

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGES TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF BHARAT THAT IS INDIA

Overview:

Over the last decade, the Indian education system has undergone profound transformations, with the cornerstone being the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020. This was the third policy in India's history, the prior ones being in 1968 and 1986. This policy overhaul marks a monumental shift away from the Anglophone system towards, in many aspects, a more American-style system. The new policy is aimed at enhancing quality, accessibility, and relevance. The ultimate goal is to equip students with essential 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy - essential for their future success in a competitive domestic and global landscape.

One of the most notable changes is the emphasis on digital learning. The new policy recognizes the transformative potential of technology in education and promotes the integration of digital tools and platforms across all levels of learning. This has not only democratized access to quality education but has also enabled personalized and interactive learning experiences, preparing students for a digital-driven future. NEP advocates for a multidisciplinary approach to curriculum design, encouraging students to explore diverse subjects and develop a deeper understanding of interconnected disciplines. By promoting flexibility in course selection and offering multiple entry and exit points in higher education, the policy aims to cater to the individual interests and career aspirations of students, thereby nurturing a more versatile and skilled workforce. Efforts are underway to revise curricula and develop frameworks for holistic learning. These changes are at various stages of implementation across different states and educational institutions.

Vocational education and skill development have gained prominence with initiatives aimed at making education more relevant to employability. Skill development initiatives like the Skill India Mission, and partnerships with industries are being promoted to bridge the gap between education and employment. These initiatives empower students with employable skills and promote entrepreneurship from an early age.

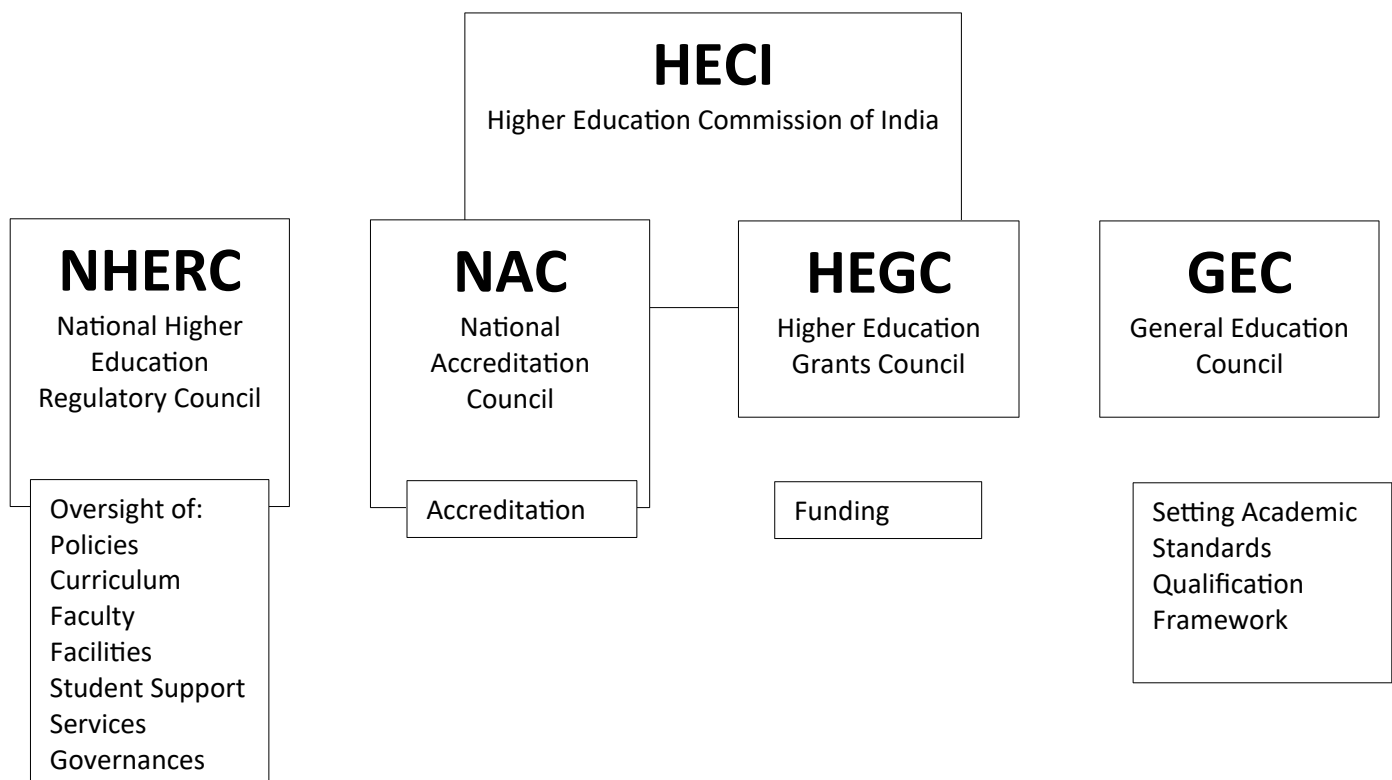
Structural Reforms:

