

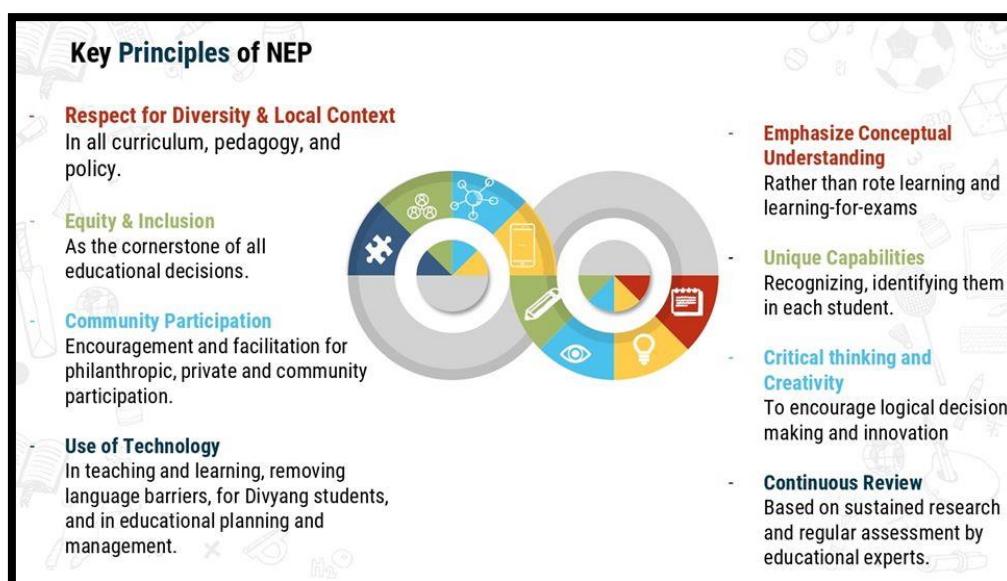
THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY - 2020

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Introduction:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 stands as a transformative framework aimed at redefining India's educational landscape. The national education policy, which has replaced the previous policy from 1986, is India's new educational system. Elementary education and vocational training are the key focus of the national education policy in rural and urban areas. The National Education Policy's primary goal is to transform the educational system for the better, starting in 2021. The main focus will be on the mother tongue and regional languages preferred by the different states. Within its comprehensive vision for holistic learning, the role of libraries emerges as a cornerstone for fostering knowledge, intellectual growth, and equitable access to information. Libraries, traditionally regarded as repositories of books, have evolved into dynamic hubs that not only facilitate learning but also contribute significantly to the multifaceted goals outlined in the NEP.



Salient features of the NEP 2020

Vision of New Education Policy :

The NEP 2022 seeks to create an education system focused on India and help the country develop into a thriving, just, and knowledge-based society by offering top-notch instruction. Because of this NEP, our nation's scientific and educational infrastructure will be reinforced. Global standards will be provided to students who have spent thousands of dollars studying abroad in India.

Importance of libraries in fostering education and knowledge:

“Books are the Quietest and Most Constant Friends; they are the Most Accessible and Wisest of Counsellors and the Most Patient of Teachers.” — Charles W. Eliot

“It is difficult exercise to achieve higher education without the support and resources of the library, as well as to achieve the purpose for which education is being imparted.” — Criss Jami

Libraries play a pivotal role in fostering education and knowledge for several reasons. They serve as vital repositories of information, offering a diverse range of resources that contribute to intellectual growth. The importance of libraries extends beyond providing access to books; they create an environment conducive to learning, research, and exploration. Libraries also play a crucial role in promoting a reading culture, instilling a love for learning and critical thinking. By offering both physical and digital resources, libraries cater to varied learning preferences, contributing significantly to the overall educational development of individuals and communities.

The librarian must work with teachers to promote the essential ideas outlined in the NEP to provide best practices to support the guiding principles of education. And one way to achieve this is to pursue curiosities and passion projects through cluster groups. The NEP emphasises that all academic members, including the librarian, maintain a service-oriented mentality. With that in mind, the library transforms into a hub for staff and digital and print educational resources.

