



Research Paper

## Implementation Strategies for National Education Policy 2020 in Ladakh: Challenges and Opportunities.

Dr. Sanjay Kumar

Assistant Professor (Education)  
Kargil Campus University of Ladakh (Ladakh)

Received 01 July, 2022; Revised 08 July, 2022; Accepted 10 July, 2022 © The author(s) 2022.  
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### About Ladakh:

On 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2019 Ladakh became a Union Territory, which was earlier the part of Jammu and Kashmir. The UT Ladakh is renowned for its distinct culture and remote mountain beauty. The Union Territory Ladakh spread towards large area of the northern and eastern Kashmir region, north-western Indian subcontinent. Administratively, Ladakh is divided between Pakistan (northwest), as part of Gilgit-Baltistan, and India (southeast), as part of Ladakh union territory; in addition, China administers portions of north-eastern Ladakh. Ladakh covers about 117,000 square km, and contains the Ladakh Range, which is a south-eastern extension of the Karakoram Range, and the upper Indus River valley. Ladakh is one of the highest regions of the world. Its natural features consist mainly of high plains and deep valleys. The high plain predominates in the east, diminishing gradually toward the west. In south-eastern Ladakh lies Rupshu, an area of large, brackish lakes with a uniform elevation of about 13,500 feet (4,100 metres). To the northwest of Rupshu lies the Zaskar Range, an inaccessible region where the people and the cattle remain indoors for much of the year because of the harsh winter. Zaskar is drained by the Zaskar River, which, flowing northward, joins the Indus River below Leh. In the heart of Ladakh, farther to the north, cultivation by means of manuring and irrigation is practiced by farmers living in valley villages at elevations between about 9,000 and 15,000 feet (2,750 and 4,550 metres). Shepherds tend flocks in the upland valleys that are too high for cultivation. Leh, the most accessible town of Ladakh, is an important trade centre located 160 miles (260 km) east of Srinagar.

The climate of Ladakh is very cold and dry. Average annual precipitation is roughly 3 inches (80 mm); fine, dry, flaked snow is frequent and sometimes falls heavily. Vegetation is confined to valleys and sheltered spots, where a stunted growth of tamarisk (genus *Tamarix*) shrubs, furze (also called gorse; spiny plants of the legume family), and other plants supply much-needed firewood. The principal products are wheat, barley, millet, buckwheat, peas, beans, and turnips. Woollen cloth and other textiles are the primary manufactures.

Ladakh has been contested by India and Pakistan since the dissolution of British India in 1947; after the cease-fire agreement of 1949, its south-eastern portion went to India and the remainder to Pakistan. China gained control of its portion of Ladakh when its forces entered the region in the early 1960s.

Kargil, portion of the western Ladakh union territory, north-western India, formerly part of north-western Jammu and Kashmir state. The sector, centred on the town of Kargil, lies in the Zaskar Range of the Himalayas and abuts the line of control between the portions of the Kashmir region administered by India and Pakistan. Kargil town, located roughly equidistant between Srinagar (southwest) and Leh (southeast), is considered the gateway to Ladakh. Kargil's landscape is mountainous, rugged, and high, the minimum elevation being some 8,000 feet (2,440 metres). The climate is cold and dry, with scanty precipitation that falls mainly as snow in winter. One locality, Dras (Drass), is reputed to be one of the world's coldest permanently inhabited places, with winter temperatures falling to as low as -40 °F (-40 °C) or colder. Vegetation, mainly grasses and shrubs, is largely confined to river valleys at lower elevations, as the higher places are rocky and largely barren. Most of the residents of Kargil are of Balti origin, and the large majority are Shi'i Muslims. Because of its close proximity to the line of control, Kargil has often been the site of border conflicts between India and Pakistan. The largest and deadliest of these clashes was the Kargil War, which took place in May-July 1999. In early May the Indian military learned that Pakistani fighters had infiltrated Indian-administered territory. The intrusion triggered intense fighting between the two sides that lasted more than two months. The Indian army reclaimed most of the area on the Indian side that had been occupied by the infiltrators, and hostilities finally ended in July

when the remaining Pakistani fighters retreated from the Indian zone. Several hundred combatants were killed on each side during the conflict.

