

Language Education Policies: Insights from Comparative Studies

Dr. T.V.S. Padmaja^{1*}

¹*Principal & Head, Department of English.*

Abstract

The education policy in India, which aims to foster global opportunities and promote multilingualism, mandates the inclusion of foreign languages, English, and regional languages in the curriculum from primary to higher education. The following paper presents an analysis of the policy highlights of NEP 2020 and 1986, detailing how well both initiatives have performed in practice. It then compares the two initiatives based on a number of criteria. Moreover, the paper discusses the measures implemented by the National Curriculum Framework in order to realise the objectives set forth in NEP 2020.

Keywords: NEP 2020, NEP 1986, Education, literacy, Comparative factors.

1 Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) for India was amended, revised, and approved on July 29, 2020, marking its thirty-fourth anniversary. The policy represents a significant turning point for the Indian education system, rendering India an undeniably appealing global hub for higher education. In accordance with the tenets of "Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability & Accountability," the policy will metamorphose India into a hive of intellectual activity. NEP 2020 prioritises institutional and systemic enhancements to oversee, promote, and regulate multidisciplinary research and academic activities in Indian HEIs. The advent of NEP 2020 has ushered in a paradigm shift in the Indian educational landscape. The policy envisions an education system centred on India that is conducive to the country's transition into a thriving knowledge society. The primary objective of the new education policy is to

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establish a well-resourced and multidisciplinary educational system through the consolidation of various academic institutions and disciplines. This consolidation is an ongoing effort to ensure that the system meets the evolving requirements of students.(MR Shubadha & MR Nirarth, 2021)

1.1. Highlights of New Education Policy – 2020

1. This will supersede the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, which is thirty-four years old. It is the first education policy of the twenty-first century.
2. The newly implemented policy seeks to achieve educational universality across all levels, from pre-school to secondary. It establishes a target of 100 percent Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) within school education by 2030, and 50 percent GER in higher education by 2035.
3. The formulation of a "national book promotion policy" is imminent.
4. Academic assessments will be administered to all pupils in Grades 3, 5, and 8 under the direction of the relevant governing body. The syllabi for both 10th and 12th grades will remain on the board, but they will be redesigned with an emphasis on comprehensive growth.
5. The National Council for Teacher Education will, by 2022, establish a unified set of "National Professional Standards for Teachers" (NPST) in collaboration with SCERTs, teachers, NCERT, and expert organisations representing various levels and regions.
6. The objective of NEP 2020 is to augment the Gross Enrollment Ratio in higher education, encompassing vocational education, from 26.3 percent in 2018 to 50 percent by 2035. Additionally, the programme seeks to supply 3.5 crore additional seats to institutions of higher learning.
7. The policy intends comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and holistic measures. An undergraduate programme that offers flexible curricula, innovative subject combinations, vocational education integration, and multiple entry and departure points with the appropriate certification.
8. "Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities" (MERUs) that are on par with IITs and IIMs in order to establish models for the nation's finest multidisciplinary education according to international standards.
9. The establishment of an autonomous organisation known as the "National Education Technology Forum" (NETF) will facilitate the unrestricted interchange of thoughts regarding the application of technology in order to improve administration, learning, assessment, and planning.
10. NEP suggests establishing a National Institute (or Institutes) for Pali, Persian, and Prakrit, an "Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation" (ITI), and strengthened Sanskrit and language departments in higher education institutions (HEIs). Additionally, it is suggested that more HEI programmes incorporate mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction.

1.2. Highlights of NPE 1986

In 1985, the Government of India conducted an assessment of the existing education system and issued a policy statement titled "Challenge of Education: A Policy Perspective" outlining the outcome. In May

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1986, former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi unveiled the National Policy on Education. It was the intention of the new education policy to equip India for the twenty-first century.

