

Impact of Draft National Education Policy by the Government of India in the subject Psychology and counselling

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ABSTRACT

Draft of National Educational Policy- 2019 was submitted to Mr. Prakash Jawedekar, minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India on December 15, 2018. This draft lays the foundation of how various subjects may grow in the upcoming future. The present draft has specifically described the roles and professional expectations from a 'counsellor'. This article is expected to help psychology students, academicians and other academic policy makers to understand the government's expectations from the psychologist who are expected to work in educational institutions.

Index terms: Counselling, counsellors, draft national Education Policy, psychologist, psychology.

I. INTRODUCTION

Draft of National Educational Policy- 2019 was submitted to Mr. Prakash Jawedekar, minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India on December 15, 2018. The policy aims to universalize the pre-primary education by 2025 and provide foundational literacy/numeracy for all by 2025. This draft also lays the foundation of how various subjects and how they may grow in the upcoming future.

II. INDIAN BASED EDUCATION SYSTEM

The policy aims to have 'Indian based' education policy for the subjects. Indian Psychology is now already reflecting in the main stream courses run in many autonomous colleges in India. The policy mentions that subjects should focus on understanding the Indian contribution to knowledge, with a specific mention of psychology. This includes the historical context which led the growth of the subject, and also the subject's growth in the country. Inclusion is expected to be so designed so that it is accurate and engaging in school curriculum and textbooks.

With the introduction of "Indian based' education system, the curriculum will now include the contribution of prominent Indian Psychologists like, Girindarsekhar Bose, M.V. Gopaldaswamy and Durganand Sinha who were often subsided and neglected by the mainstream education.

It has been observed that the term 'counsellors' are used instead of 'counselling psychologist'.

The term counsellor can be used for various domains. Most often, it is used to describe someone who is a therapist, which includes psychologist. The word is also used to describe lawyers who advocate for others in court or give legal advice, a person working as a consul or representative of a state, a person working at a children's camp or at a school to give academic advice, or for a church. The expertise required to be a counsellor is different from that of psychologist. (Writer, wiseG. E. E. K.et al., 2019).

I. PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS AND ROLES

It was mentioned that teacher's education requires multi- disciplinary exposure. They mentioned that such qualities will be attained if appropriate trainings and preparation is given by institutions which offer multi-disciplinary academic program and environments. This education should aim that there is an appropriate interaction with other areas of higher education and that student teachers develop at their best. It was specifically mentioned that that faculties from psychology and other related fields of education, will create appropriate training for teachers. This is expected to create more teaching and training based jobs for people with the educational background of psychology.

On field experiences in psychology is highlighted to be an important factor for its education. The draft mentions that it is desirable to have faculty who have researched or worked with children and teachers, and to ensure that a minimum of at least 50% of faculty come with such experience.

Now talking about counselling, the draft of National Education Policy has laid down the specific roles for counsellors. They have been summarized below.

1. A counsellor will work with students, their parents, tutors, IAs, and community members which will enhance the mental health of children and also improve the retention in school.
2. Importance is given to mental health as the policy specifies that children will be exposed to such professionals in schooling system.
3. Social workers and counsellors will be recruited to school, who will work with students, parents, teachers, and communities to ensure that all school-age children are attending and learning in school up to the age of 18.

In areas where poor sanitary conditions, unhygienic food practices, and lack of appropriate precautions cause diseases among school age children, subsequently causing them to drop out, schools, social workers, counsellors, and/or health workers will help instruct parents, students, and also to the the community-at-large. The focus will be on enhancing health, hygiene, cleanliness, and timely vaccination practices. This will further encourage children to return to school.

4. Counsellors are expected to check on the students, who have prolonged absenteeism, falling behind in the class, never enrolled or have dropped out.
5. Counsellors along with other school professionals should collaboratively work to ensure that the children in the system are learning.
6. Counsellors can be shared across school complex.
7. Counsellor can be hired to meet the needs of career guidance and also meet the mental health needs. They are described below:

1. Counselling regarding the choice of secondary and vocational subjects. They can also guide regarding career choices of students.
2. Counselling has to be provided to understand and meet age related growth and development issues. They should also cater special care in adolescent years.
3. Support and counselling on mental health issues, including stress and mood disorders.

This counselling support should also be able to identify cases requiring clinical mental health support - and the school complex must have the tie-ups necessary to provide this.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this draft of national education policy has included the “Indian- ness’ in the education system. This will encourage future Indian Psychologist to build their name in the field of psychology. This also brought in the culture specific element into the subject. This will make the students of psychology understand the subject in a better way. However, Indian psychologists are not always the global contributor in this field. Earlier, the main contributors of the subject were included rather than their nationality. This might divert a student from focusing on the major contributors for various topics in psychology. The policy draft uses the term counsellor and specified the importance and the role of a counsellor. As the term ‘counsellor’ has multiple definitions. A pre- determined definition of this term along with basic qualifications can help the government and other institutions to hire appropriate person for a specific job. It has also been highlighted that counsellors can be shared among schools. That often makes it difficult for a counsellors function appropriately. At times, the schools allotted them is located far apart. This makes the travelling aspect difficult. They have numerous roles as mentioned by the draft policy.

Fulfilling all the requirements and then shifting across different schools might affect the counsellor and the quality of work they are expected to provide. This draft is indeed helping Indians read more about Indians. However, a specified set of qualifications for various professions will increase the authenticity of such practices.

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