### **The NEP 2020: Brief**

The National Education Policy 2020 introduces a whole scope of changes and reads largely as a very progressive document, with a firm grasp on the current socio-economic landscape and the prospect of future uncertainty. Education for a new generation of learners has to essentially engage with the increasing dematerialisation and digitalisation of economies, which requires a completely new set of capabilities in order to be able to keep up. This seems to be an even more vital prerequisite now, with the trend towards digitalisation and disruptive automation being quickened by the pandemic.

The NEP 2020 addresses the need to develop professionals in a variety of fields ranging from Agriculture to Artificial Intelligence. India needs to be ready for the future. And the NEP 2020 paves the way ahead for many young aspiring students to be equipped with the right skillset. The new education policy has a laudable vision, but its strength will depend on whether it is able to effectively integrate with the other policy initiatives of government like Digital India, Skill India and the New Industrial Policy to name a few, in order to effect a coherent structural transformation.

Hence, policy linkages can ensure that education policy addresses to and learns from Skill India's experience in engaging more dynamically with the corporate sector to shape vocational education curriculum in order to make it a success. There is also a necessity for more evidence-based decision-making, to adapt to rapidly evolving transmutations and disruptions. NEP has reassuringly provisioned for real-time evaluation systems and a consultative monitoring and review framework. This shall empower the education system to constantly reform itself, instead of expecting for a new education policy every decade for a shift in curriculum. This, in itself, will be a remarkable achievement. The NEP 2020 is a defining moment for higher education. Effective and time-bound implementation is what will make it truly path-breaking.

### **Ladakh: Its Educational Structure and Status:**

Education Department Kargil has been the biggest department in the district with the largest human resource and network of schools in the nook and corner of the District. Presently the organization is managed by (1) CEO at District Level (1) Dy. CEO (7) ZEO at zonal level (14) Principals, 47 Headmasters at institutional level and 1 Principal at DIET Kargil along with one University with two campuses at Leh and Kargil districts.

### **Objectives of the study:**

**The present research investigation is focused on the following objectives:**

- 1. What is the present status of Education in Ladakh.**
- 2. What are the various challenges in implementation of NEP 2020 in Ladakh.**
- 3. How NEP can provide better opportunities and exposure to the students.**

**Objective 1: to discuss the present status of Education in Ladakh**

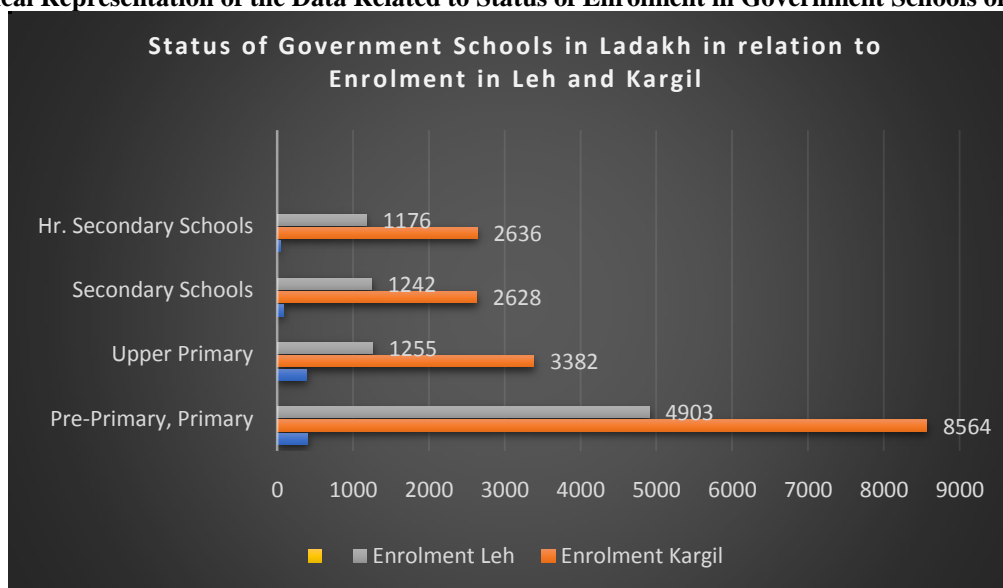
**Tale 1.1 Showing Data Related to Status of Government Schools in Ladakh in relation to Enrolment in Leh and Kargil**

