New Education Policy 2020 on Employment and Educational Competitiveness

Mains Syllabus: GS II - Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors.

Why in the News?

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan emphasised the importance of fully implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for India to become a developed nation.

How does the National Education Policy 2020 improve employability?

- **Skill Development** - NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of vocational education and skill development at the school and college levels.
- **Strengthening Industry-Academia Collaboration** - It promotes mechanisms like internships, vocational training, and joint research initiatives to bridge the gap between academia and industry.
- **Practical Learning** – Strong industry-academia linkages enable students learn hands on directly from industries and enhances their employability outcome.
- The apprenticeship programs provide on-the-job training at industry establishments and include a stipend, partially funded by the government.
- **Research Internship Programme** - To enable an original and innovative research universe, a vibrant research internship programme for undergraduate and postgraduate students has evolved in higher education institutions.
- **Reduces Drop-Out Rate** – National Credit Framework (NCrF) to allow for multiple entry and exit points in higher education, enabling students to pursue their careers while simultaneously earning credits and completing their degrees.
- It enables them to pursue diverse career trajectories with tangible credentials.
- **Holistic Development** - NEP 2020 emphasizes a holistic approach to education, ensuring students develop not only academic knowledge but also soft skills, leadership qualities, and ethical understanding, which are important for career success.

Employment Progress After NEP 2020

• **Increase in Employment Rate** - From 2018-19 on, there has been constant growth in the employment rate of educated youth.
• By 2023-24, the overall employment rate increased to 38.6% and the employment rate of men was 53.4% and that of women at 22.7%, approaching 2004-05 levels.
• For all age groups, also, employment grew after 2017-18, touching 43.7% in 2023-24.
• **Increase in Formal Work** - The proportion of regular workers has grown, particularly for men from 17.2% in 2004-05 to 24.88% in 2023-24.
• **Decline in casual labour** – It has decreased for females (30.31% to 16.68%) and overall (28.85% to 19.83%) as per NSS employment and unemployment and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data.

How have NEP 2020 enhanced the global competitiveness of Indian education?

- **Global Rankings** - 11 Indian universities feature in the QS 500 listing and India also has the highest representation in the QS Asia Rankings 2025.
- 10 higher education institutions (including six Indian Institutes of Technology, and two Indian Institutes of Management) placed in the global top 50 across various disciplines.
- **Improvement in Performance** - Under subject-specific performance, Indian institutions recorded a 25.7% jump in total entries (533).
- **Increase in Patents** - Patents filed by Indian higher education institutions have grown from 7,405 in 2021-22 to 19,155 in 2022-23, which is a 158% increase.
- **Moving Up in Innovation** - India's performance in the Global Innovation Index has moved up to 39th, which is an exponential improvement from a decade ago, when India was 76.
- **Fostering Research** - Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), All India Council for Technical Education's (AICTE), Idea Development, Evaluation and Application (IDEA) labs have all contributed in giving depth to the Indian research universe.
- **Strengthening International Collaboration** - Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) has been instrumental in fostering a culture of research and innovation by facilitating collaborative projects between Indian and foreign educational institutions.
- It has identified educational partners from 28 countries, which include the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and France to advance joint research efforts.
- **Promoting Grassroot Innovations-** Initiatives such as the Smart India Hackathon are nurturing innovation at the grass-root level.
- Since inception, it has empowered over 13.9 lakh students, with idea submissions growing sevenfold since 2017.

What lies ahead?

- NEP 2020 is a significant step towards modernizing India's education system and enhancing its competitiveness in the global landscape.
- While it offers a comprehensive framework for educational reform, its successful implementation requires significant resources, infrastructure, and policy changes.
- Ensuring equitable access to quality education for all students, including those from

disadvantaged backgrounds, is a major challenge that needs to be addressed.

Reference

The Hindu | A case of practical, pragmatic and innovative education

