

Study of Different Policies, Provisions and Amendments for Disadvantages Groups in the Lens of NEP 2020

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Abstract: *This paper presents about the various government policies related to school education to promote equity, equality, and quality among the students of various disadvantages groups in society. It also reflects the various evidences from a policy perspective on how to support the students, parents and society belongs to Socio - Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) both in educations particularly in school education. The paper focused on the students belongs to minorities, tribal children, OBCs, girls, and transgender to increase their enrollments and other factors to enhance the quality aspects of their education to develop inclusive society.*

Keywords: National Education Policy (1986 POA 1992, 2020), Socio - Economically Disadvantaged Groups, Society, Inclusion, Equity, CWSN etc.

1. Introduction

Education can counteract systematic societal disparities by implementing policy initiatives to create inclusive societies. The objective of social inclusion and equitable education has always been a priority in India. Since independence, several policy efforts have been made in India to consider the educational needs of various socio - economic and cultural communities and social discrimination and equality issues, lagging behind other societies based on their social, economic, linguistic, or gender. Over the past decades, various programmes, policies, and schemes have been launched by the government for the educational development of marginalized sections such as National Education Policy 2020, National Curriculum Framework for foundational stage 2022, National Curriculum Framework for Secondary Education 2023, National Credit Framework etc. Various milestone programmes were initiatives during last three decade in line of National Policy of Education, 1986 (PoA 1992). These programmes were followed at the national and state level and the achievements were assessed at global level. At the Primary and Elementary level, some of such programmes were District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Shiksha Karmi Yojana (SKY), Bihar Education Project (BEP), Lok Jumbish (LJ), Non - formal Education Programme (NFEP), Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS), Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), etc., which had their advantages and specific objectives for Socio - Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs). Such war foot programmes were planned and executed National wide in line of Government polices and financed by the government of India as per their budget allocation.

2. Review of Related Literature

To understand the base or foundation of present study the comprehensive review of existing literature is required. The present portion of paper synthesizes key findings, theories and debates relevant to provisions of educational polices.

P. S. Aithal and S. Aithal (2020) discussed the various policies announced in the Higher education system and compare them with the currently adopted system as per the NEP 2020. The study also reflects the various innovations and predicted implications of NEP 2020 on the higher education system along with its merits are discussed. Besides this research also gave some suggestions for its effective implantation toward achieving its objectives.

Kumar, P. et. al (2022) found that Empowerment of the Socially Disadvantaged Groups viz., the Scheduled Castes (SCs), the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and the Minorities continues to be on the priority list of country's developmental agenda as they still lag behind the rest of the society due to their social and economic backwardness. Their share in the country's total population is quite substantial as SCs account for 179.7 million, representing 17.5 percent and Minorities being 188.9 million, representing 18.4 per cent in 2001. There was little movement between classes. Developments in the late twentieth and twenty - first centuries have created massive change in the economy and workplace. Changes in education gave young people the opportunity to choose a career rather than slot into class expectations.

A report based on brainstorming consultation workshop on "Empowering Deprived through Education NEP - 2020: Insights and Inputs" focused on the facts that there should be an increase in accessibility to SEDGs in terms of more educational opportunities towards quality education. For provide financial assistance to these students' national scholarship portal should be developed in welfare of children belong to SEDGs.

Report of the expert committee on the issues relating to Transgender persons (2014), M/o Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India suggested promoting the awareness of inherent equality and discouraging the discrimination in schools based on sex such as face bullying, harassment, and physical and sexual violence.

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The depth and breadth of present research was guided the various above reviews of literature, Key theories, policies, outcome of provision under various policies and findings reveal for the educational welfare of children belong to SEDGs by integrating these findings the present study was embodied and offer valuable contribution in the education in respect of the children belong to SEDGs.

Research Objective

To enlist the various provisions in the policies for the students of Socio - Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) in light of NEP 2020 for empowering in school education and others.

Rational of the Study

After the implementation of the RTE Act 2009, education is the fundamental right of every child, irrespective of their social and economic status. Though after independence three national education policies such as 1968, 1986 (PoA 1992), and 2020, and most of the commissions constituted in the field of education forced for the accessibility of education to all. NEP 2020 reflects various strategies for empowering an equitable, accessible education system for the inclusion of socially, culturally, and economically backward students.

3. Methodology

The present paper is an attempt of explore the various provisions in various National Education Policy and other provisions under various schemes, acts. For the purpose the Meta analysis method adopted to conduct present study. The qualitative analysis was done to explore.

Objectives

- To enlist the provisions under various policy /act/commissions etc. in light of NEP 2020 for empowering SEDGs in school education.
- To find the recommendations and strategies under NEP 2020 for empowering the SEDGs for school education.