School Category (Govt)	Total Schools in Ladakh	Enrolment Kargil	Enrolment Leh	TOTAL Enrolment in Ladakh (Govt)
Pre-Primary, Primary	399	8564	4903	13467
Upper Primary	387	3382	1255	4637
Secondary Schools	82	2628	1242	3870
Hr. Secondary Schools	36	2636	1176	3812
Total	904	17210	8576	25786

<https://dse.ladakh.gov.in/>

The above Table revealed the detailed information regarding the enrolment in schools of Ladakh. It was found that there are 399 pre-primary schools in Ladakh and having enrolment of 13467 students. While there were 387 upper primary schools in Ladakh with the enrolment of 4637 students. Further there was 82 senior secondary schools in Ladakh with the enrolment of 3870 students. Along with this there are 36 Higher secondary schools in Ladakh with the enrolment of 3812 students. The total enrolment from pre-primary to higher secondary was 25786 students in Ladakh.

**Graphical Representation of the Data Related to Status of Enrolment in Government Schools of Ladakh**



**Table 1.2 Showing Data regarding Enrolment in Private Schools in Ladakh**

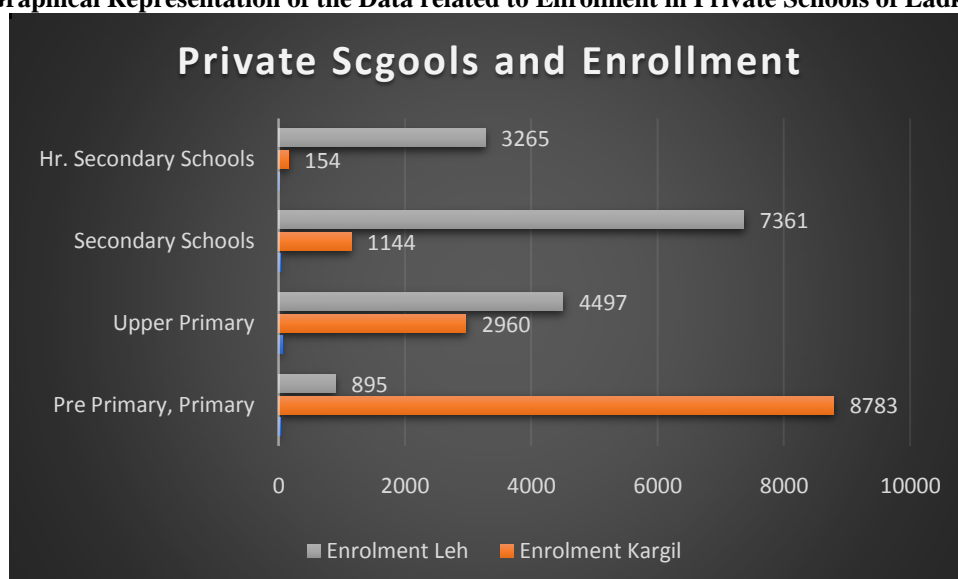
School Category (Private)	Total Ladakh	Enrolment Kargil	Enrolment Leh	Total Enrolment in Ladakh. ( Pvt)
Pre Primary, Primary	25	8783	895	9678
Upper Primary	56	2960	4497	7457
Secondary Schools	28	1144	7361	8505
Hr. Secondary Schools	4	154	3265	3419
Total	113	13041	16018	29059

