



Mains Practice Question

Q. “Education is not an injunction, it is an effective and pervasive tool for all-round development of an individual and social transformation”. Examine the New Education Policy, 2020 (NEP, 2020) in light of the above statement. (UPSC GS-4 Mains 2020)

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Approach

- Start the answer by briefly mentioning the objectives of the National Education Policy.
- Explain how National Education Policy can help in the furtherance of Individual & Social Transformation
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has been recently announced by the Government of India. NEP 2020 is novel in many ways that can help develop an individual and social transformation.

It recognizes the importance of formative years; it envisages making education more inclusive and aimed at transforming the Indian education system to meet the needs of the 21st Century.

Body

NEP's Vision of Individual & Social Transformation

- **Recognizing the Importance of Formative years:** In adopting a 5+3+3+4 model for school education starting at age 3, the policy acknowledges the formative years' primacy from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future.
- **Encouraging Vulnerable Sections of Society:** Another laudable aspect of the scheme is vocational courses with an internship. This may encourage the vulnerable sections of society to send their children to school.
 - Also, it would help in the realization of the goal of the Skill India Mission.
- **Making Education More Inclusive:** The NEP proposes extending the Right to Education (RTE) to all children up to the age of 18.
 - Further, the policy seeks to leverage the huge potential of online pedagogy and learning methodologies to increase gross enrollment in higher education.
 - Moreover, technological solutions should be utilized for creating greater access to the socially and economically disadvantaged groups.
- **Ending Hindi vs. English Debate:** Most crucially, NEP, once and for all, buries the strident Hindi versus English language debate.
 - It emphasizes making the mother tongue, the local language, or the regional language the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, which is considered the best medium of teaching.

- This will integrate culture, language, and traditions with the learning so that children can assimilate it in an integrative manner.
- **Departure from Silos Mentality:** Another key aspect of school education in the new policy is the breaking of the strict division of arts, commerce, and science streams in high school.
 - This can lay the foundation for a multi-disciplinary approach in high education.
 - This will help change the present scenario where students are under societal pressure to pursue certain streams that may not be as per their choice.
- **Education & Social Justice:** NEP recognizes education as the most effective way for social justice. Thus, the NEP calls for an investment of about six percent of GDP jointly by the Center and the States.

Conclusion

The new National Education Policy 2020 is novel. It aims to make the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned to the needs of the 21st century and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

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