

## PARADIGM-SHIFT IN PRIMARY EDUCATION DURING POST PANDEMIC ERA: AN OVERVIEW THROUGH NEP 2020

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### Abstract

*In the year of 2020, people have confronted with the pandemic caused by COVID-19 and the after effect of this virus a new normal society has been imbibed. Not only social distancing or wearing masks people have become accustomed with virtual culture through internet facilities. This study is going to discuss about the practicing virtual classes in govt. primary schools in West Bengal through the glance of New Education Policy (NEP 2020). The present central government has modified the primary education to preparatory stage of education with the structural and pedagogical changes through this NEP 2020. This study is going to gauge people's dealings with virtual classes to fulfill the recommendations for primary education in NEP 2020. The data was collected through two self-made questionnaires from 30 stakeholders of primary schools as teachers and parents, who were chosen randomly from KVS and state govt. primary schools. The result was analyzed through SPSS which has shown that, recommendations of NEP 2020 and virtual classes are positive correlated. Suggestions to imbibe virtual classes to achieve the goals of shifting paradigm in primary education were taken from a focused group of expertise.*

**Keywords:** New Education policy NEP-2020, Paradigm-Shift, Primary Education in India, Post Pandemic Era, Virtual Classes.

### INTRODUCTION

An expert committee headed by Dr. Kasturirangan, the former chairman of ISRO, has given recommendations on a new education policy, which the Govt. of India has recently announced in 2020. India is a country, which will be the largest number of youths consisting nation in the upcoming centuries. So here it is important to provide our future a meaningful and standard education. The rapid change in technology is going to change the education sector inevitably and a paradigm-shift could be seen in practicing pedagogy from physical classroom to virtual classes.

**Scenario of Primary Education in India:** As per the report published by the All India Education Survey, 2002, There are more than 1.3 million recognized educational institutions in India teaching from primary to higher secondary Regulation and supervision of these institutions which entail matters of maintenance, quality, and administration have to be thoroughly reviewed (Tilak, 2021). It has also been voiced by many that the process of unification is a direct violation of the tenets of Article 246 of the Constitution of India which places education in the Concurrent List giving certain obligations to governments at both the central and the state levels. This step is

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also in contradiction to the report presented by Prof. Yashpal to the Government of India (english.gov.cn, 2019).

**Paradigm-shift in Primary Education in India:** As it is known that the Children's' Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009 was the outcome of the amendments of 1968, 1986 and 1992 Education policy. Right to Education is the primary right of every citizen of India, whether a child resides in a high-profile society or in a faraway not so developed scheduled village (Zahoor Ahmed Lone 2017). This amendment of article 45 made changes in the setup of Indian primary education. Now the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) has recommended some points regarding primary education which may shift the paradigm of education system (Athial & Athial, 2020).

**New Vision of NEP-2020:** The NEP 2020, outlines the vision of India's new education system, was approved by the Union Cabinet Minister on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Primary education in mother tongue is easier to grasp the concept rather than the foreign language to the children. The New Education Policy allows for mother tongue being the medium of instruction up to 5<sup>th</sup> standard. The policy also advocates a three-language formula with English being one of the languages to equip the learners with requisite knowledge of a foreign language and increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio.

**The Aim of New Education Policy of 2020 regarding Primary Education:** "Reach to the Education" – this quotation influenced the NEP 2020 to make the learners aware of their fundamental rights and fundamental duties (Athial & Athial, 2020).

Some important steps have been taken in school level education to make the system more efficient for each of the students-

- The 6% of the GDP will be spent on education. (present days-it is 1.7%)
- The age group of 3 – 8 years (instead of 6 – 14) old learners will be under RTE Act.
- To overrate the digital education system, National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) will be introduced along with the e-course system in mother tongue or local language.
- [5+3+3+4] pattern will be followed.
  - I. Foundation Stage (3 to 8 years old)
  - II. Preparatory Stage (8 to 11 years old)
  - III. Middle Stage (11 to 14 years old)
  - IV. Secondary Stage (14 to 18 years old)
- In 2025 each state and central school must ensure to give the compulsory education till class 3.
- Vocational education will be there from class 6.
- Coding will be taught from class 6.
- Board examination will be conducted in two ways – both subjective and objective.

