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Q5(c)

Highlight the salient features of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2023 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Perspectives on the study of Indian society
Perspectives on the study of Indian society: Indology (G.S. Ghurye); Structural functionalism (M.N. Srinivas); Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai).

Core demand of the question

- Highlight the salient features of the National Education Policy 2020
- **Stay sociological:** structure, language, vocational mix, and equity
- Keep a 10-mark length

Revision summary

NEP 2020 replaces 10+2 as the public stage-story with **5+3+3+4**.

Higher education is to allow multiple entry, exit and credit mobility.

Early mother-tongue teaching, multilingualism and vocational exposure are named pillars.

Equity for disadvantaged groups is a stated aim.

Outcomes will follow teachers, funding and the still-unequal English market.

Introduction

The National Education Policy 2020 is a framework to recast school and higher education around flexibility, multilingual foundations, and a claimed shift from rote to competency. For sociology it is also a state attempt to modernize opportunity structures that still follow caste, class, and region.

Body

Structural features

- Schooling is recast as a **5+3+3+4** design from foundational years through secondary, replacing the older 10+2 as the main public story of stages.
- Multiple entry and exit in higher education, academic credit banks, and a **four-year undergraduate** option aim to reduce a single fail-or-leave gate.
- A common regulatory direction for higher education and a stress on multidisciplinary universities sit beside existing professional councils in practice.

Curriculum and language

- Foundational literacy and numeracy, mother-tongue or regional-language teaching in early years, and later multilingualism are central policy claims.
- Vocational exposure from school, internships, and a less rigid arts-science split try to join education to work.

- Indian knowledge systems are named as content, which Yogendra Singh would read as modernization of tradition inside the classroom.

Equity claims and sociological limits

- The policy speaks of socio-economically disadvantaged groups, gender inclusion, and special education zones.
- Without teachers, buildings, and English as a still-closed elite code, flexibility can widen the gap Beteille notes between certified merit and inherited advantage.
- Digital education after the pandemic showed that a platform is not a school for the landless household.

Flow diagram

5 plus 3 plus 3 plus 4 -> NEP 2020 2020
Flexible credits multilingual vocational -> NEP 2020
Disadvantaged groups -> Test of public provision
NEP 2020 -> Test of public provision

Conclusion

NEP 2020's salient features are a new stage design, flexible higher education, multilingual early schooling, and vocational mixing. Whether it equalises India depends on public provision, not only on the document.

Facts & figures

5+3+3+4

Foundational, preparatory, middle and secondary stages in the NEP school design.

Academic Bank of Credits

Device for storing and transferring higher-education credit across institutions.

Mother-tongue early years

Policy preference for regional-language medium in the foundational stage.

Four-year undergraduate

Flexible bachelor's structure with exit options.

SEDGs

Socio-economically disadvantaged groups named as an inclusion target.