<https://dse.ladakh.gov.in/>

The above table 1.1 revealed the data regarding enrolment in private schools of Ladakh. It was found that there was only 25 pre-primary school and the total enrolment was 9678 students. Majority of the students in pre-primary 8783 were enrolled in Kargil while only 895 students were enrolled in Leh district.

There were 56 upper primary schools in the Ladakh, in which 2960 students were enrolled in Kargil and 4497 students were enrolled in Leh. Further there were 28 secondary school and, in these schools, total 8505 students were enrolled out of which 1144 were enrolled in Kargil and 7361 were enrolled in Leh district. Further there are 4 private Higher secondary schools in Ladakh and in Kargil enrolment was 154 and in Leh enrolment was 3265. The table revealed that total number of students in private school from pre primary to higher secondary was 29059 students.

**Graphical Representation of the Data related to Enrolment in Private Schools of Ladakh**



**Table 1.3 Vocational Education in Hr. Sec. School in Ladakh**

District	ITI	Tourism/ Health Care	Retail/Beauty	Enrolments
Leh	09	09	0	638
Kargil	07	05	02	609
Total	16	14	02	1247

<https://dse.ladakh.gov.in/>

The above table explored the information regarding the total number of ITI's in Ladakh, Tourism / Health centres and retail/ beauty institutions. There was total enrolment of 638 students in Leh and 609 students in Kargil district of Ladakh.

### **Challenges in the Implementation of New Education Policy 2020:**

#### **1. Doubling the Gross Enrolment Ratios required more Institutions:**

India today has around 1,000 universities across the country. Doubling the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education by 2035 which is one of the stated goals of the policy will mean that we must open one new university every week, for the next 15 years. Opening one University every week on an ongoing basis is an undeniably massive challenge.

#### **2. Required Reforms to our School System:**

The National Education Policy 2020 plans to bring those 2 crore children back to schools, who are currently not going schools for education. To fulfil this plan, over the 15 years, requires the setting up of around 50 schools every week. This certainly requires a substantial amount of investment in classrooms and campuses which will be extremely challenging.

#### **3. Lack of Funding in the Post Covid era is a big challenge:**

The NEP 2020 forecasts an increase budget in education spending from 4.6% to 6% of GDP, which amounts to around 2.5 lakh crores rupees per year. This money will be spent on infrastructure, building schools and colleges across the country, recruiting teachers and professors, and for operational expenses such as providing free breakfast to school children.

This policy was launched at the time when the economy has been affected by Covid-19 related lockdowns, government tax collections are dreadfully low, and the fiscal deficit was high even pre-Covid and in post covid era, immediately generating funds is an issue.

#### **4. Requirement of creating a large pool of trained teachers**

For the better implementation of National Education Policy 2020, we need to create a pool of trained teachers as in school education, the policy predicts a sweeping structural reformulation of the syllabus. Many of the curricular changes require considerable mindset shifts on the part of teachers, as well as parents.

**5. To fight with harsh winter conditions in Places Ladakh:** Summer and Winter campus formula to prevent from winter along with exposure to students. This formula can also be helpful in any situation of war for the local students to migrate and will help to get full facilities in their respective winter campus outside the UT. There is another idea of shifting students in winters to the other universities to and to use resources. As there are limited seats in each department so these few students can be easily accommodated in various universities during winters, Such MoU should be made with other universities for betterment of the Ladakhi students.