4. Analysis and Enlisting

For equality and equity of the students belong to SEDGs:

- Children in India should get equal opportunities to learn and excel, irrespective of their birth circumstances or background as per article 45, RTE Act 2009, Provisions under NEP 2020.
- The NEP 2020, NCF (Foundational stages) 2022, NCF SE 2023 and National credit framework focused to address the gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes across social categories in school education, especially for all socio - economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), including gender, socio - cultural identities, geographical origins, disabilities, and socioeconomic conditions.

Provision for Inclusion of SC/ST/ Female/ Transgender/ OBCs/ Special children in various policies:

- SEDGs also encompass female and transgender communities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, minorities, students from rural areas, small towns, and aspiration districts, as well as those with disabilities and in vulnerable situations as per RPWD act 2016,

Right to equality, NEP 2020 and various National Curriculum Framework.

- Various factors such as limited access to quality schools, poverty, social norms, customs, and language barriers that adversely impact enrollment and retention rates among Scheduled Castes are identified for improvement in enrollment and retention in Right to Education act 2009, National Education Policies 1968, 1986 (PoA 1992), 2020, and in all National curriculum frameworks applicable.
- The importance of providing special focus on welfare schemes in educational concern to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) falls in non creamy layer, who are identified based on historical social and educational backwardness enlisted in various acts, framework and before the Law.
- The educational provisions in various national educational policies/commissions/ relevant act focused in educational welfare of the children belong to tribal communities, children from Scheduled Tribes, attributing their disadvantages to historical and geographical factors are also addressed.
- NEP 2020 focused various schemes related to SEDGs students such as Minority Scholarship, SC, ST Scholarship and Backward class scholarship etc. so that the hurdles may be removed in the path of educational enrichment to such learners.
- Programmatic interventions aim to uplift tribal children are required to be focused and specific for the purpose to fulfill the need for special mechanisms to ensure that the target group may receive the full benefits of these interventions must be emphasized. The appropriate Government must be catered the war foot programmes to achieve such objectives.
- The policy recognizes the significance of interventions to promote education among children from all minority communities, with particular emphasis on those communities that face educational underrepresentation.
- The policy suggests that under the Ministry of Education (GoI), State Governments should promote the establishment of National Cadet Corps (NCC) wings in secondary and higher secondary schools, including those in tribal - dominated areas. This initiative aims to tap into the natural talents and unique potential of students, providing them opportunities to inspire for bright and successful career their future life.

Provisions at the Foundational Stage:

- The NEP 2020 underscores the relevance of addressing critical issues and implementing recommendations related to early childhood care and education (ECCE), foundational literacy and numeracy, access, enrollment, and attendance, with a specific focus on underrepresented and disadvantaged groups (SEDGs) in the path of equality and equity in the school education.
- Government concerned may implement various welfare scholarships in line to identify the need and benefits for future prospects to the children belong to SEDGs groups so that burden may be minimized to the family of children. Various notorious programme may also be enriched by the way of keeping care of health highlights the success of existing policies such as targeted

scholarships and conditional cash transfers, emphasizing the need to strengthen these initiatives nationwide.

- Suggestions are made for considering research to identify effective measures tailored to specific SEDGs e. g. providing bicycles and organizing walking groups have proven effective in increasing female student participation, particularly for safety reasons.
- The importance of tailored interventions like one - on - one teachers, peer tutoring, open schooling, appropriate infrastructure, and technology to ensure accessibility, especially for children with disabilities must be focused. It also focused notes that schools offering quality ECCE yield significant benefits for economically disadvantaged families as per NCF guidelines.
- The effectiveness of counselors and well - trained social workers in rural areas, emphasizing their role in connecting with students, parents, communities and teachers to enhance attendance and learning outcomes, is also pointed out. The provision for training must be emphasized for such stakeholders in line of NEP 2020.

Creating Special Education Zones (SEZs):

The National Education Policy 2020 also recommends about development of SEZs considering geographical areas which may provide the quality and quantitative education in higher concentrations of socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs). There are identified aspirant districts requiring special interventions for educational development. To address this, the recommendation is to designate regions with significant populations of educationally - disadvantaged SEDGs as Special Education Zones (SEZs). This involves implementing schemes and policies with additional concerted efforts to bring about substantial changes in their educational landscape in compliance of provision under NEP 2020, UGC regulations etc.

