

Media Coverage

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People Matters	5 Aug 2020	Online	https://www.peoplesmatters.in/article/executive-education/impact-of-new-education-policy-on-employability-26554	Impact Of New Education Policy On Employability



Yet for a long time now the Indian education system was being questioned for its lack of effectiveness. Business leaders struggled to find job-ready talent and job-seekers grappled to find a job where their skills match the demand. But now the future looks promising with a new revised policy in process that aims to focus on the holistic development of the emerging workforce- students.

On Wednesday, July 29th, the Indian government introduced the new education policy which has created multiple debates across the country about the future of the education system in India. This new policy has proposed significant changes in school and higher education.

The National Education Policy, 2020 is meant to provide an overarching vision and comprehensive framework for both school and higher education across the country. Till now, It is only a policy, not a law; implementation of its proposals depends on further regulations by both states and the center as education is a concurrent subject. But if implemented effectively, the policy can help reshape the future of the workforce and help the emerging job seekers become more job-ready.

Among the multiple elements of the policy, some are directly linked to employability. There is no doubt that with a better education system the chances of employment

becomes better. But how will the New Education Policy help bridge the job readiness gap? Let's explore.

Job readiness: An unsolved challenge

Various surveys have suggested that most of the passing graduates don't feel ready for their first job and they always remain in the dilemma of staying or leaving the job. Freshers are not fully prepared for their working life and lack of proper education is one of the main reasons. Industry-Academia gap is probably the most discussed thing by employers and job seekers.

With the new policy coming in picture, the school and college education will not only be seen as a facilitator of degree but it will be treated as a medium to build personality and it'll help the students in their holistic professional growth.

When asked how this policy will impact employability in the longer run, RP Yadav, Chairman & Managing Director, Genius Consultants, said, "This policy will be very lucrative, students will be awarded certificates for the completion of every academic year, during graduation. This will encourage them to hone their skills with more confidence, with the backing of a degree, even if they need to leave mid-way due to some issue. Other points like making colleges autonomous, a single governing authority for colleges, inviting top global universities, multi exit and entry for courses will surely favor our student community. All in all, the new policy seems to focus more on skill development over points like just building a good "report card" and hence, will lead to the creation of a more educated and employable Indian population."

"With the NEP 2020, the industry will witness a shift from summative assessment to regular and formative assessment, which is more competency-based that promotes learning and development, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, logical thinking and clarity," said Mrityunjay R Narayanan, CFI President.

Sumesh Nair, Co-founder of Board Infinity feels that these measures will create a potential workforce in the future. He said, "50% gross enrollment target in higher education and multi disciplinary education are progressive measures towards creating a high potential workforce. Also, making more institutions go autonomous gives the flexibility to decide the curriculum and pedagogy. If we are able to combine this with skill-based education focusing on what the contemporary needs of the industry are, we will be able to create world-class talent in India in pure absolute numbers because of our demographics".

NEP empowers the future workforce with more flexibility to choose their courses. As the policy says, "There will be no hard separation among 'curricular', 'extracurricular', or 'co-curricular', among 'arts', 'humanities', and 'sciences', or between 'vocational' or 'academic' streams." Further to close the gap in achievement of learning outcomes, classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education. In addition to all of this NEP will also allow students to accumulate & retain credits which will enable them to continue their learning process from where they had left, in case they discontinue for some reason.

"One of the key aspects that the policy has addressed is the implementation of the Choice Based Credit System- a multi-disciplinary approach which will provide flexibility to students to choose between programs of choice. It is a huge step towards improving the employability of the students in the future," says Neeti Sharma, Senior Vice President, TeamLease Services.

The flexibility and autonomy now presented to the future workforce will enable them to explore a variety of options and build more relevant and in-demand skills rather than following traditional career paths. However, this emerging workforce will need mentorship, coaching and guidance to ensure that the given flexibility doesn't lead them to get more lost than before. If implemented effectively, a flexible learning ecosystem will create a more self-driven workforce.

A focus on essential subjects, skills, and capacities relevant for all

In recent times the need for behavioral competencies like resilience, agility, innovation and adaptability in the workforce has increased. From hiring to performance reviews, these skills are always prioritized. The traditional education system lacked the focus on building such competencies but the new policy has increased the scope of learning beyond subject-matters and made learning these skills essential.

In addition to proficiency in languages, these skills include scientific temper and evidence-based thinking; creativity and innovativeness; sense of aesthetics and art; oral and written communication; health and nutrition; physical education, fitness, wellness, and sports; collaboration and teamwork; and problem-solving and logical reasoning, among others.

Additionally, these essential skills also include vocational exposure and skills; digital literacy, coding, and computational thinking. The future workforce shall now be more digital-ready. They already had the advantage of being in the digital era, and now with skills like coding becoming essential to learn, they will further have the edge when it comes to being future-ready.

But how will these skills be taught and what teaching methods should be used by all? Will uniformity of learning methodology be an important element to ensure that each and every student/emerging job seeker gets equal exposure.