

NEED OF FLEXIBLE ACADEMIC PROGRAM IN INDIA

India, which has been spreading the light of its knowledge and spirituality across the globe for centuries, has been called the world *GURU*. All the civilizations were seen walking on the path shown by us of education. In the early period, education was mainly given by Brahmin families in India. During the time of Mughals, the education system was under elitist ideology. The British rule promoted a modern state, economy and modern education system.

After independence of India in 1947, the higher educational and technical institutions like IIMs and IITs in the country for better education were envisaged. Many NITs and IIITs were also established for technical and IT education in the country. There were many reforms and policies were implemented but there was utter need to relook our education system in the current environment and technological advancements. Education being in the concurrent list, both state and central government are responsible for improving the education in the country.

The first education policy came in 1968. It was based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964–1966). In this, education was declared a subject of national importance. Aimed at better training and qualification of teachers with compulsory education for children up to the age of 14 years. The teaching of Sanskrit language was encouraged as an essential part of culture and heritage. A target of 6 percent of the budget has been set for expenditure on education. Three language formula was implemented at the secondary level.

The objective of National education policy 1986 was to lay special emphasis on equality of educational opportunity, especially for Indian women, scheduled tribes and scheduled caste communities. Expansion of open university system was started with Indira Gandhi National Open University. A call was given to build a rural university model based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. Its objective was to promote economic and social development at the grassroots level in the rural India.

One of the main objectives of the amendment, which was done in 1992, in the National policy on education 1986, was to organize a common entrance examination at the national level for admission to professional and technical programs in the country. National level Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) and All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE) and State Level Engineering Entrance Examination (SLEE) have been prescribed for admission to engineering and architecture programs. It offered a lot of convenience.

New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which came after several years, has provided the flexibility in education system and employable education with help of skill development courses. The on-line education with multi-entry and multi-exit options is possible in new information technology. Skill development and vocational training will be promoted to increase the employability at various levels in the education system. Creating a single

research fund for all the areas and one regulatory body is major step for overall development in education and research. To encourage the healthy competition in Indian education system, the permission of foreign universities in India is a welcome move. A common examination for the admission to the colleges will be offered so that pressure and inconvenience of students and their guardians can be minimized. Professional bodies involved in research and development in India and abroad are instrumental in implementation of new education policy through workshops, conclaves, conferences, etc.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineer (IEEE), USA is the largest professional body in engineering and technology, and it is involved in many educational and accreditation activities around the globe. The ABET and pre-university education programs of IEEE are focused areas for improving the engineering education in the world. Some initiatives such as Smart Global Village, humanitarian technology activities, women in engineering, etc. are very effective in promoting skill development and generating the employability at the local bodies.

The concept of Flexible Academic Program (FAP) proposed by Prof Neetish Purohit, IIT Allahabad is very effective and very useful as per direction of NEP 2020. He has organized as series of events for FAP. The outcomes of brainstorming sessions organized should be considered in refining and implementation of the concept and approach. I visited the site of FAP and found the details which are very informative and clear.

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