policy makers to implement these in letter and spirit for the smooth implementation of NEP-2020 with special reference to Foundation Stage in Himachal Pradesh.

KEY WORDS: NEP 2020, ECCE, Himachal Pradesh, Pre-Primary.

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the Indian government implemented a historic reform. The introduction of NEP 2020, the much-needed and expected reform to the Indian education system.

The 34-year-old National Policy on Education, which was drafted in 1986, has been replaced, and the new NEP certainly supports the nation's vision of the "New India".

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions a transformative education system that prioritizes foundational learning. Himachal Pradesh, a state committed to improving education, has been actively aligning its foundation education with the NEP's recommendations.

Foundational stage of education students will spend 5 years in strengthening their foundation. The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 has made an important change in India's schooling system. It has filled a gap that has been there for 74 years, by including formal education for young children aged 3 to 8 - a critical age range for brain growth. Scientific studies show that 3 to 8 years old is a key time for kids to learn and grow their minds. By focusing on this age group, the new policy aims to prepare kids better for their future education and overall development. This key change is a big step for India's education system.

The NEP has made it apparent that it intends to promote Foundational learning. Successful implementation of these long pending interventions will lead to qualitative improvement in foundational literacy and numeracy among early-grade learners. After then, it will turn out to be one of the biggest factors influencing education in schools generally and in the early grades specifically.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Himachal Pradesh was the first state to implement NEP-2020 in the year 2021, but nothing considerable and significant has been achieved so far at the foundational stage. So, it was thought worthwhile to study the challenges and problems for implementation of the same at foundation stage. In Himachal Pradesh, lack of clear-cut policy and implementation plan for pre-primary education and/ or ECCE as envisaged under foundation stage of NEP-2020 is a major challenge for the Government of Himachal Pradesh. Problems include: lack of education, training, proper recruitment, teaching quality, minimum qualification for teachers in HP for being eligible for an appointment in the Preprimary classes. NEP 2020 works to build proficient teachers for better networking.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the status of education at foundation stage in the state of Himachal Pradesh.
- To study the challenges at Foundational stage in HP.

Following is the main point:

- **Universal Access** : Universal access to quality Foundational Education with special focus on socio-economically disadvantaged districts in HP is very important. Anganwadi centers should be reinforced with excellent facilities, playthings, and teachers and staff with the necessary training to be completely integrated into school buildings, and for parents and teachers of Anganwadi students to take part in

educational initiatives. Establishing an Institutional Basis for the Preparatory Course All children must attend Balalaika (i.e., class 1) before the age of five. The class is taught by an EECE qualified teacher.

- **Mid-day meal program:** The mid day meal program will be expanded to include elementary school preparatory programs. All Anganwadi and elementary school pupils will have access to health examinations and growth tracking. Early literacy and numeracy as well as the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills are the main goals of the play-based learning program that NCERT is creating.
- **lack of manpower (teachers) :** If there are teachers for every classes run in primary, then the level of education will be very good. New framed curriculum is not run by the two teachers presently in the Govt Primary school. The first five Foundational classes can be run well only if there is a separate teacher for each class and every child should be given personal attention.
- **PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCURE:** The quality of education depends upon good infrastructure available in school. School infrastructure is important because it make teaching learning process successful, improves students' performance and it decreases the number of students who dropout. Infrastructure is an integral component of the learning and teaching context. In the foundational stage, the physical infrastructure should be attractive to the children so that they feel comfortable in staying there.

Curriculum Transaction: Since 2018, pre-primary education was going on in the schools of Himachal, but for the last 5 years, it was going on without curriculum. Whatever content was delivered for the next 5 years from 2018, it was being prepared by samagra siksha. There was no any kind of well-organized curriculum for pre primary education in HP. On the direction of Director Elementary, NCERT was asked to make a well-organized curriculum for HP 2020, that's why SCERT is now preparing a new curriculum according to the New Education Policy with the contribution of Samagra siksha , which will be implemented from 2024.

EDUCATIONAL MEASURES

The present paper has very significant educational implications.

The findings of this study to improve the quality of foundational education by first acknowledging the need and importance of Early Childhood Education. Only once we understand its importance and attach certain value to it, and making it beneficial and a must for each and every child. Per -primary Education for majority of the parents means reading, writing and competing at an early age. They don't understand that early education care is about developing life skills. It is socio- emotional development which takes place first, which is not understood by many.

The following suggestions are as follows: A State- wide campaign needs to be started about the importance of foundational education.

Focus first on children's safety, health and happiness.

Parent education programme on child care practices, healthy diet, early education needs to be taken up. Parents need to be involved in certain school and home activities.

CONCLUSION

As much as researcher looked, found that the main challenge in HP at foundation stages lack of manpower (teachers). Till now it is being seen that the challenge is only manpower for which the government is being repeatedly asked but no action has been taken yet. Because curriculum is recently published by SCERT Solan for foundational stage so now we cannot say that no clear-cut curriculum is available Curriculum mapped according to new education policy. If we look at the school, we will find that the eighth classes presently in primary school is being run by two teachers, which is not a good thing at all for a quality education. If there are teachers for eight classes run in primary, then the level of education will be very good. New framed curriculum is not run by the two teachers presently in the Govt Primary school.

In other words, we can say that if this policy implemented properly then the future of student of HP will be changed extremely.

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