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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/15312

DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/15312>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

ROADMAP OF SAFETY, SECURITY AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 28 June 2022

Final Accepted: 31 July 2022

Published: August 2022

Key words:-

Safety, Security, Disaster Risk
Reduction, National Education Policy
2020

Abstract

Safety and security are major concerns in any institution. An emergency can occur anywhere and in any form such as fire breakout, building collapse, medical emergency, floods etc. It can have an adverse effect on everyone and cause threats to the life and property of the people. The present study will be theoretical in nature and the main focus is on mentioning of the terms related to the disaster, disaster risk reduction and safety measures used for students, teachers, and other staff in the National Policy of Education 2020. For this purpose, the researchers used the available secondary form of data.

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Introduction:-

India is a land of diverse physio-cultural conditions. Due to its vast and varied physiographic conditions, each area has different problems related to disaster, safety, and security. For dealing with different types of disasters. It has been given references in the National Education Policy 2020, which has to be implemented in educational institutions. The information regarding disaster risk reduction has been traced directly and indirectly in the chapters of the National Education Policy 2020

The previous National Policy on Education 1986 (Revised in 1992) mainly focused on improving the educational standard at all levels so that access to education will become easy for every child. Here very less information in relation to disaster, safety and security can be managed (merged or included) in educational institutions. Whereas National Education Policy 2020 not only gives the guidance for improvement of education but also safety security and disaster are also framed road map on safety, security and disaster risk reduction.

Objectives:-

1. To study the roadmap safety security and disaster risk reduction for children and teaching staff in National Education Policy 2020.
2. To find out the context of the mentioning of the terms security, safety and disaster components in National Education Policy-2020.

Limitations

The study is limited to National Education Policy 2020.

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Methodology:-

The present study is a descriptive and evaluative type, in which the researcher critically evaluates the safety, security and disaster components of the National Education Policy 2020. The researcher identifies the statements where there are terms on safety, security and disaster written in the National Policy of Education 2020 document of the policy and analysis these terms such as safety, security and disaster risk reduction word or statements are used in the policy.

Finding and Analysis of the statements and words on safety, security and Disaster

The terms related to disasters which appeared in the National Education Policy 2020 are the following:

Terms	Appeared in no. of time	Page No.
Disaster	1	16
Safety	7	9, 25, 26, 27, 33, 51 and 61
Security	4	27, 31, 32, and 49
Risk	1	58

Source: Prepared/derived by the researcher from the official document of National Educational Policy 2020.

The above table shows the terms related to the disaster that appeared in the education policy 2020.

Following are the statements and words related to safety, security and disaster that occurred in the National Education Policy 2020:

Peer tutoring and safety aspects:

Part I School Education, Chapter 2 Foundational Literacy and Numeracy: An Urgent & Necessary Prerequisite to Learning. Page no. 9 Para 2.7.

The term 'Safety' has been defined in the context of learning numeracy, literacy and peer tutoring it is mentioned in this chapter that in the above chapter it is mentioned that "Due to the scale of the current learning crisis, all viable methods will be explored to support teachers in the mission of attaining universal foundational literacy and numeracy. Studies around the world show one-on-one peer tutoring to be extremely effective for learning not just for the learner, but also for the tutor. Thus, peer tutoring can be taken up as a voluntary and joyful activity for fellow students under the supervision of trained teachers and by taking due care of safety aspects....."

Thus, it can be concluded that the word safety is used in the context of securing foundational numeracy and literacy so that one can get a better understanding of safety from any kind of unforeseen disaster and also for removing learning crises.

Sensitization of human values:

Part I School Education, Chapter 4 Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools: Learning Should be Holistic, Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging. Page no. 16 Para 4.28 ".....Basic training in health, including preventive health, mental health, good nutrition, personal and public hygiene, disaster response and first aid will also be included in the curriculum, as well as scientific explanations of the detrimental and damaging effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs."

The above paragraph of National Education Policy 2020, gives emphasis on basic training in health-related activities which include mental health, good nutrition, preventive health measures, personal and public hygiene, and disaster risk reduction and response strategies i.e. first aid will be included in the curriculum. Thus, from this above paragraph part of the policy, it can be concluded that the policy laid emphasis on curriculum and pedagogy should have health-related issues/matters and disaster risk reduction response to sensitized children towards human values that are directly and indirectly helps them to become a self-aware citizen and can take care of their health and can differentiate what is good and bad for themselves, which can restore their safety and make them prepared for disaster response.

