



## **THE NEED OF REVISING THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY WITH THE CHANGING SOCIAL NORMS**

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### **Abstract**

*Education policy is a formal document that lists the sets the goals or the targets to be achieved by the educational system within a set time frame. The educational policy is a reflection of what the society aims to achieve in terms of its social, economic and political dimensions. With day to day changes in the social system, it becomes all the more important to revise the educational policy as per the current situation and norms. In this regards, the paper highlights the need of the policy revision with the changing social norms in the society.*

*Keywords: Social Norms, Educational Policy*



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### **1. Introduction**

Policy is defined as a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual. Webster's dictionary defines it as a definite course or method of action selected (by government, institution, group or individual) from among alternatives and in the light of given conditions to guide and, usually, to determine present and future decisions.

The education policy is the reflection of the social targets that the society aims to achieve. Education policy is the principles and government policy-making in the educational sphere as well as the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of education systems.

There is an intricate relationship between the education and the society. Where on one hand, society and its ideals impact the educational goals and procedures; on the other hand, education paves way for the betterment of the society. The social ideals and norms act as the directing principles for the educational planning process.

Over the last decade, many developing countries have embarked on large education reforms aimed at rapidly expanding the supply of education, achieving equity in the provision of education, and significantly improving the quality of education. Changes in the world

economy, the general dissatisfaction with the state of education in the 1980s, and findings emerging from academic research on economic growth, returns to education, and user fees, among many other phenomena, have delivered much of the impetus for education reforms (UNESCO, 2011)

## **2. Factors Influencing the Policy Formulation**

The educational policy is the formal document highlighting the goals (both long term and short term) that the education system in the society needs to achieve. It acts as a reflection of the social norms that the society cares to adopt. The education policy highlights the initiatives that need to be taken for the improvisation of the education system within the pre defined time range. Based on the targets achieved, if needed, the educational policy is revised from time to time.

Education policy is high on the agenda of governments across the world. Global pressures focus increasing attention on the outcomes of education policy and on their implications for economic prosperity and social citizenship.

According to Pressman and Wildavsky (1973: 23) in their study on minority job creation policy, policy implementation is the process of interactions between the setting of goals and the actions geared to achieving them. Proper implementation requires government officials to translate broad agreements into specific decisions. (Chompucot, 2011).

The implementation of the educational policy is affected by several factors viz. the economic factors, the political factors, the social factors etc. These factors have both direct and indirect repercussions on the effectiveness of the policy. Some of these factors are discussed below:

- *Social factors*: The social factors influencing the education policy include the population size of the country, the level of education of the citizens, social changes occurring and their impact upon the society, the gender differences that prevail, the castes and related factors, the culture of the society and the cultural lag, if exists, the level of social mobility that the society permits etc.
- *Political Factors*: The political factors include the ideals that the ruling party in the democracy has. The political aims and targets have a significant impact on the aims that the educational policy targets for.
- *Economic Factors*: The economic factors include the economic status of the population of the country, the average income of the citizen, the per capita income of the people, the classes the population is divided into etc.

All these factors tend to have a significant impact on the educational policy formulation ultimately reflecting the norms that the society has and the challenges that it is ready to meet.

### **3. Revising the Educational Policy**

Though a policy may be implemented for a particular time achieving the intended purpose, it may prove necessary to amend or revise a policy keeping in mind the dynamic nature of the society the policy is catering to. The dynamic nature of the society endeavours to bring about a lot of changes in the structure and the thinking of the society with each of the passing days. Such changes are the outcomes of the social processes such as socialization and social mobility. Further the social changes that come across including westernization, globalization pave way for the need for the policy revisions. All such changes result from the improvised communication networks that are now supported by the latest technology around the world.

The revision in the policy is mandatory in light of the changing social norms that change with the social changes in the society. The word 'norm' has several meanings. A common meaning is that a norm is merely a statistical regularity: one notices that many people wear white in order to stay cool on a hot day. Thus a norm is a social construct. It exists as a collectively shared belief about what others do (what is typical) and what is expected of what others do within the group (what is appropriate). (Heise & Manji, 2016).

Social norms are generally maintained by social approval and/or disapproval. Social norms interventions focus on peer influences, which have a greater impact on individual behavior than biological, personality, familial, religious, cultural and other influences (Berkowitz & Perkins, 1986a; Borsari & Carey, 2001; Kandel, 1985, and Perkins, 2002).

### **4. The Need for Revision of Educational Policy in India**

The National Policy on Education was framed in 1986 and modified in 1992. Since then several changes have taken place that calls for a revision of the Policy. The Government of India needs to bring out a National Education Policy to meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regards to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry (MHRD, 2014)

According to the National Policy on Education-1968, based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission Report (1964-66), the government of India had formulated certain principles to promote the development of education in the country. The National Policy of 1968 marked a significant step in the history of education in post Independence India. It

aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration. It laid stress on the need for a radical reconstruction of the education system, to improve its quality at all stages, and gave much greater attention to science and technology, the cultivation of moral values and a closer relation between education and the life of the people. (NCERT, 1986)

Since the formulation of the National Policy on Education, 1986/92, significant changes have taken place in India and the world at large. India's political, social and economic development is passing through a phase which necessitates a robust and forward looking education system ( MHRD, 2016). In the last twenty years, the educational scenario has seen major changes and new concepts such as rights-based approach to elementary education, student entitlement, shift in emphasis from literacy and basic education to secondary, higher, technical and professional education, the endeavour to extend universalization to secondary education, reshape the education scenario. Recent developments include a new impetus to skill development through vocational education in the context of the emergence of new technologies in a rapidly expanding economy in a globalised environment, need for innovative ways of student financing, addressing challenges of globalization and liberalization, recognition of multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary nature of learning and knowledge, efficient use of public resources and encouraging ways of enhancing private investment and funding.(NUEPA, 2014).

There is now recognition that there are several imbalances due to social, gender and regional disparities, which can be remedied through appropriate interventions and a focused strategy. Sustainable development of a nation can be realized only if all sections of the society have equal opportunities and hence the need for a clarion call for multi-pronged, inclusive measures such as provision of educational amenities, student incentives and financing, remedial coaching, special facilities for different disabilities, etc. (NUEPA, 2014).

## **5. Conclusion**

The educational policy needs to be revised in light of the changing social norms that need to be adhered to bring about effective interventions. these social norms highlight the current state of the society and its thinking. The educational policy must cater to these social norms and bring about the changes in them, if found necessary for the development of an egalitarian society.

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