- Sanskrit will be an important subject in school level.
- Gifted children are given to be special guidance.
- There will be a smart classroom in each class.
- 3 months of 'Play-based school preparation module' framework will be designed by NCERT/SCERT.

The main focus of this system is to prepare students to delve deeper into insights by various activities and different exposures. Play and activity based 3 years preparatory stage gradually introduces the formal classroom learning with textbooks in primary education stage.

**Post Covid-19 Effect in Education System:** The covid-19 pandemic in India has introduced neo-normal internet-based learning-teaching ways by not sparing the education system from its gape too. In the year of 2020, during outburst of COVID 19, the pandemic virus it was a great lesson for all that a new-normal society has been newly introduced during pandemic situation with wearing mask, using soap and sanitizer regularly, maintaining social-distancing, frequent lock-down and people-curfew, habituating in window-shopping and specially being accustomed with online classes (Joshi, Vinay & Bhaskar, 2020). A report from UNESCO during this pandemic has showed that 1.37 billion students in 138 countries are drastically affected by school, university, and higher educational closures. Not only the students; nearly 60.2 million teaching faculties are also highly affected as they are not in school environment. Online video conferencing apps are utilized for learning-teaching by both the students and the teachers.

**Paradigm-shift to Online Pedagogy:** Education is not just a chalk and duster; it is also about the discipline, development, curiosity, and creativity for hundreds of millions of the young to breaking the cycle of ignorance and poverty leading to employment and prosperity in India (Sam Pitroda 2020). To access the educational curriculum in pandemic, online education is the breaker of traditional method by experiencing the electronic technologies. Online pedagogy is nothing but a process of learning-teaching method where the teachers and the learners participate from various physical places through networked or virtual environment. Aside from space, other studies say that participants can be separated by time. Online pedagogy is not bound in a particular method. There are many different types of approaches which are user-content based for distinction of users and the distinctions also follow the tutor-training methodologies (Siddesh & Veerabhadrapa, 2020).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Maurya & Ahmed (2020) have mentioned after their deep analysis of the education system in India, that is; the government should enhance its spending on primary and secondary education, making teaching a viable earning proposition. This would induce good students to take up teaching as a career and would also allow them to distance themselves from scouting for other avenues. The administration can then become more stringent in matters of abstaining from duties

and the like. The focus should also be laid on the development of infrastructure, aspects of governance to ensure quality education among the students.

According to Aithal & Aithal (2020), New Education Policy 2020 has made a huge difference in higher education. They have compared this new policy with older one. There is a statable recommendation regarding lifelong education, that is, lifelong learning and research to avoid human beings becoming obsolete in society in terms of knowledge, skills, and experience to lead a comfortable life. It is believed that education and research at any stage of life will give further maturity for satisfaction in life.

On other hand Siddesh & Veerabhadrapa (2020) have gauged the issues and problems regarding online classes in India. They have found that; the main drawback is to integrate teaching methods with technology. The teachers need to adapt their teaching methods to the technical instrument. In a country like India the access of the internet is very poor and low, especially in rural regions. Some students and teachers have chance to access to mobile phones but majority not owning computer and laptops, they are very few.

### **OBJECTIVES, HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH QUESTION OF THE STUDY**

This study is going to measure cognitive load of primary school children during post pandemic situation. It is also focusing on the effectiveness of online pedagogy. This study is gauging the impact of online pedagogy to fulfill the recommendations of NEP 2020.

Through the above discussion it has been cleared that New Education Policy or NEP 2020 has made changes in the whole structure of education system of India. Now it is to see that how the new system imbibes with this paradigm-shift. Not only the structure has been modified; the pandemic of COVID -19 has created a new-normal situation in education system based on virtual classes. So that, the present study is going specify its objectives;

- To know the impact of new recommendations of NEP-2020 on the virtual classes in primary education.
- To know the ways of betterment of primary education through virtual classes with the recommendations of NEP 2020 in the post-pandemic situation.

From the concept of the objectives of this study a hypothesis can be stated as

- There is no relation among the new recommendations of NEP-2020 and the virtual classes in primary education.

