

National Education Policy 2020: The Key To Development In India (Volume-2)

Volume 2
Year: 2025

AG
PH Books

Empowering India's Youth: A Critical Analysis of NEP 2020's Implementation Strategies

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Abstract

India is actively implementing the guidelines of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) to bring transformative changes in school and higher education. The policy aims to create an education system that empowers youth with knowledge, skills, and human values, equipping them to tackle present and future societal challenges through innovation and technological proficiency. NEP 2020 emphasizes a holistic learning approach, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving abilities to build a self-reliant and globally competitive workforce. In higher education, the policy focuses on multidisciplinary, autonomous institutions offering undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs, guided by skilled educators committed to academic excellence. It encourages the integration of technology, interdisciplinary learning, and value-based education to promote societal progress. Effective implementation strategies include forming competent committees, enforcing balanced regulations, ensuring transparency, and adopting performance-based faculty evaluations. Measures such as a "publish or perish" culture, periodic institutional audits through accreditation bodies like National Accreditation Council (NAC), and strict accountability mechanisms are crucial for success. If executed systematically, NEP 2020 has the potential to establish an inclusive, innovative, and technologically advanced education system that prepares India's youth for global challenges and opportunities.

Keywords: National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), Empowers youth, Higher education, Implementation strategies, National Accreditation Council (NAC), etc.

* ISBN No. - 978-93-49028-49-4

1 Introduction

The National Educational Policy (NEP-2020), India's first education policy of the twenty-first century, aims to make the country a developed nation by supporting developmental imperatives in line with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of the United Nations, which is to guarantee inclusive and equitable quality education and to encourage opportunities for lifelong learning for all by 2030 [1], [2]. India thinks it can accomplish this aim by 2040 at the latest with its new national education strategy 2020, which will provide everyone, regardless of social or economic background, with fair access to high-quality education [3].

By improving education at every level and establishing a new ideal system through the revision and revamping of the current education structure, including policies, regulations, and control systems, the new policy NEP-2020 is designed with the goal of creating a platform to provide quality school and higher education to all citizens of the country with Indian ethos and values [4], [5]. This will help to transform the country into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society and a global knowledge superpower. Therefore, it is anticipated that the new policy NEP-2020 would be a comprehensive overhaul with less material but more problem-solving, innovative, interdisciplinary, and holistic abilities for integrity and unity [6]. In order for the educational output to support a nation's economic growth, equality and social justice, scientific advancement, cultural preservation, and national integration, the policy anticipates a new set of regulations that will make the educational pedagogy more experimental, inquiry driven, discovery orientated, learner centred, analysis based, flexible, enjoyable, and futuristic [7], [8].

A. Technology Driven Education with Equity

NEP aims to pave the path for changing and improving the educational system in both schools and higher education in order to make India a worldwide knowledge powerhouse. Even in the midst of a catastrophe, an opportunity might sometimes present itself. Online courses provided the education industry with opportunity during the COVID-19 epidemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning has become commonplace [9]. Following the announcement of a nationwide closure by the centre as a means to manage the COVID-19 epidemic, colleges and schools were forced to shutter. PM eVIDYA, a program for multi-mode access to digital/online education, was started right away. Manodarpan, a program for psycho-social assistance for families, teachers, and students in terms of mental health and emotional well-being, was also introduced [10]. A poor user experience that is not conducive to sustainable growth is the result of the hasty and unplanned shift to online learning without training, inadequate bandwidth, and little preparation. However, the integration of information technology in education will accelerate, and online education will eventually become a crucial part of the curriculum [11].

India has evolved into an information-focused nation in recent years, and using technology in the classroom is now imperative. According to the NEP 2020, the education system will be accelerated by the widespread use of technology in instruction, language barrier removal, access expansion, and

educational planning and administration [12]. Rethinking traditional teaching and learning methods has become even more pertinent in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic, where virtual learning has become the new standard. The policy outlines an educational vision that has the foresight to create a youth-led, self-sufficient India [13]. According to the policy, "a National Education Technology Forum (NETF)" and a specialised e-education unit would be established. Machine learning, artificial intelligence, and other educational hardware and software will be integrated into education via the establishment of NETF [14]. These tools and software support the goals of NETF, which include enhancing classroom procedures, enhancing student success, advancing the professional development of educators, and facilitating effective management and administration of education [15].