1. Retention, enrollment, and accessibility to institutions for all students until the age of fourteen.
2. Enhancement of education quality through the following measures: improvement of the school environment; implementation of an activity-centered and child-centered teaching methodology; ongoing assessment throughout the academic year; elimination of all forms of physical punishment; maintenance of the practice of not failing students in any elementary course; and provision of basic facilities in primary schools.
3. The establishment of "Navodaya Vidyalaya" was an additional turning point in the annals of education.
4. The policy prioritised the integration of children with motor disabilities into regular educational settings and established special schools within the district headquarters.
5. The national education system, as proposed by NPE 1986, is predicated on the widely acknowledged framework of 10+2+3.
6. Establish primary education institutions in remote regions, such as residential schools or ashrams in tribal areas.
7. Facilitating informal education for children who have withdrawn from schools, are residing in areas without schools, or have been between schools.
8. It was recommended that the +2 level be incorporated into the national curriculum.
9. With the establishment of the "Indira Gandhi National Open University" in 1985, it further expanded the Open University system, prioritised adult education, and fostered the growth of new academic institutions.

1.3. Approach to Language Education and Literacy

The development of curricula is underpinned by the National Curriculum Framework. The document furnishes the fundamental principles, objectives, framework, and components necessary for the creation of curricular materials, textbooks, learning resources, syllabi, and other instructional materials. Furthermore, it facilitates the integration and alignment of pedagogical practices and assessment methodologies. For students in grades 3–18, this paper details the plans for curricular and pedagogical reforms to schooling throughout the four phases of the 5+3+3+4 model, as outlined in NEP 2020. To realise the objectives of NEP 2020 with regard to providing fundamental education in the native language and, whenever feasible, utilising multilingualism. The following are some methods for teaching languages at various grade levels:

Foundational Stage

- Given that children acquire knowledge of concepts at a faster rate when speaking their native tongue, the principal mode of instruction during the Foundational Stage (in both public and private institutions) would be the child's native language, also known as maternal tongue or

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familiar language (L1). For this reason, it is crucial to have local educators who are well-versed in the local customs and culture.

- Children should be routinely exposed to a minimum of two and preferable three languages (referred to as L2 as well as L3 below) beginning at a young age, in the presence of both teachers and parents.
- Whenever feasible, the foundational stages of reading and writing instruction are carried out in the first language via guided reading, picture and narrative books, read-aloud books, drawing, labelling, and additional guided writing methods.

Preparatory Stage

- Students gain proficiency in verbal communication and are able to articulate abstract concepts in their first and second languages. In addition, they improve their reading proficiency by perusing unfamiliar texts (such as narrative, argumentative, prose, and poetry) and by acquiring a foundational comprehension of them.
- In order to cultivate proficient writing and effective communication in their first and second languages (L1 and L2), pupils acquire an extensive vocabulary from diverse sources and in a variety of contexts (including academic and personal life).

The Middle Stage

- Students cultivate the ability to communicate effectively through the application of diverse language skills (e.g., analysis, description), as well as the capacity to identify and employ fundamental linguistic elements (e.g., sentence structure and vocabulary) in both written and spoken forms in their first and second languages.
- Students cultivate an affinity for reading and writing in their first language through an examination of various literary devices, genre structures (comedy, suspense, tragedy), and forms (poetry, prose, drama).
- Students acquire the proficiency to articulate their reflections, emotions, and personal encounters regarding social gatherings (e.g., festivals, fairs) in their second language (L2) while also demonstrating the ability to identify and employ fundamental linguistic elements (e.g., sentence construction and vocabulary) in both written and spoken forms of communication.

The Secondary Stage

- By engaging with a variety of written and audio-visual materials and utilising L1 and L2 to communicate effectively in writing of various forms (e.g., essays, letters, articles, speeches in public, e-mail, audio-visual material, etc.), students develop their reasoning and argumentation abilities.
- Students will earnestly recognise the aesthetic value of various genres (comedy, suspense, tragedy), writing styles (narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive), and story contents. Furthermore, they will possess the ability to incorporate these elements into their first-language writing.

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It is mandatory for secondary school pupils to select one native language of India (from L1, L2, or L3) in order to acquaint themselves with the country's rich literary heritage.