Also a research question may come out that;

- How the virtual classes could make primary education better in the perspective of NEP 2020's recommendations?

### **METHODOLOGY**

**Sample and Sampling:** For the present study 30 stakeholders as parents and teachers of primary school children were communicated. They were chosen randomly from Kendriya Vidyalaya

Sangathan and upper primary schools under state government in the district of East Burdwan of West Bengal.

**Technique and Tool:** The samples were interviewed through self made questionnaire regarding virtual classes and acceptance of NEP 2020. Both of the questionnaire consisted of 20+20=40 questions. Another way the suggestions were made this focused group of sample to develop virtual classes of primary education until the schools are open with the help of the recommendations of NEP 2020.

**Data Analysis:** The collected data were correlated through the help of SPSS. It was to gauge whether virtual classes are related with the recommendations of NEP 2020 or not. On the other hand suggestions from the focused group were analyzed.

## RESULTS

Result of Correlation among the dimensions of recommendations of NEP 2020 regarding Primary education and the components of Virtual Classes is been shown below.

Table 1. Result of Correlation among the dimensions of recommendations of NEP 2020 regarding Primary education and the components of Virtual Classes

| Recommendations of NEP 2020    | Components of Virtual Classes |           |            |            |                           |                  |            |                     |                 |                    |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
|                                | Attendance                    | Attention | Creativity | Evaluation | Hygiene & Health Training | Fostering Values | Motivation | Communication Skill | Time Management | Concept of Content |
| Structure of Primary Education | 0.124                         | 0.112     | 0.104      | 0.121      | 0.112                     | 0.002            | 0.022      | 0.001               | 0.003           | 0.034              |
| Attitude to Preparatory Stage  | 0.122                         | 0.211*    | 0.187      | 0.171      | 0.271                     | 0.012            | 0.031      | 0.310*              | 0.010           | 0.038              |
| Play & Activity Based Learning | 0.341**                       | 0.342**   | 0.200*     | 0.120      | 0.242**                   | 0.173*           | 0.040      | 0.340**             | 0.119           | 0.040              |
| Expose to different Subjects   | 0.340**                       | 0.350**   | 0.221*     | 0.133      | 0.191                     | 0.270*           | 0.011      | 0.321**             | 0.211*          | 0.141              |
| Preparation for Insight        | 0.311**                       | 0.311**   | 0.210*     | 0.100      | 0.219                     | 0.214*           | 0.049      | 0.220*              | 0.022           | 0.020              |
| Total                          | 0.342**                       | 0.315**   | 0.211*     | 0.038      | 0.260*                    | 0.279*           | 0.043      | 0.344**             | 0.271*          | 0.043              |

There are the various components e.g. *Attendance, Attention, Creativity, Evaluation, Hygiene & Health Training, Fostering Values, Motivation, Communication Skill, Time Management and Concept of Content* which had correlation with the dimensions of the recommendations of NEP 2020 regarding primary education as *Structure of Primary Education, Attitude to Preparatory Stage, Play & Activity Based Learning, Expose to different Subjects and Preparation for Insight*. NEP 2020 Recommendation is positively correlated with the various components of Virtual Class. It is also positively correlated with Attendance in online class ( $r=0.342$ ), Attention( $r=0.315$ ) and Communication Skills ( $r=0.344$ ) at 0.01 level of significance; and

Creativity ( $r=0.211$ ), Hygiene & Health Training ( $r=0.260$ ), Fostering Values ( $r=0.279$ ) at 0.05 level of significance; but Time Management ( $r=0.271$ ), It is not significantly correlated with Motivation ( $r=0.043$ ) and Evaluation ( $r=0.038$ ) at 0.05 level of significance.

## INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through the result of correlation it could be said that the null hypothesis is rejected and it could be concluded that there is an effect of new recommendations of NEP-2020 and the virtual classes in primary education.

From the result of correlation it has been cleared that the Virtual Classes could be able to achieve the goal of New Education Policy 2020. The stakeholders like parents and teachers of primary school children from both central and state government schools (Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and Rashtriya Uchha Prathamik Vidyalaya) are concerned about the quality of students. But some of them are still unaware of virtual class system. There is a different condition of state govt. primary schools as they are still closed and not even started the online or virtual classes. Parents are really worried regarding the quality of primary school children thus the private tuitions have been raised especially by the govt. school teachers. There is an illegal practice of tuition has been started by the primary and secondary teachers of government schools. Though the parents are not aware of the recommendations of NEP 2020 but they are eager to start online class as their children are in dark future which is the after effect of pandemic.

