

Role of ICT in increasing the outreach of Indian Higher Education System: Draft National Education Policy 2019

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Abstract— The vision of India’s new education system has accordingly been moulded to ensure that it traces the life of each citizen, consistent with their ability to contribute to many growing essentials of the nation at one side, and towards creating a just and equitable society on the other. The draft new education policy suggested the revision and restructuring of all aspects of the education structure, its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the ambitious goals of 21st century education, while continuing legacy of India’s traditions and value systems. The five main points in which the draft policy has been drafted are Access, Equality, Affordability, Quality and Accountability. To fulfil this ambitious plan and to satisfy the demand of future needs, Information Communication Technology (ICT) plays a very crucial role to rebuild a new education system. Here we are representing some salient features with reference to *Draft National Education Policy 2019* that narrates importance of ICT and challenges to inculcate in present education system.

Keywords—Higher Education, ICT, ODL

I. INTRODUCTION

A high level committee under the Chairmanship of eminent scientist Padma Vibhushan, Dr. K Kasturirangan former Chairman of ISRO and renowned academician of the county, was constituted in the year-2017 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) in order to examine and suggest the New National Education Policy. Accordingly, the draft ‘*National Education Policy (NEP) 2019*’ was submitted to Minister of MHRD, GoI on 15th December, 2018. The Draft Policy is crafted on the guiding goals of Access,

Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability. It was released on 31st May, 2019 for getting inputs from various stakeholders and public. The draft policy consists of 22 chapters and more than 450 pages and has successfully covered the finest detailed and recommended planning at micro level to bring changes in the Higher Education system. We will be discussing in detail regarding the role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in reconstituting, revamping and re-energizing the Indian Higher Education system by addressing on the following aspects discussed in the draft policy:

1. ICT for reconstitution of Higher Education
2. ICT for increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)
3. Technological Challenges for ICT in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

The policy describe that India will be the youngest country with it median age of 29 by 2020. This changing dynamics of population requires a new /novel approach with respect of quality education, innovation and research and accordingly the HE in India must at the earliest be restructured (pg 202 of draft National Education Policy 2019). ICT plays a pivotal role to reconstitute revamp and re-energies the HEIs in India which has been detailed in the draft policy.

The present Higher Education has been considered as Mono-disciplinary approach in the draft policy and recommended for a Multidisciplinary approach in Higher education. Single skill and discipline jobs are likely to become mechanized over the time and

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this will be replaced by machines and thus the future Human Resource should have multiple skills which can only be possible by adopting multidisciplinary approaches in Higher Education.

This approach has also been envisioned to make a considerable transformation in Industrial revolution. The committee has recommended a very big step in revamping the HE, which requires changes quality and quantity of present Human Resources, Infrastructure etc. This shift can be simplified by the effective use of ICT in education system, which the Government has realized and has started emphasizing on it. The change from Mono-disciplinary to Multi Disciplinary can be achieved by Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), using Virtual Labs, Learning Management System (LMS) for beyond class room reaching, by the means of virtually transferring expertise and technologies to the geographically disadvantaged areas.

The policy discusses about the present Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education which is 25.8% and the government plans to increase it by 30% in 2022 and further has an ambitious target to increase it to 50% by 2035 (Chapter 9 Pg 201 of draft National Education Policy 2019). In order to mitigate, the factors affecting GER in HE showed be known which are:

1. Fragmentation of the Higher Education System
2. Lack of access
3. Lack of teacher and institutional autonomy
4. Insufficient research infrastructure.

Presently India has around 900 universities out of which approximately 343 are Private. This raises the difficulty to cater the large population of India to bring them in to Higher Education system. Also the access and affordability for the students to pursue their Higher Studies in India is limited. The question then is how the Government plans to increase GER in such a situation in a very short time. This can only be done through innovation and expansion of Open Distance Learning and Online Education Learning while ensuring quality. The effective quality ODL and Online Education are majorly depended on ICT by ensuring good

Learning Management System is offered to the student, the online repositories for the learners are increase and also increasing research data repository.

The policy also emphasizes in the importance of Technology in Education and has dedicated an entire chapter (Chapter 19 pg 339 of draft National Education Policy 2019). It majorly focuses on effective use ICT in education in the following manner:

1. Teacher preparation and Continuous Profession Development (CPD)
2. Classroom process of Learning, Teaching and Evaluation
3. Access to education to disadvantage groups including differently able, girls, women, student residing in remote areas.
4. Planning and management of entire education system with an administrative purpose.

We need to understand that the technology trend is advancing and it is essential acknowledge key technology trends in order to identify the way in which education system can leverage, in emerging technologies as well and therefore considerable investment in basic infrastructure like electricity, hardware and connectivity will be the future need of the hour.

Thus the five fundamentals on which the draft National Education Policy 2019 has evolved i.e. Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability & Accountability can be majorly be achieved through effective use of ICT in Education.

REFERENCE

Draft National Educational Policy 2019
<https://innovate.mygov.in/new-education-policy-2019/>