B. Effect of NEP 2020 On Youth Empowerment

The new education policy's implementation has the potential to spark a revolution by empowering young people and unleashing their potential [16]. Through a number of important elements, India's "National Education Policy (NEP) 2020" seeks to positively impact youth empowerment [11]:

- **Holistic Education:** The NEP places a strong emphasis on moving away from memorisation and towards a more comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach that may aid students in expanding their capacity for critical thought and problem-solving.
- **Skill Development:** The policy promotes vocational education and skill development, which may improve youth employability and equip them with useful abilities.
- **Flexible Curriculum:** Students may follow their interests thanks to the NEP's encouragement of curriculum and topic choice flexibility, which can increase their motivation and self-confidence.
- **Research Opportunities:** It fosters innovation and research, which might enable young people to participate in research projects and business possibilities.
- **Equal Access:** Attempts to provide high-quality education in underserved and rural regions may enable more young people to have access to school.
- **Multilingualism:** Young people may become more varied and internationally competitive by encouraging multilingualism.
- **Technology Integration:** The policy's emphasis on integrating technology may help young people develop digital skills that will increase their flexibility in a world dominated by technology.

2 Literature Review

(Singh & Malik, 2023) [17] The knowledge society we want requires us to teach our heritage children the necessary skills. Develop their thinking, analysis, and world-building skills. Policymakers may use COVID-19 to recognise and unlock the nation's potential and call for "the Atamnirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India). Policymakers propose using technology extensively in teaching and learning to achieve self-reliance. This study evaluates NEP2020, which states its vision, purpose, and policy objectives for

National Education Policy 2020: The Key To Development In India (Volume-2)

ICT and establishing a self-sufficient India by constructing an Educational Digital Facilities and Capacity. Youth may become entrepreneurs, content writers, assessors, career coaches, and counsellors thanks to educational technology.

(Kaur, 2024) [13] investigate if NEP will increase young people's job prospects. The conventional educational approach places little focus on practical learning and is mostly centred on rote learning. Due to inadequate preparation, freshmen are ill-prepared for their professional lives. The NEP 2020 offers a comprehensive framework and all-encompassing vision to transform the workforce of the future and assist aspiring job seekers in becoming prepared for the workforce. To assist the young be prepared for the workforce, the NEP 2020 framework has included elements like skill development, entrepreneurial development, and vocational education. Additionally, NEP will help young people become entrepreneurs so they can create jobs rather than just looking for them.

(Khatoon, 2023)[15] As a result, the current study is based on the NEP 2020 policy statement, which outlined certain key vision, purpose, and policy objectives for constructing an independent Bharat via the development of an educational digital network in India. To facilitate the open exchange of ideas on how to utilise technology to improve teaching, learning, and evaluation at all levels of the educational system, as well as to promote teacher professional development, the "National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)" was established. Technology-based educational systems like DIKSHA and SWAYAM will be incorporated to simplify academic planning, administration, and management. Lastly, some recommendations are made regarding how to effectively apply it in order to accomplish its aims and objectives.

(K, 2024)[10] India's young will be greatly impacted by the NEP 2020's focus on skill development and entrepreneurship. NEP 2020 aims to educate India's young with skills and entrepreneurial potential by integrating vocational education into the curriculum, encouraging entrepreneurship education, and building industry-academia cooperation. Their employability, entrepreneurial drive, and creativity and invention may improve. However, debt, unemployment, and regional inequality may persist. These impediments may be overcome and India's youth's potential realised by implementing NEP 2020's mentoring and support networks. An opinion survey is used to determine how India's youth view skill development and entrepreneurship activities under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The research contributes to entrepreneurial and skill development expertise and advises industry stakeholders, educators, and policymakers.

(YASMIN, 2023)[11] An important tool for empowering young people and advancing sports is the new education policy. It gives young people the skills they need to succeed in both academics and athletics by encouraging holistic learning and skill development. In order to prepare our children to be people who can make valuable contributions to society, this policy envisions a balanced approach that uses sports to foster leadership, collaboration, and physical health. Essentially, it serves as a guide for maximising the potential of the younger generation, enabling them to succeed in both school and athletics, improving their general well-being and forming a more successful and healthy country.