National Policy on Library and Information Systems :

The Department of Culture, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India appointed a committee of senior library scientists and other experts in October 1985, which included Prof. D.P. Chattopadhyay as chairman to prepare a draft document on National Policy on Library and Information Systems. Its report is titled National Policy on Library and Information Systems (NAPLIS). The committee completed its work and submitted a draft document to the government on 31st May 1986. The main objectives of the library and information policy are recommended as follows:

1. To promote and maintain the organization, availability and speed of information in all areas of national activity.
2. To take steps for modernization and up gradation of existing library and information systems and services and to introduce new programmes relevant to our national needs.
3. To encourage programmes and initiate at the earliest possible pace the training of library and information personnel.
4. To establish an adequate monitoring mechanism to ensure rapid development of library and information facilities and services to meet the information needs of all sectors

Role of the National Digital Library of India (NDLI) in NEP :

NDLI is a government-funded initiative, primarily implemented by IIT Kharagpur and was started in 2015 by the Ministry of Education. The main aim of these digital libraries is to distribute digital learning resources nationwide. While the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasises enabling the education sector and utilising the potential of digital,

accomplishing those goals still presents a challenge.

Role of INFLIBNET in NEP :

To promote and establish communication facilities to improve capability in information transfer and access, that provide support to scholarship, learning, research and academic pursuit through cooperation and involvement of agencies concerned.

- to promote and implement computerization of operations and services in the libraries and information centres of the country, following a uniform standard;
- to evolve standards and uniform guidelines in techniques, methods, procedures, computer hardware and software, services and promote their adoption in actual practice by all libraries, in order to facilitate pooling, sharing and exchange of information towards optimal use of resources and facilities:
- to evolve a national network interconnecting various libraries and information centres in the country and to improve capability in information handling and service;
- to provide reliable access to document collection of libraries by creating on-line union catalogue of serials, theses/ dissertations, books, monographs and non-book materials (manuscripts, audio-visuals, computer data, multimedia, etc.) in various libraries in India:
- to provide access to bibliographic information sources with citations, abstracts, etc. through indigenously created databases of the Sectoral Information Centres of NISSAT, UGC Information Centres, City Networks and such others and by establishing gateways for on-line accessing of national and international databases held by national and international information networks and centres respectively;
- to develop new methods and techniques for archival of valuable information available as manuscripts and information documents in different Indian languages, in the form of digital images using high density storage media;
- to optimize information resource utilization through shared cataloguing, inter-library loan service, catalogue production, collection development and thus avoiding duplication in acquisition to the extent possible;
- to enable the users dispersed all over the country, irrespective of location and distance, to have access to information regarding serials, theses/dissertation, books, monographic and non-book materials.
- to create databases of projects, institutions, specialists, etc. for providing on-line information service;
- to encourage co-operation among libraries, documentation centres and information centres in the country, so that the resources can be pooled for the benefit of helping the weaker resource centres by stronger ones; and
- to train and develop human resources in the field of computerized library operations and networking to establish, manage and sustain INFLIBNET.

Libraries as Learning Spaces:

A. Facilitating access to diverse resources:

Libraries excel in facilitating access to diverse resources, offering a rich tapestry of books, journals, multimedia materials, and digital content. This extensive collection spans various subjects, genres, and formats, ensuring that individuals have a broad spectrum of



information at their fingertips. This diversity not only supports academic pursuits but also encourages exploration and a holistic approach to learning, catering to the varied interests and needs of a diverse community of learners. In essence, libraries serve as invaluable gateways to a world of knowledge, fostering a comprehensive and well-rounded educational experience.

B. Creating a conducive environment for study and research:

Libraries go beyond being repositories of information; they actively contribute to education by creating a conducive environment for study and research. With quiet spaces, dedicated study areas, and resources curated for academic pursuits, libraries provide an atmosphere that fosters concentration and intellectual exploration. This environment supports focused study sessions and encourages collaborative research efforts, making libraries essential hubs for academic engagement. The physical and intellectual infrastructure within libraries thus plays a crucial role in nurturing an environment that stimulates learning and research endeavours.