#### **❖ Strategies for Implementation National Education Policy 2020 in UT Ladakh**

The process of awareness and sharing information about NEP 2020 with all stake holders goes with all stake holders and general public for almost 5 years in the form of consultation, discussions, conducting seminars, holding workshops. Now it is available in the public domain. We should understand that a policy document is a statement of intent of the government and provides guidelines. It is to be implemented as a procedure and protocol by following all the regulations and directions pointed out in the policy document.

There are structural changes to revolutionize the Indian education system along with path breaking and transformatory initiatives which were hitherto not found in the earlier educational policies. It appears to be providing direction for holistic, integrated, comprehensive and all-inclusive high quality education, value system and man making life skills activity without, neglecting 21st century skills.

Transforming curricular and pedagogical structure of school education i.e. 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 which includes 3 years in Anganwadi / Balvatika / pre-school and 12 years in school in 4 stages viz. foundation stage (5 years), preparatory stage (3 years), middle stage (3 years) and secondary stage (4 years). Here new concept is "Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)" is being streamlined assuring continued health care, self-help skills bringing all Anganwadis, Balvatikas and other pre-primary classes under main stream education.

There are otherspecialties like attaining Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of retaining all children in schools until completion of secondary education with a thrust on vocational education. Improving the quality and achievement of learning outcomes i.e. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), focus on 21st century skills in teaching, learning and assessment, resource sharing through school complexes, overcoming the

language barrier in learning, fixing common standards for public and private school education and improving teacher education along with empowerment and provision for continuous professional development are some of the new features in the NEP-20 policy document. Every policy and plan have got to succeed when its implementation is taken care with utmost precaution and strategy involving all the stakeholders.

**1. Requirement of study and understanding the policy details:**

The Effective implementation of NEP 2020 is possible when all the stake holders study and understand each and every aspect of the policy proposed. For this we may follow top down approach. The academic world, intellectuals, education-leaders, media and policy implementers are to be well informed about all important aspects of National Educational Policy-2020 and need to compare the difference with previous policies.. It is more futuristic and prepares our people to face global competition and achieve all 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs).

**II. Success Depends on Teacher on the Ground level and in the schools:**

The role of teachers is the most crucial in the implementation of NEP-2020. Whatever policies may be laid down by the government, teachers have to be interpreted and implemented at ground level. There are about 904 pre primary to higher secondary schools Government schools in Ladakh with the enrolment of approximately 25786 students (Details in Table-1.1) while in private sector there are about 113 pre primary to higher secondary schools with the enrolment of 29059 students in Ladakh. Insite of this there are ITI's and one University with two campus and 07 colleges. The teachers of all these schools and colleges should understand the policy in detail and their special role. Educating, empowering, upgrading, up-skilling and updating them is a big challenge even to the Government. Simultaneously here bottom-up approach is to be followed.

**2. Content Generation:**

As the thrust is on multi linguism and power of language, high quality text books are to be prepared in local language, for which a lot of effort is to be put in advance at primary stage classes. For example, there are many languages which are only spoken without script. There needs a special effort to design text books to meet local or regional requirements. There will be no hard separation among curricular, co-curricular or extra- curricular activities and arts, humanities, science subjects, between academic or non-academic streams. Our graded activities shall be providing guidelines at school level. We should have to get ready with quality content at all levels, before the space is occupied by anti-national forces which were hither to controlling the whole educational organizations setup and system.

**3. Integrated and Experiential learning:**

There are two guideline books has been released by CBSE on experiential learning and arts integration with all subjects. Basing on these we should have to work out in details during this year and get ready for submission of content whenever it is required.

**4. Vocationalisation – Skilling while Schooling:**

To meet all future challenges and requirements this is quite reformatory and essential measure that from standard VI to XII – vocations and skills education, to be added after studying the local and field level requirements and needs are to be considered. We shall have to send a detailed plan with syllabus and activities. Village artisans, local experts, village professionals, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and skill development agencies can play a vital role in this regard.