Safe infrastructure and facilities:

Part I School Education, Chapter 5 Teachers Page no. 21 Para 5.9. ".... Adequate and safe infrastructure, including working toilets, clean drinking water, clean and attractive spaces, electricity, computing devices, internet, libraries,

and sports and recreational resources will be provided to all schools to ensure that teachers and students, including children of all genders and children with disabilities, receive a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment and are comfortable and inspired to teach and learn in their schools. In-service training will have inputs on safety, health and environment at workplace in schools to ensure that all teachers.....”

Thus, in the above paragraph of National Education Policy 2020 words safe infrastructure, and safe learning environment has been mentioned which reveals that National Education Policy 2020 has given the emphasis on pleasant service conditions, that is an adequate and safe infrastructure which includes neat and clean toilets, safe and clean drinking water, clean and attractive spaces, proper electricity, computing devices, internet and libraries etc. It is also mentioned that teachers, students and children with special needs should have a safe, inclusive and effective learning environment and briefed that In-service training will be given to teachers on safety, health issues and environment at the workplace frequently.

SEDGs and cycle and other aids:

Part I School Education, Chapter 6 Equitable and Inclusive Education: Learning for All. Page 25 Para 6.5 ".....methods in increasing participation of female students - even at lesser distances - because of the safety benefits and comfort to parents that they provide. One-on-one teachers and tutors, peer tutoring, open schooling, appropriate infrastructure, and suitable technological interventions to ensure access can be particularly effective for certain children with disabilities.....”

The above paragraph of National Policy 2020 has mentioned that for improving the mental health of the children and maintaining good connections between students, parents, and teachers with the help of counsellors and other social workers. The policy also mentioned that, for increasing the enrolment ratio of female students. There should be less distance from home to school due to safety concerns and also appropriate infrastructure and suitable technologies for catering to the needs of children having special needs. It laid importance to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning among all as per the SDG (Sustainable Development Goals- Goal number 4). It also laid importance on technological interventions for making the learning process more accessible. But the use of technological advancement toward safety and security was missing.

Safety measures for girls and underprivileged:

Part I School Education, Chapter 6 Equitable and Inclusive Education: Learning for All Page 26 Para 6.9 “.... with suitable arrangements for the safety of all children, especially girls. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas will be strengthened and expanded to increase the participation in quality schools (up to Grade 12) of girls from socio-economically disadvantaged.....”

Above paragraph reveals that the National Education Policy 2020 in its chapter 6, guided that female, children are the vulnerable sections of society and suitable arrangements of safety for all the children including children with special needs in the residential school, and especially for girls from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds will be provided.

Barrier-free access and other facilities:

Part I School Education, Chapter 6 Equitable and Inclusive Education: Learning for All Page 26-27, Para 6.11 & 6.12 ‘.....Barrier-free access for all children with disabilities will be enabled as per the RPWD Act. This will apply to all school activities including arts, sports, and vocational education. NIOS will develop high-quality modules to teach Indian Sign Language, and to teach other basic subjects using Indian Sign Language. Adequate attention will be paid to the safety and security of children with disabilities.’

The above paragraph of National Education Policy 2020 adequate emphasis that there should be provision of safety measures for the safety of children with special needs and also providing them with a barrier-free learning environment. As per the policy school should have provisions for the integration of children with disabilities, recruitment of special educators or trained teachers and resource centers where for children having disabilities can sit and access a barrier-free learning environment. The safety of special need children should also be applied in vocational education, school activities, arts, and sports activities.

Basic parameter at state school standard authorities:

Part I School Education. Chapter 8 Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education Page 31, Para 8.5 Para (C) ‘.... States/UTs will set up an independent, State-wide, body called the State School Standards Authority (SSSA). The SSSA will establish a minimal set of standards based on basic parameters (namely, safety, security, basic infrastructure, number of teachers across subjects and grades, financial probity, and sound processes of governance), which shall be followed by all schools....’

The above paragraph of chapter 8 of the National Education Policy 2020 stated that the educational authorities of the states and UTs to set up independent state-wide-bodies such as the State School Standard Authority (SSSA) and which will monitor a minimal set of standards on the parameters such as safety, security, basic infrastructure, number of teachers across subjects and grades, financial probity, and sound governance so that all stakeholders remain safe and secure from any type of disaster.

Part I School Education. Chapter 8 Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education Page 32, Para 8.8. ‘.... inputs, and the mechanistic nature of their specifications – physical and infrastructural – will be changed and requirements made more responsive to realities on the ground, e.g., regarding land areas and room sizes, practicalities of playgrounds in urban areas, etc. These mandates will be adjusted and loosened, leaving suitable flexibility for each school to make its own decisions based on local needs and constraints, while ensuring safety, security, and a pleasant and productive learning space.....’