**A bunch of suggestions was analyzed which was taken from a group of stakeholders, experts who are researching in the field of primary education,** to develop the practice in virtual classes. These suggestions are; teachers may keep motivating their students through various play based activities as they can engage themselves without being bored. As it has been already known that availing internet is a fun for the children so the learning style must indulge in fun and also productive activities. Origami, craft, versatile drawing may engage the students of primary or preparatory stage. Teachers may provide some audio-visual videos to the children belonging to primary schools which would help them to develop their language skills and communication. Teachers may keep patients during instructing them in virtual class as there could be internet issues. As in remarkable days teachers may foster their values through various co-curricular activities. These suggestions have helped to develop the research tools for this present study.

The children belonging to poor family or rural areas should be considered before starting virtual classes because smart phone could not be provided to individual, and/or the connectivity of internet is very low, or the online classes have not been introduced yet. Online classes could be conducted there by maintaining physical distance or by shifting class time among a group of primary students. Primary school children must have some practical classes regarding habit formation and basic language or calculations; so videos can help them to do so. Schools can make their own channels to provide them such videos and some personnel could be permitted to show all of these in projectors. Our country has shown energy to broadcast games or movies in a



large screen in front of a mass, due to pandemic situation government could get help from them to spread primary education through the same way by maintaining covid-19 safety measures.

## CONCLUSION

10+2 pattern of education has been following in India until higher secondary level with an option to dropout after class 10. This pattern has been replaced with [5+3+3+4] pattern. This pattern reduces the stress among the learners by making learning more fun. Regulation and supervision of these institutions which entail matters of maintenance, quality, and administration have to be thoroughly reviewed (Tilak, 2021). As per the recommendations of NEP 2020, it could be possible to check the rate of stagnation and wastage in primary education stage. Especially in post pandemic situation where the whole country is depended on online pedagogy, the primary education may also focus on this. The ongoing developing technologies, the various online learning methods, the connection of the organization with the institutions and learners vary the definition of online pedagogy (Velasquez, Graham & West, 2013).

There are some notes on practices virtual classes:

- The report of the Telecom Regulatory Authority in India shows that the internet subscribers increased from 446 million to 719 million between 2017 and 2019.
- Though mobiles are being useful to listening online classes, but they are not so convenient in writing assignments or giving the exams.
- As most of us were not such used to with the internet and technology before the pandemic, this lead to create a gap in digital education. 76% of 5 – 35 age grouped students in India did not know how to use a computer.
- $\frac{3}{4}$  of students in India did not have internet access at home according to a 2017-18 all – India NSO survey.

So that it has been seen that virtual classes are not newly introduced in India; in the post pandemic situation it could be practiced in primary schools as the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) has shown its positive result. NEP 2020 has suggested some new ideas regarding the structure and learning teaching methods. The post pandemic situation is reverse to achieve the goals of NEP 2020 but through virtual classes especially in primary schools it could be introduced and practiced in a regular manner (Athial & Athial, 2020). Government could take action through organizing some orientation course for the primary schools teachers regarding virtual classes to develop the learning teaching process as there is paradigm-shift in formal class room pattern to virtual class (Mayura, Ahmed, 2020).

In primary education, the schools under the central government have different rules from the states. Some of them start the class schedule twice a day from 10 am to 2 pm. Teachers upload the questions and study materials, from another pole students give feedback or assignments by uploading photos, videos etc. They also have the schedule for co-curricular activities along with academic activities (Ghosh, 2020).

In this post pandemic situation, teachers of secondary levels or KVS have also found their way of teaching-learning process through online classes. Students and parents have joined them as the stakeholders and learn the new technology to install and login to the software. Interestingly, there are schools running online classes as per routine, whereas some do not offer these distance mode classes and some choose to have infrequent and sporadic classes. Some of the private colleges have started their online classes for teacher education (Lawal, 2012).

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