**5. Establishment of Local organisations like SCERT:**

As NEP 2020 suggested, 20 to 30 percent of local syllabus should be in text books. We should have to gear up our mechanism to select local essential syllabus content and provide inputs whenever and wherever it is essential. This will help organisations like SCERT in preparing textbooks in time and hasten the process of implementation.

**6. Integration of regular subjects with life skills, value system and man making mechanism:**

For the integration of regular subjects with life skills, along with prescribed competencies and decided learning outcomes, we need to inculcate scientific temper, evidence based thinking, creativity and innovation, sense of aesthetics and art, oral and written communication, health and nutrition, wellness and sports, collaboration and team work, problem solving and logical thinking, digital literacy, coding and computational thinking, ethical and moral reasoning etc. Further teachers are to be trained and up-skilled and ready with necessary inputs and information. Workout sessions are to be held for curriculum integration with desirable skills acquisition.

### **7. Transforming teacher education:**

The present policy NEP 2020 is a complete revamp of teacher education, a key sector on which the entire education edifice depends and which was not cared for and most neglected one during all the years after independence is inevitable and the present policy aims to achieve it.

### **8. Development of School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework (SQAAF):**

School quality improvement programme and Manak parishad are our successful initiatives across the country with our rich experience in school education. Basing on our expertise we should assist authorities, organisations like SCERT in developing SQAAF after consulting all stake holders since there is a time line for implementation of NEP-20

### **9. Institutional Empowerment for better implementation strategy:**

We need to establish the powerful institutions for the democratic environment. India inherited the administrative legacy from the Britishers. Therefore, most of our institutions including bureaucracy is designed to fulfill the requirements of colonial rule and are not strong enough to strengthen a true democracy and Indian values. In spite of facing hurdles from some quarters we have to think of institutional empowerment for better implementation strategy and desired results.

### **10. School Complex and clusters:**

We need to make school complexes and clusters so that School complexes will ensure the availability and sharing of all resources, infrastructure, experienced teachers, special teachers and counsellors, by all the schools in that cluster. There is a mention of Balbhavans which same as Bala Samskara Kendras, running for pre-primary children through art, play and culture related activities.

### **11. Samajik Chetana Kendras**

There is a guidance that schools are to be developed as samajik chetana kendras to promote useful service activities as our social responsibility. This is in association with our concept of school as a centre for social change, for which we required to plan number of activities and with our expertise we can help the government. Hence, we need to be ready to prepare syllabus and activity schedule for the same.

### **11. Monitoring and involvement in implementation:**

Department of school education will be responsible for overall monitoring and policy making for frequent improvement. All educational tasks and other provisions of schooling system are to be handled by the Directorate of School Education. Academic matters, curriculum, syllabus and textbooks shall be prepared by SCERT, with close consultation and collaboration with NCERT.

### **Conclusion:**

The National Education Policy 2020 has a praiseworthy vision, There is also a need for more evidence-based decision-making, to adapt to rapidly evolving shifts and disruption. Its influence will depend on whether it is able to effectively merge with the government's other policy initiatives- Digital India, Skill India and the New Industrial Policy. Policy linkages can ensure that education policy learns from Skill India's experience in engaging more dynamically with the private sector to shape vocational education curriculum in order to make it a success.

The National Education Policy, 2020 also aims to change towards more scientific approach in education. It will surely help to cater ability of the child in different stages of life, which includes cognitive development, social and physical development. When implemented, the policy will bring India at par with leading countries of the world.

It is an model policy as it targets at making the education system more flexible, multidisciplinary, aggregate and aligned to the needs of the 21st century and the 2030 and help to fulfil the higher enrolment dream by 2035. The commitment of the policy seems to be ideal in many ways but it is the implementation process where the key to success ultimately lies. We need to sit continuously and hold workshops to prepare transcripts, need to enlist activities and suggestions etc. both for our comprehension and to hasten the process of implementation at government level. So that a union territory like Ladakh can implement in a better way and can serve the trans-Himalayan inhabitants with better education.

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