Support for Multidisciplinary Learning:

A. Role of libraries in promoting interdisciplinary studies :

Libraries play a crucial role in promoting interdisciplinary studies by serving as dynamic hubs that bridge the gaps between various academic disciplines. Their diverse collections provide resources across subjects, fostering an environment where learners and researchers can explore connections between different fields. By offering a rich tapestry of materials, including books, journals, and digital resources, libraries encourage individuals to engage in cross-disciplinary research, thereby promoting a more holistic understanding of complex topics. In essence, libraries act as catalysts for intellectual integration, facilitating the exploration of diverse perspectives and enhancing the collaborative nature of interdisciplinary studies.

B. Integration of digital resources for a holistic learning experience:

Libraries contribute significantly to a holistic learning experience through the integration of digital resources. By embracing technology, libraries expand their offerings beyond traditional books to include a vast array of digital materials such as e-books, online journals, multimedia resources, and educational databases. This integration ensures that learners have access to up-to-date information, diverse learning materials, and interactive content. The use of digital resources also promotes self-directed learning and accommodates various learning styles, contributing to a more comprehensive and adaptable educational experience. In essence, the incorporation of digital resources in libraries enhances the accessibility and relevance of information, enriching the overall learning journey.

Bridging the Digital Divide:

A. Providing equitable access to information and technology:

Libraries play a crucial role in providing equitable access to information and technology. By offering a wide range of resources, including books, digital materials, and internet access, Libraries Bridge the digital divide and ensure that individuals, regardless of socio-economic background, have the opportunity to access information and technology. This



inclusivity promotes equal opportunities for learning, research, and skill development. Libraries serve as community hubs that empower people with the tools and knowledge necessary to participate fully in the information age, contributing to a more equitable and educated society.

B. Initiatives to enhance digital literacy through library programs:

Libraries actively contribute to enhancing digital literacy through various programs. Initiatives include:

Workshops and Training: Offering hands-on workshops and training sessions to teach users essential digital skills, such as internet navigation, online research, and digital communication.

Online Learning Resources: Curating and providing access to online courses and tutorials on digital literacy topics, empowering individuals to learn at their own pace.

Public Access Computers: Ensuring public access to computers with internet connectivity, allowing individuals to practice and improve their digital skills.

Collaboration with Educational Institutions: Partnering with schools and colleges to integrate digital literacy programs into the curriculum, fostering a culture of technological proficiency from an early age.

Community Outreach: Engaging with the community through outreach programs, targeting diverse demographics and addressing specific digital literacy needs.

By implementing these initiatives, libraries contribute significantly to building digital literacy skills, empowering individuals to navigate the digital landscape confidently and participate actively in the modern, technology-driven world.

Cultivating a Reading Culture:

A. Promoting the joy of reading among students:

Libraries play a pivotal role in promoting the joy of reading among students through various strategies:

Diverse Book Collections: Offering a wide array of books across genres and reading levels to cater to varied interests and preferences.

Reading Programs: Implementing reading programs and challenges that incentivize and celebrate regular reading habits among students.

Author Events and Book Clubs: Organizing events with authors, book discussions, and book clubs to create a sense of community and shared enthusiasm for reading.

Storytelling Sessions: Hosting storytelling sessions for younger students, fostering an early appreciation for narratives and the joy of literature.

Reading Spaces: Creating inviting and comfortable reading spaces within the library to encourage students to spend time immersed in books.



By cultivating a vibrant reading culture, libraries contribute not only to academic development but also to the overall well-being and lifelong love for learning among students.

B. Encouraging critical thinking and analytical skills through literature:

Libraries contribute significantly to encouraging critical thinking and analytical skills through literature by:

Diverse Literary Selection: Offering a diverse range of literature that challenges perspectives, explores complex themes, and prompts critical reflection.

Book Discussions and Literary Analysis Programs: Hosting discussions and programs that encourage readers to analyze and interpret literature, fostering a deeper understanding of themes, characters, and contexts.

Research Support: Assisting students in conducting literary research, guiding them in the exploration of diverse viewpoints and the development of analytical arguments.

Integration into Curriculum: Collaborating with educational institutions to integrate literature that stimulates critical thinking into the curriculum.

Providing workshops on critical writing skills, enabling students to articulate and express their analytical thoughts effectively.