The above paragraph of chapter 8 of the National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes on reviewing the physical infrastructural system of schools, accreditation, and governance on the basis of past decadal experiences. The purpose behind this is to ensure access to high-quality universally free education for all. This paragraph has emphasis especially on the underprivileged and socially disadvantaged section from age 3 years up to grade 12 of the country. Another significant area of emphasis is upon inputs and mechanisms that are concerned with changes in physical and infrastructural facilities such as sizes of the room, playgrounds in urban areas and land availability, etc. while ensuring safety, security in the classroom space, proper movement of children i.e. pleasant and productive learning space in the school where there is an inclusive environment.

Safety measures for an adolescent:

Part I School Education. Chapter 8 Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education Page 33 Para 8.11. “Finally, the children and adolescents enrolled in schools must not be forgotten in this whole process; after all, the school system is designed for them. Careful attention must be paid to their safety and rights- particularly girl children.....”

Thus above paragraph of National Education Policy 2020 has recommended on physical and infrastructural changes which are suitable to fulfil the needs of children, adolescents, children with special needs and especially female child. It also lays importance on the safety and rights of adolescent children and teaches about reporting mechanisms kept in high priority to protect students from any kind of violence, drug abuse, discrimination and harassment etc.

Part III Other Key Areas of focus, Chapter 21 Adult Education and Life Long Learning. All Page 51 Para 21.2. “.... directions and safety directives on the street, on medicines, etc.; help children with their education; be aware of one’s basic rights and responsibilities as a citizen of India.....”

It is concluded from the above paragraph that the adult education and lifelong learning mentioned in chapter 21, and emphasizes upon helping the non-literate group of the community by making them aware of directions and safety on the streets, medicines, children for their education, and making them aware of their rights and responsibilities as a citizen of the country.

Part IV Making it happen, Chapter 27 Implementation. Page 61 Para 26.3. ‘.... ensuring universal access, learning resources, nutritional support, matters of student safety and well-being, adequate numbers of teachers and staff, teacher development, and support for all key initiatives towards equitable high-quality education for underprivileged and socio-economically disadvantaged groups.’

The above paragraph of the national education policy, 2020 lays importance upon the financial assistance to the important elements of education. These elements include nutritional support, ensuring universal access, learning

resources, matters of students to the safety and well-being of all, a sufficient number of teachers and other required staff, teacher development, and support for all initiatives toward equitable, high-quality education for every section of society without any discrimination.

Conclusion:-

It has been observed in the policy that the national education policy is covering disaster-related terms in different chapters and parts of the policy.

1. Firstly, its emphasis on developing foundational literacy and numeracy as it is required for getting a better understanding of disaster-related concepts in long run.
2. Secondly, by including disaster in the curriculum and pedagogy helps in making students and teachers aware of their health and hygiene which is very important for sensitizing about human values.
3. Thirdly, providing safe infrastructure facilities to all in the educational and time-to-time training to the teachers for raising the awareness level of all.
4. Fourthly, it gives importance to the inclusive setup in which children having special needs can also be aware of their safety and security under one roof and also laid importance to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
5. Fifthly, it gives importance to females and the underprivileged section of society as they are more vulnerable to disasters.
6. Sixthly, providing a barrier-free environment in every field of education such as arts, sports and vocational education.
7. Seventhly, it gives directions to states and UTs to set up the school accreditation and assessment, which not only measures education but also monitors the safety and security of all.
8. Eighthly, it gives importance to the assessment of physical and infrastructural and making need-based changes in the existing infrastructure for reducing the disaster risks in the school buildings.
9. Ninthly, it gives importance to providing awareness about the rights and duties of adolescents for which due attention is given so that they can be protected from any kind of violence, abuse, and discrimination.
10. Tenthly, it also emphasizes long-term lifelong learning goals by giving moral responsibility to those educated students so that they can make people aware of their locality who are illiterate and uneducated about their safety and security.
11. Lastly, it provides direction or guidelines for the disbursement of financial assistance so that it can reach to the ground level of implementation

It is concluded that the government of India has formulated educational policies regularly to ensure high quality in the education system which will recognize at the international level. The previous educational policy has contributed to developing the educational system but the National Education Policy 2020 emphasis is on providing basic infrastructure, but the importance of safety and security to the teachers and students was not given in a clear and defined way. The current educational policy is now getting more comprehensive and elaborative form, in terms of inclusion, safety, disaster response, rights and security among all.

Thus, it is concluded that the Education Policy 1986 (Revised in 1992) has mainly emphasis on access to education for each and every individual of society. The new education policy has also covered safety, security and disaster risk reduction within the institution as well as giving awareness how to prevent themselves from any kind of disaster and to live a healthy life with safety and security.

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