Strengthen JNVs, KGBVs, and KVs in respect to Girls child:

- The policy concerned has also outlined plans to build free boarding facilities, matching the standards of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, in locations where students may have to travel from far distances, especially for those from socio - economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The schools are being upgraded to PM Shree schools with the aim to enhance the facilities in relation to enrollment, retention etc. in such schools as per recommendation by MoE, GoI.
- It aims to strengthen and expand Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) to increase the participation of girls belongs to rural area. The construction of additional Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas is also proposed, particularly in aspirational districts, Special Education Zones, and other disadvantaged areas, to enhance high - quality educational opportunities.
- The National Education Policy also advocates for the addition of pre - school sections (Three years before class I) providing the educational concern for early childhood care and education in central funded schools i. e. PM Shree Kendriya Vidyalayas, NVs etc. and other primary schools nationwide, with a focus on quality education in various disadvantaged areas.

Provision for financial assistance to SEDGs groups:

- The establishment of 'Gender - Inclusion Fund' to enhance the nation's capacity for providing equitable quality education for all girls and third gender students is proposed, which will be directly in support to such groups.
- The fund created will support the states in implementing central government priorities for assisting female and transgender/ third gender children in accessing to education in welfare of SEDGs.
- The overarching goal of the policy is to eliminate any remaining disparities in access to education, including vocational education, for children of any gender or socio - economically disadvantaged group which is ultimately acknowledged by national policies and acts applicable in India.
- The National Education policy focused special attention within socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs) to address disparities in the educational development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. To enhance participation in school education, the policy outlines measures such as establishing special hostels in dedicated regions, implementing bridge courses, and providing financial assistance through fee waivers and scholarships. These efforts are particularly aimed at talented and meritorious students from all SEDGs, with a larger focus on the secondary stage of education, intending to facilitate their entry into higher education.
- NEP 2020 also proposed the coordination and announcement of all scholarships, opportunities, and schemes for students from socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs) through a single agency and website. This aims to ensure that students are well - informed and can easily apply through a simplified 'single window system, ' based on their eligibility.

Providing a Safe, Secure, and Conducive Environment in Educational institutions to the students of SEDGs:

- NEP 2020 highlights the importance on implementing various issues in policies and measures for socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs) in the education system in school culture.
- Various policies such as NEP 2020, NCF SE 2023 etc. advocate for sensitizing all participants, including teachers, principals, administrators, counselors, and students to fulfill the need of each and every student, promoting the principles of inclusion and equity, and respecting the dignity and privacy of all individuals.
- This cultural shift is being seen as essential in empowering the students to become responsible individuals in society, fostering a societal transformation. To achieve these provisions under NEP 2020 to make standard of education at global level by the way of inculcating 21st century skill is required. The School curriculum framework also recommended such curriculum for future citizen.
- The National education policy along with the curriculum framework for school education outline the integration of a new school culture to achieve the futuristic student in comparison to globe; that involves sensitizing students through the efforts of teachers, trained social workers, and counselors. This shift accompanied by changes in the school curriculum to promote inclusivity, global citizen.

- The curriculum framework 2023 incorporated in education to develop the human values such as respect, empathy, tolerance, human rights, gender equality, non-violence, global citizenship, inclusion, equity etc.
- The develop curriculum on the guideline of National curriculum framework at school level initiated in development of detailed knowledge about various cultures, religions, languages, and gender identities to foster awareness and respect for diversity among the students. The present applicable curriculum framework intended to eliminate biases and stereotypes in the school curriculum, replacing them with relevant material /Chapters /Values /Skills of 21st century and relatable to all communities.

Provisions to access the learning material (Such as e - Learning platforms) to SEDGs and others:

- Various platform related to e - learning with the purpose to provide knowledge/ learning material to all stakeholders for example DIKSHA, SWAYAM, and SWAYAMPURABHA, E Pathshala, Virtual labs etc. ensuring equal access to quality education and hands - on experiment - based learning experiences for all and specifically to socially and economically disadvantaged group (SEDG) students.
- Preloaded digital devices such as tablets, mobile phones etc. are being provided under various welfare schemes to the student of SEDGs for learning opportunities in the benefit.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

In examining the various policies, provisions related to support SEDGs through the implementing of national education policy 2020, it evident that represent a transformative shift in India to develop the student in line of globe. The policy intends to bring social justice, equality, inclusion, and equity to SEDGs by bridging the gaps in accessing quality education, increasing participation, and providing equal opportunities to learn and access. It lays special focus on minorities, tribal children, OBCs, girls, and third gender to increase their enrollments retention, completion of education.

However, NEP 2020 and other National wide educational policies lay solid foundation for supporting disadvantages group / minority group; subject to implementation of provision. Although, challenges of various resources such as resource allocation, infrastructural development, monitoring, evaluation etc. are to be qualitative addressed to ensure in achieving the goals. The success of policies will depend on the active participation of various educational participation communities and stakeholders as a collaborative approach the bridge existing gap and achieving the policies vision to access the quality education to all.

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