What used to be the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) is now known as the Ministry of Education (MoE).

One of the key aspects of the NEP was the restructuring of the education system to include foundational changes such as the establishment of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) and the National Education Technology Forum (NETF).

These reforms are still in progress, with some initial steps taken towards their establishment, and implementation and operational processes ongoing.

At the Tertiary level institutes were governed by different authorities (e.g. UGC, AICTE). This will now be merged into a Single authority, called the “Higher Education Commission of India” (HECI). The 4 Councils under HECI and their areas of responsibilities are shown in the chart below. The goal is to streamline the operating process for institutions.



A major push is to establish Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERU). Another push is to structure all current higher education into multidisciplinary institutions by 2040.

Currently, Colleges are associated with a University with the university being the degree granting authority. Colleges will be granted autonomy with the authority to issue degrees without a university affiliation by 2035

Secondary and Tertiary programs for the most part have followed a yearly format with exams being held at the end of each year. Technical institutes however, over the last several decades, have followed the semester format with exams held at the end of each semester. The semester trend in the past decade has begun to be adopted by more institutes, led by private HEIs. This NEP now has high school and all HEIs shifting to the semester format.

However, the prior system of a comprehensive examination after the 10th grade (Secondary) and 12th grade (Higher Secondary) still remains.

Grading through the entire education system was based on “marks”, primarily 100 marks per subject per year with yearly and program level grades in the form of “Division/Class” (e.g. First Division; First Class). Over the last decade there has been a shift towards “Units” and “Letter grade” primarily at private HEIs. This policy now has the entire education system shifting to letter grades.

National Educational Technology Forum (NETF):

Central to the digitization and the implementation of technology in education, is the National Education Technology Forum (NETF). It is an autonomous body under the Department of Education and operates structurally almost like a hi-technology company, with the freedom to explore and innovate as technology progresses. It creates partnerships between government-non-profit and private sectors and is the hub for everything related to technology on the education domain. NETF has revolutionized educational practices across the country. It plays a pivotal role in fostering digital literacy and equitable access to education by promoting the use of technology in teaching and learning. This initiative has democratized education, bridging the gap between urban and rural areas through digital platforms and ensuring that all students have access to high-quality educational resources.

Central On-line Depository of Records:

India is creating a central on-line depository of all vital records. Records such as Driver’s License, Adhar Card (akin to a biometric-enabled social security card), academic records, etc.

This is known as Digi(tal)Locker. This is under the purview of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

Every branch (e.g. Transportation, Housing, Education, etc.) of the government will have their sub-set within this DigiLocker.

Each Individual will then have their own password-protected records as they relate to that branch of the government.

For example: (a) Housing Ministry will have Title(s) to an individual’s property; (b) Transportation Ministry will contain their Driver’s License, Car Registration, etc. The Ministry of Education’s branch into the DigiLocker is the National Academic Depository (NAD). NAD has a sub-set known as ABC – Academic Bank of Credits, which houses the student’s Transcript. This is a comprehensive verifiable source of a person’s academic credentials.

In conclusion:

The current trends represent a pivotal moment in the evolution of the Indian education system. By embracing innovation, flexibility, and inclusivity, the direction sets a robust foundation for preparing students to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. While challenges remain in implementation and ensuring universal access, this transformative vision holds promise for shaping a more dynamic, equitable, and responsive education landscape in India. These changes represent a positive step towards creating an education system that can cater to the needs of a diverse and dynamic youth population in India.

“We owe a lot to the ancient Indians for teaching us how to count. Without which most modern scientific discoveries would have been impossible. ” -Albert Einstein

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ACREVS (Academic & Credential Records, Evaluation & Verification Service)