

HOSTING MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN INDIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM - A TRANSITION TO SCALE UP KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

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Abstract: *The today's complex world is offering my challenges and problems on daily basis and in order to address them in isolation may leads to imperfect or unsuccessful results. All these problems are interconnecting in nature and need to be troubleshoot from wide spectrum, knowledge from multiple disciplines are greatly solicited. Globally, educational communities in particularly and the societies at large have understood the prominence of multidisciplinary knowledge and research in the educational system. The Indian government thoroughly understand the lapses in the existing educational system and identify the need to adopt multidisciplinary approach by bringing necessary policies in NEP 2020. Further, Indian government proactively adopting Multidisciplinary Approach in the Educational system and prepared for handling the transition to scale up Knowledge economy. This article focuses on the initiations and needed actions in hosting multidisciplinary approach in Indian educational system for sustainable development in a nutshell.*

Key words: *Multidisciplinary Approach, New Educational Policy 2020, Higher Educational Institutions, Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities, Career pathways and student Readiness Centers.*

Introduction:

In the competing global world, mankind is continuously making efforts to secure new knowledge in each and every field remarkably. With the persistent zeal of acquiring new knowledge, human being achieved a lot of astonishing inventions and magnificent innovations from time to time. As a result, currently we are privileged to live in a modern society, which cannot be imagine without the treasure of systematic education and inquisitive research. Over the years, the world has crossed so many milestones without par excellence academic progress, nevertheless we have to travel a long way. Despite, the world is progressing well with novel scientific developments and inventions, but still have to answer several problems and challenges which are unique in nature. In order to address the new challenges, application of action oriented research approach is required by using the subject knowledge in the relevant disciplines. However, in the dynamic world with rapid advancement of research and

development, countries are progressing well by finding solutions to complex problems through integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines. The developed countries brought lot of changes in their educational systems and educational policies towards multidisciplinary approach. India, one of the largest economies in the world with abundant human resources is a land of enormous natural resources, exceptionally potential markets, enormous and ingenious platform for global networks and linkages and all the more reservoir for exceptionally talented individuals. As the educational system in the world is rapidly transforming, adopting multidisciplinary approach by bringing necessary changes through New Educational Policy (NEP) is the need of hour of India to scale up knowledge economy.

Rationale for Multi-disciplinary Studies (M.D.S):

At present demand is increasing for Multi-Disciplinary Studies (M.D.S) in the developed countries. Countries like USA are offering Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies (MDS) which enable the students with more flexibility in planning their academic and career path. Multidisciplinary Studies is a well-planned academic program allowing students by providing the scope to acquire a comprehensive knowledge base with problem-solving skills. The objectives of the program is to lay down a solid foundation by imparting knowledge in diverse disciplines and to equip communication, improving critical thinking and logical analysis, investigating and problem solving abilities, tactical management skills and allied abilities. The program provides the students to enrich advanced academic concepts that fall outside the normal disciplinary frontiers. Further, Multi-Disciplinary Studies is an interdisciplinary program designed to maximize the opportunities for students to cherish their individual goals, encounter job requirements and to progress in their careers. Owing to the significance attached to Multi-Disciplinary Studies, Indian government brought New Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 to design action plan for launching Multi-Disciplinary Studies with par excellence in global perspective.

Restructuring existing system in the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) :

One of the significant reform measures proposed under NEP 2020 is abolition of single-stream Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in a phased manner and to transform them into multidisciplinary institutions. Moreover, this policy amendment provide the opportunity to affiliated colleges over 15 years by removing the existing system with a new system of graded autonomy. In case of universities, the NEP proposed to eliminate diverse categories of existing classifications of universities such as 'deemed to be university', 'affiliating technical university', 'unitary university', 'affiliating university' by replacing them under a single category ruled by a single set of norms.

Amendments in Under Graduate studies:

As per the New Educational Policy amendments, the proposed duration of undergraduate degree program will be fixed either three or four-years with multiple exit options to avail greater flexibility. Under the new system, students can obtain a certificate

immediately after completing stipulated partial duration, for instance diploma for two years, and a Bachelor's degree for three years after successfully completing their education. The new educational policy provides the opportunity for the students to avail four-year multidisciplinary bachelor's degree program which will be the more preferred option on global perspective. Moreover, the four-year degree program may also create a scope to acquire a degree with research, provided if the student completes a rigorous research project in their major field of study. The NEP 2020 planned to bring necessary changes in curricula of all courses in the Higher Educational Institutions on credit-based system for the students including in the areas of community engagement and service projects. Keeping in view of transparency and end user convenience Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) system will also be created by facilitating a digital store which enables the students to access the earned academic credits score even from their previous Higher Educational Institutions (HEI). This system of digitalization of academic status of the students facilitates to ease for the re-entry of students who previously exit the academic program and then revert back to pursue a full degree later.

Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities in India:

India's first education policy in 21st century is the National Education Policy 2020 which focused on the developmental imperatives for strengthening knowledge economy. The Policy envisioned to revise and renovating Indian educational structure by bringing necessary regulations towards multidisciplinary educational system. A thrust toward multidisciplinary approach, the NEP proposed to create a model public universities on par with Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) under the label of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs).

The main theme in the National Education Policy (NEP) is Multidisciplinary programs in higher education to be initiated with a long term aim of launching all undergraduate programs including technical, vocational and professional disciplines by the approvals of the MERUs. The MERUs meant to conquer global excellence in quality education. Further, the rest of existing institutions concentrate on research and innovation by establishing start-up incubation and alike centres, focuses on interdisciplinary research platform. The NEP 2020 suggested to development both public and private institutions as multidisciplinary institutions each of which with an intake of 3,000 or more students by the year 2040. Moreover, the NEP developed certain measures for regulating the fee structure of Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) seeks to create a fee determination mechanism by leaving no scope for arbitrary increases in fees.

Student's career mapping by redesigning designing single-stream academic Programs towards multidisciplinary programs:

As Information and communication technology advances, the requirements of employers changed drastically in the global employment market, which continually demanding to redesign the job market in pursuit of versatility with specialized skill set in contemporary disciplines and leaving no or less demand for other disciplines. The trend of present student community is designing their career path with much fascination towards

engineering and medical programs resulting to create supply and demand gap. Due to the mismatch of industry requirement in the job market and educational institutional output leading to create increase in un-employability rate which ultimately cause to adverse impact on the economy. The major reason for chaos in the supply and demand in the job market arises due to lack of student's career mapping by governments to make well-informed in choosing right educational programs based on the market requirements. Further the existing academic program is a single-stream and concentrate merely on one discipline leaving no scope for shift over option in later stages which can be overcome by introducing multidisciplinary programs through higher education institution's clusters. The NEP 2020 amendment will facilities students to avail lot of flexibility to shift over to diverse disciplines under multidisciplinary approach.

Multidisciplinary Research Support and Coordination Centers by integrating rural areas:

The NEP 2020 proposed multidisciplinary approach need to be implemented through establishing multidisciplinary research support and coordination centers by integrating rural areas and focusing on vital rural developmental problems to enrich economic well-being of rural societies. Further, the center need to bework on the learning environments that foster faculty members and student community by promoting market-oriented academic programs, developing international university partnerships, creating sustainable public-private collaborations and other innovations towards sustainable economic development.

Establishment of Career pathways and student Readiness Centers:

Apart from the implementation of NEP 2020, the government need to focus on exploring ways foreffectively linking academic learning with career aspirations of students. Career pathways and student Readiness Centers serves as comprehensive system thatprepares the studentstowards career readiness. Indeed knowledge exploration towards career goals, academic programs and prominence of courses selectionare appropriate for students at all levels, particularly right from elementary and middle school level. Since,selecting a right career pathway necessitates mature and profound decision making. Until and unless this sort of back ground work was not done at foundation level any beautiful super structure lay down at higher educational level may not yield fruitful results.

Conclusion:

Today's world is making efforts by leveraging through creation of superior knowledge economy. In this direction all the countries in the globe are trying to strengthen their educational systems by adopting multidisciplinary approach. At present India is the third largest higher education system in the world with around thirty million students. In order to capitalize big base of educational system, the Indian government brought some educational policy amendments through NEP 2020. One of the major move NEP 2020 is adaptation of multidisciplinary programs and research in educational system at higher educational institutions for sustainable development. Now India is at a crossroads for successful

implementation of NEP 2020. It is a tough task for the largest populated and developing country like India to handle the transition of introducing multidisciplinary approach smoothly to scale up the Knowledge economy. In this juncture, Indian government endeavor needs strong support and cooperation from all the stakeholders to reap the benefit out of painful efforts into pleased results.

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