Dr. Santosh Kumar

(Bansal et al., 2023)[12] The idea of holistic development also emphasises the need of students' skill development in order to increase their proficiency in applying the ideas they have learnt in formal education. Its primary goal is to transmit practical skills that students may apply at the vocational level. With the help of skill development, "the National Education Policy 2020" offers our young people fresh hope for being self-sufficient, which will help India become Atmanirbhar. "The National Education Policy 2020" is based on the idea of holistically developing students via vocational courses in order to ultimately equip them with critical life skills.

(Aithal & Aithal, 2020)[18] provides an overview of NEP-2020, identifies and analyses potential generic strategies for implementing NEP-2020 to achieve its goals based on focus group discussions, evaluates the policy's implementation recommendations, and highlights the policy's strengths and weaknesses in the higher education and research sectors. Developing high-quality universities and colleges, institutional restructuring and consolidation, more holistic and multidisciplinary education, the best possible learning environment and student support, changing the higher education regulatory system, technology use and integration, and online and digital education are just a few of the many proactive recommendations included in the paper. Lastly, some suggestions are offered for successfully implementing NEP2020 in spite of a number of obstacles. This article may be regarded as a reference to the Government of India's policy implementation teams.

(Sharma & Trivedi, 2023)[3] Along with a shortage of trained labour, unemployment is India's largest problem. However, the mismatch or lack of abilities to do a certain job is often the issue rather than the job's availability. In order to increase people's employability in the future, "the National Education Policy 2020" will serve as an update for changing the educational system. The NEP 2020 highlights the importance of education in providing students with the necessary skills and highlights key areas of strength for a happy work life. NEP 2020 focusses on the importance of training in equipping students with the skills they need. The main focus of this paper is how NEP 2020 is predicted to have a big role in employability.

(JATANA & Nahar, 2022)[19] Both men and women in India want better education under "the National Policy on Education (NPE)". It serves rural and urban primary through college students. The method identifies gender stereotypes and long-held beliefs as the cause of women's mistreatment. This study critically assesses NEP 2020's impact on women's freedom. A full research review is included in the paper. Apparently, "the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020" seeks equitable and inclusive education for all children, especially low-income girls and young women. This research offers various ways to boost women's college enrolment. This plan comprises Gender Inclusion Funds, Targeted Scholarships, special education zones, and formula-based and discretionary school-level gender inclusion initiatives. This study's findings may empower women via NEP for policymakers. Findings imply NEP empowerment for women.

3 Conclusion

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) presents a transformative vision for empowering

National Education Policy 2020: The Key To Development In India (Volume-2)

India's youth by strengthening both school and higher education systems. One of its key objectives is to enhance the infrastructural credibility of government schools, ensuring the availability of safe, clean, and fully functional facilities, including toilets, to address female dropout rates. Additionally, initiatives such as the formation of walking groups and the distribution of bicycles have been introduced to improve female attendance by providing safe transportation options. In higher education, NEP 2020 aspires to cultivate responsible individuals who contribute to societal progress through human values, discipline, and mutual respect. By fostering quality education, the policy envisions a system where students are encouraged to discover, adopt, and promote new technologies, thereby accelerating national development. The creation of multidisciplinary, autonomous higher education institutions offering degree programs at undergraduate, postgraduate, and research levels is a crucial step toward nurturing innovation and critical thinking, guided by committed and skilled educators. For effective implementation, a structured top-down approach is recommended, ensuring alignment among stakeholders. Key strategies include forming competent implementation committees, enforcing light but efficient regulations, maintaining transparency at all levels, promoting a “publish or perish” culture, and linking faculty promotions and increments to annual performance evaluations. Regular institutional audits through accreditation bodies like NAC (National Accreditation Council), along with strict penalties for non-compliance, can ensure accountability. NEP 2020's success depends on its faculty-focused and student-centered approach, with an anticipated implementation timeframe of 10–15 years. If executed systematically, the policy has the potential to create an inclusive, technology-driven, and globally competitive education system that truly empowers India's youth.

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