

# R.K. Narayan's My Educational Outlook from The Perspective of New Educational Policy 2020

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## Abstract:

R.K. Narayan is considered a phenomenal man of letters of Indian Writing in English. His writing style mirrors his thoughts on the social, political, and economic concerns of society. His minute observation of major issues of countries makes him a key figure in transforming his surroundings. This paper seeks to examine R.K. Narayan's My Educational Outlook from the perspective of the New Education Policy 2020.

**Indexterms:** Indian Writing, Education, Society

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayanaswami better known by the name R.K. Narayan, faithfully examines the old education system based on cramming, considering it unproductive. A set plan told by him in his essay "My Educational Outlook" somehow resembles the New Education Policy 2020, which is practical and flexible. R.K. Narayan is often considered to be an outspoken writer who is fearless in putting up issues which are ignored before and need to be paid attention to now. He is a voluminous writer and raises his voice to the larger audience. Having the skill of serious writing, he pursues his work with hard work and dedication.

Narayan's My Educational Outlook is one of the essays from his famous book *A Writer's Nightmare* (1988), which raised societal issues such as the Caste system, the Indian Education System, Cinema, etc. The focus of this research paper is the study of My Educational Outlook, which is an honest view on the Old Indian Education System in comparison to the New Education Policy 2020. R.K. Narayan starts his essay by raising his voice for an organized educational system, as he says:

'If a classification is called for, I may be labeled 'anti-educational'. I am not versed in enlightenment, but I feel convinced that the entire organization, system, outlook, and aims of education are hopelessly wrong (Narayan 37).

In the initial part of the essay, R.K. Narayan focuses on the unchanging scenario of education since its foundation, from primary to P.H.D, nothing is new. Hype is given of making numerous changes, scientific and practical, but reality is the opposite. After analysis of the New Education Policy 2020, it seems that the draft prepared in today's time reflects ideas from R.K. Narayan's ideology on education. The vision that he saw 40 years ago through his essay resembles the education policy of today, which focuses on recognizing, identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each individual. The New Education Policy 2020 focuses on flexibility, no hard separation of curriculum, promoting life skills, and critical thinking.

In the essay, R.K. Narayan recalls his childhood memories of strict teachers who could not bear a minor mistake in calculation, but on the other hand could have cane and snuff with them. Time may take a drift, but the behavioral traits of teachers remain unchanged, as nowadays instead of snuff, the foot rule is used; thus, this indicates that violence has been practiced since old times, just the object used is replaced according to the standard of modern age. It is a pathetic experience of R.K. Narayan of his schooldays, facing harsh punishment, causing physical and mental harassment. It's a traumatic experience to see the behavior of teachers considered as Godly figures for the students. Can we expect such teachers to inculcate values among the students?

A ray of hope given by Narayan is seen through the eyes of the new policy framed by the Government of India, as NEP 2020 believes: "Teachers truly shape the future of our country and therefore, the future of our nation" (NEP 20). TET and NTA test scores are taken into account for recruitment. Experts as 'master instructors' in various subjects are appointed to enrich students with vocational art, entrepreneurship, agriculture, and promote local knowledge. If these rules are taken into action, then teachers will be well versed with issues of students and by using their knowledge, they can render help to students to understand difficult topics, thus paving their way to better future opportunities.

R.K. Narayan highlights on the tiring admission procedure. He feels that the poor people find it difficult to pay the exorbitant fees. Poor people have to beg for admissions as the seats are restricted and recommendations also play the vital role in admission process leading to deterioration of their mental and physical health. Even on getting admission the poor students are under stress as they find it difficult to afford expensive books. R.K. Narayan writes:

At the next stage, the students will once again queue, beg, beat about, and appeal--for a textbook this time (38).

So it is clear that the poor students face tremendous stress to fulfill their aspirations of getting education. India with the population of sixty five percent under the age of 35 is considered to be largest youth population in the world, but India's major issue is unemployment, leading to the underdevelopment of the country. Due to misguidance and lack of awareness, India's youth is sitting idle or indulge in wrong deeds like drugs and stealing. NEP 2020 aims to provide an equitable opportunity to study for students from different backgrounds. The main focus is on giving job-oriented skills so that the percentage of the unemployed population can be reduced over a span of time.

Examination under the Indian Education System was considered the most stressful and depressing phase of a student's life. During preparatory holidays, students used to experience anxiety and nervousness about the exam. Invigilators instead of making students comfortable by wishing all the best and motivating them used to stare like wardens, they used to open the seal of the question paper after creating suspense. Even if the students were well prepared, tension used to shed their confidence, leading to bad results. R.K. Narayan's wish to become Vice Chancellor is a drastic step in the old education system. Through his wish, he wants to remove all the stones that are hurdles in the way of a transformed Education System. Narayan, as a writer, is straightforward and faithful in mirroring his mind with full clarity and firmness, raising major issues prevalent in society. Narayan's first step after his wish of becoming V.C. is abolishing the secrecy of the question paper by publishing it in a public newspaper and giving the name of the evaluator. So this step of Narayan focuses on the student asking the important question.

Narayan is of the view that the question paper in India is considered to have the highest power, which piques students' curiosity. They cram all the important questions, study according to the pattern of the

paper, but now that the paper is all in public, students can answer questions more confidently, giving their ideas and points, which increases their intelligence. Further, he will add a postscript to every question paper:

If you cannot answer any of the above questions, do not despair. Remember, your examiners are not infallible and may not do better if placed in your predicament. Your inability to answer willingly in no way reflects on your intelligence (39).

From the above it is clear that the examination is the parameter to judge individual's intelligence.

Through this step of R.K. Narayan, there will be normalization in the Education System, causing new insight in youngsters to explore more and become intellectual, leading a productive life. His vision can be seen in light of NEP 2020. Narayan mentions that the educational system needs to be well-endowed, organized, and deep-rooted; a remedy must be found immediately so that the new educational system gives faithful results. He concludes his essay by saying: "When there is a crisis at home, the thing to do is to buy a round-the-world air ticket and leave" (40)

R.K. Narayan is recognized as a conscious writer who not only contributed to Indian Literature but also showed keen interest in raising the issue of exploitation in educational decorum. R.K. Narayan was nominated to the Rajya Sabha, where he was a member of the upper house of the Indian Parliament, in 1989, for a six-year term. He took his responsibility seriously by raising issues about his country's education system. The parliament speech given by Narayan on 27 April 1989 focused on the issue of over-burdening of school Children. R.K. Narayan says:

The hardship starts right at home. v.hsa straight from bed, the child is pulled out and gets ready for school before his faculties are awake (Parliamentary Debates 183)

Narayan emphasized the burden on a school-going child especially the convent schools. He has to get up early in the morning and dress up in a prescribed uniform, tie, laced, and polished shoes. The child carrying a bag with a load of 3-6 kg over the shoulders looks like a chimpanzee. If students by mistake forget to carry any book, they are beaten on their knuckles with a wooden scale. R.K. Narayanan is of the view that weight of the bag can be reduced by lessening the quantity of unnecessary books and stuff. Taking inspiration from Narayan's ideology, 'No Bag Day' in Telangana is practiced. It is an initiative taken into account where students come to school without a loaded bag on the fourth Saturday of each month. This decision was undertaken to break the shackles of academic pressure on students so that they can participate in extracurricular activities to boost their creativity and allow them to strengthen their physical health by indulging in sports activities, dancing, taekwondo, etc.

In nutshell it may be said that under New Education policy 2020 the Educational system is paving the way of well endowed and organized structure which is deep rooted. NEP suggests remedies that must be followed immediately for fruitful results.

## REFERENCES

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