

Need for Structural Reforms in Universities & Colleges

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New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 covers a wide spectrum of issues, including reforms in school and higher education. However, emphasis should also be on the need to restructure the governing bodies for universities and autonomous colleges.

In news: Structural reforms for NEP 2020

Placing it in syllabus: Governance

Dimensions

- Problems with Governing Bodies of Universities and their impact
- How to improve the situation?

Content:

Problems with Governing Bodies of Universities and their impact

The governing bodies for universities and autonomous colleges have the following problems:

Appointments are often mired in controversies:

- There have been frequent reports in the past of aspirants for the post of vice-chancellors and membership of **syndicates** indulging in unethical practices to gain favour

Opaque Recruitment Procedures:

- In the existing system of syndicates, the members usually consist of government nominees and those nominated by Governors or chancellors.
- This opaque selection procedure results in people

lacking merit but with an eye on memberships of affiliation, building, and purchase committees, among others, getting nominated to these bodies.

Political interference

- The practice of having government nominees, chancellor's nominees and university nominees is riddled with scope for political interference in academic affairs.

How to improve the situation?

The following solutions could be applied to solve these problems:

Replacing Syndicate with new Board of Management:

- The NEP 2020 talks of creating new structures, such as a **Board of Management**, to replace the syndicate system.

Making Board of Management more representative:

- The vice-chancellor as chairman, the Board of Management should consist of former vice-chancellors drawn from other universities, members drawn from industry, the alumni, eminent public intellectuals, principals of affiliated colleges on rotation and members representing the non-teaching staff.

Restructuring Selection Committee for Vice-Chancellors:

- The government's and chancellors' role in such committees must be stopped.
- The practice of having government nominees, chancellor's nominees and university nominees should be stopped .
- It should be replaced by drawing an eminent former vice-chancellor or academician of proven integrity and administrative capability for the post of chairman.

Transparent Selection Procedures:

- Applications for the post of vice-chancellors can be invited through advertisements on the university website and through newspapers.
- Biodata of candidates must also be published on the websites.
- The committee may then allot marks to candidates' scholarship in terms of teaching and research, administrative capabilities, and capacity for fundraising.
- The scores obtained by candidates should be consolidated and the names of shortlisted candidates then submitted in the order of merit to chancellors for deciding on formal appointments.

Ensuring accountability of faculty through Institutional structure of 'academic audit':

- Faculty members must mandatorily upload on university websites their annual plans for research and innovative modes of teaching.
- Their annual self-appraisal reports can be evaluated by external peers and their recommendations should be strictly implemented.
- There is an urgent need to overcome faculty shortage by recruiting teachers in order to overcome the existing trend of higher educational institutions relying on guest faculty.

Mould your thought: The governing bodies of Universities and autonomous colleges need reforms for successful implementation of National Education Policy 2020. Evaluate.

Approach to the answer:

- Introduction
- Discuss Problems of Governing bodies of Universities and their impacts
- Mention the solutions to tackle these issues

- Write how they will impact academic achievement of Higher Education in India
- Conclusion