By emphasizing literature as a tool for intellectual exploration, libraries play a pivotal role in nurturing critical thinking and analytical skills among readers.

Collaboration with Educational Institutions :

A. Libraries as partners in curriculum development:

Libraries serve as valuable partners in curriculum development by:

Resource Curation: Collaborating with educators to curate relevant and diverse resources that align with curriculum objectives.

Information Literacy Programs: Designing programs to enhance students' information literacy skills, teaching them how to locate, evaluate, and use resources effectively.

Tailored Workshops: Offering workshops to educators on utilizing library resources, integrating technology, and incorporating diverse learning materials into their teaching strategies.

Support for Interdisciplinary Learning: Facilitating the inclusion of interdisciplinary materials to enrich the curriculum and promote a holistic approach to education.

Feedback Mechanisms: Establishing feedback mechanisms to gather insights from educators and students, ensuring that library resources align with evolving curriculum needs.

Through these collaborative efforts, libraries actively contribute to the development of robust and engaging curricula that meet educational standards while promoting a culture of continuous learning and innovation.

B. Supporting academic research and innovation:

Libraries play a crucial role in supporting academic research and innovation by:

Comprehensive Resource Collections: Providing a diverse array of academic journals, books, and digital resources to support researchers across various disciplines.

Research Assistance Services: Offering expert assistance from librarians who guide researchers in navigating resources, conducting literature reviews, and refining research queries.

Access to Specialized Databases: Providing access to specialized databases and research tools that facilitate in-depth exploration and data analysis.

Collaborative Spaces: Creating collaborative spaces within libraries to encourage interdisciplinary research and foster a culture of innovation.

Workshops and Seminars: Organizing workshops and seminars on research methodologies, data analysis, and emerging trends to keep researchers informed and skilled.

By serving as hubs for knowledge and research support, libraries contribute significantly to the academic research landscape, fostering innovation and advancing the boundaries of knowledge.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage:

A. Role of libraries in safeguarding traditional knowledge:

Libraries play a crucial role in safeguarding traditional knowledge by:

Archiving: Actively collecting, preserving, and archiving traditional texts, manuscripts, and documents that hold cultural and historical significance.

Digital Preservation: Implementing digital preservation strategies to ensure the longevity of traditional knowledge in the face of technological advancements.

Collaboration with Indigenous Communities: Engaging with indigenous communities to understand and respect their knowledge systems, seeking permission for preservation, and collaborating on initiatives.

Promoting Cultural Heritage: Showcasing traditional knowledge through exhibitions, events, and educational programs, promoting awareness and appreciation.

Access Control: Implementing access control measures to protect sensitive traditional knowledge, ensuring that it is shared respectfully and responsibly.

Through these measures, libraries contribute to the preservation and dissemination of traditional knowledge, recognizing its cultural value and safeguarding it for future generations.

B. Archiving and promoting indigenous literature and heritage:

Libraries play a vital role in archiving and promoting indigenous literature and heritage by:

Collection Development: Actively acquiring and preserving indigenous literature, including

books, oral narratives, and other cultural artifacts.

Digitization Initiatives: Implementing digitization projects to make indigenous materials accessible globally while preserving fragile or rare items.

Cultural Heritage Preservation: Collaborating with indigenous communities to ensure respectful preservation of their cultural heritage, including language, stories, and traditional practices.

Exhibitions and Events: Organizing exhibitions, events, and cultural programs to showcase indigenous literature and heritage, fostering awareness and appreciation.

Community Engagement: Involving indigenous communities in the curation process, seeking their input and participation to accurately represent and promote their heritage.

By serving as custodians and promoters of indigenous literature and heritage, libraries contribute to the preservation of cultural diversity and the empowerment of indigenous communities.

Challenges and Solutions:

Here are some of the limitations of the NEP 2020 related to libraries:

A. Addressing resource constraints and funding issues:

Funding: One of the major limitations of the NEP 2020 related to libraries is the issue of funding. The policy requires the development of libraries at all levels of education, but it does not provide clear guidelines on how the necessary funding will be generated. Without adequate funding, it may be difficult to fully implement the NEP 2020 related to libraries.

Infrastructure: The NEP 2020 calls for the development of libraries at all levels of education, but many schools and colleges in India lack the necessary infrastructure to support the development of libraries. Lack of physical space, inadequate storage facilities, and poor technology infrastructure are some of the challenges that need to be addressed for the effective implementation of the NEP 2020 related to libraries.

Limited digital infrastructure: While the NEP 2020 promotes the development of digital libraries and e-books, there is a limited digital infrastructure in many parts of India. In order to fully implement the NEP 2020 related to libraries, there needs to be an investment in digital infrastructure to support the development of digital libraries.

Lack of trained staff: The NEP 2020 recognizes the important role of librarians in promoting access to learning resources and supporting teaching and learning, but there is a shortage of trained librarians in India. To fully implement the NEP 2020 related to libraries, there needs to be an investment in training and professional development for librarians.

Advocacy Campaigns: Engaging in advocacy efforts to raise awareness about the importance of libraries, garnering community support and potentially attracting increased funding.

Efficiency Measures: Implementing cost-effective measures, such as optimizing resource utilization, exploring shared services, and adopting technology to streamline operations.

Diversifying Revenue Streams: Exploring options like fee-based services, book sales, or

community fundraising events to generate additional revenue.

B. Implementing innovative strategies to enhance library relevance:

To enhance library relevance, consider implementing innovative strategies such as:

Digital Transformation: Embrace technology to offer digital resources, virtual services, and online platforms that cater to evolving user needs.

Community Engagement: Foster a sense of community by organizing events, workshops, and activities that address the diverse interests and preferences of library users.

Collaborations: Partner with local schools, businesses, and organizations to create synergies, expand services, and contribute to community development.

Flexible Spaces: Create adaptable and multifunctional spaces within the library, catering to various activities such as collaborative work, events, and individual study.

Specialized Services: Develop specialized services, such as research support, technology training, or community outreach, to meet specific needs within the community.

By continuously adapting to changing user expectations and community dynamics, libraries can position themselves as dynamic and relevant hubs for learning, collaboration, and information access.

Conclusion:

A. Recap of the pivotal role libraries play in the NEP-2020:

In the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, libraries assume a pivotal role by serving as:

Learning Spaces: Providing environments conducive to study, research, and exploration, aligning with NEP's emphasis on holistic education.

Access to Diverse Resources: Facilitating access to a wide array of resources, supporting NEP's goal of multidisciplinary learning and comprehensive education.

Technology Integration: Contributing to digital literacy and technology integration, aligning with NEP's focus on leveraging technology for enhanced learning experiences.

Promoting Reading Culture: Cultivating a joy of reading among students, fostering critical thinking and analytical skills, in line with NEP's vision of a well-rounded education.

Supporting Interdisciplinary Studies: Enabling interdisciplinary learning through diverse resource collections, supporting NEP's encouragement of a multidisciplinary approach.

Collaboration in Curriculum Development: Acting as partners in curriculum development by providing resources and expertise to align with NEP's goal of a flexible and forward-looking curriculum.

Preserving Cultural Heritage: Safeguarding traditional knowledge, promoting indigenous literature, and preserving cultural heritage, aligning with NEP's emphasis on cultural sensitivity



and inclusivity.

In essence, libraries play a crucial role in realizing the objectives outlined in NEP-2020, contributing to the comprehensive development of learners and the advancement of education in India.

B. Call to prioritize and invest in strengthening library infrastructure:

In recognizing the pivotal role that libraries play in education, there is a pressing call to prioritize and invest in strengthening library infrastructure. This involves:

Financial Commitment: Allocating sufficient funds to libraries for technology upgrades, collection development, and facility enhancements.

Professional Development: Investing in the training and professional development of librarians to ensure they stay abreast of technological advancements and evolving educational needs.

Technological Integration: Updating and integrating technology to enhance digital access, virtual services, and online resources, aligning with contemporary educational trends.

Facility Upgrades: Renovating and expanding library spaces to accommodate diverse learning styles, collaborative activities, and community engagement.

Community Outreach: Investing in outreach programs to raise awareness about the library's role, foster community engagement, and ensure inclusivity.

By prioritizing and investing in library infrastructure, there is an opportunity to strengthen educational foundations, promote lifelong learning, and contribute to the overall development of individuals and communities.

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