1.4. Comparative factors between the two policies

Factors	NEP 2020	NEP 1986	Comparison
Released By	“Ministry of Human Resource Development”	“Govt of India, Ministry of Education”	The NEP 2020, initiated on July 29, 2020, by Union Cabinet of India, delineates the overarching vision for India's forthcoming education system. However, the Indian government enacted NPE 1986 to promote as well as regulate education in India.
Academic Structure	5+3+3+4 format	10+2 format	The 5+3+3+4 structure, which NEP 2020 mandates incorporates “Early Childhood Care and Education” (ECCE) beginning at age 3, is intended to promote improved learning, development, and well-being overall. An endeavour will be made as well to have +2-stage incorporated into school curricula across the nation, in accordance with the 10+2+3 structure established by the NPE 1986, which stipulated that primary stage should comprise five years, followed by three years of upper primary and two years of high school.
Languages	3 language- by state, region, and choice of student	3 languagesHindi, English, and the regional	NEP 2020 suggested three language formulas: first, the individual's mother tongue or a regional language; second, other contemporary Indian languages or English; and third, English or a contemporary Indian language in Hindi-speaking states. According to the NPE 1986, however, schools are required to teach English, Hindi, and one contemporary Indian language.
Test Conducted by	A aptitude test or examination will be administered by the National Testing Agency (NTA) in the fields of science, humanities, languages, arts, as well as vocational	The formulation of a National Examination Reform Framework would function as a manual for examining bodies, granting them the	NEP 2020 declared that the National Testing Agency (NTA) will administer a unified entrance examination to all colleges and universities for undergraduate admissions. However, in order to develop a comprehensive plan for reforming national examinations, the Department of Education intended to establish an interinstitutional committee in

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	disciplines.	autonomy to modify and enhance the framework in accordance with particular circumstances.	1986. This committee would consist of representatives from the UGC, NCERT, AICTE, as well as state-level organisations such as the Board of Secondary Education.
Curriculum	New Curricular as well as Pedagogical Structure: Accreditation standards are to be established to classify autonomous colleges and universities into teaching-oriented and research-oriented categories according to their curricula, with an emphasis upon early childhood care and education.	A number of Curriculum Development Centres were to be established to promote the requirements of application-oriented study and specialisation in the curriculum.	The objective of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is to establish four National Curriculum Frameworks (NCFs). To achieve this, the Ministry of Education (MoE) as well as the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) have collaborated to develop a comprehensive strategy. NPE-1986, on the other hand, emphasised early childhood education, which included strategies for the child's physical, motor, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social, and moral development, all of which were crucial for children younger than six years old.
Teachers Training	All HEIs shall offer one-year, two-year, and four-year B.Ed. programmes, respectively, in accordance with the number of years candidate has completed since graduation.	Policies pertaining to the professional development of educators at every tier, spanning elementary to tertiary, were established.	The government takes an active role in the development of an integrated B.Ed. programme through NEP 2020; completion of the programme requires four academic years. In this regard, teacher education is regulated by the "National Council for Teacher Education" (NCTE), which also promotes the B.A.-B.Ed. programme, which assists prospective educators in reaching their utmost capabilities. NPE 1986 Proclamation In light of current training requirements, the current programme for teacher educators may be adapted accordingly. The faculty induction and ongoing training programmes for DIETs/CTEs/SCERTs shall be formulated and executed by the NCERT, NIEPA.

2 Literature Review

(S & Praseeda, 2020) This paper undertakes an examination of Indian National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) within Higher Education in relation to its international standing, drawing inspiration from the educational policies implemented in countries such as Australia, China, Germany, and Singapore. NEP 2020 supports comprehensive development by employing a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates digital learning, curriculum and course autonomy, advanced technology, business acumen, and global education.

(Mallik, 2020) The destiny of a child is contingent upon the schooling he or she receives. Although the adage "education begins at home" is certainly accurate, the way in which a child is instructed in school is equally influential in shaping his or her way of life. Their social standing, professional trajectory, and innermost being are all influenced by the education they obtain in school. Additionally, a clearly defined and meticulously devised education policy contributes to the advancement of a country's economic standing and societal standing. A nation's education policy is determined by its culture, tradition, and societal perspective. Furthermore, in light of the growth observed among the most valuable asset of our nation, which is its intellectual youth, it appears that implementing a novel educational policy is a forward-thinking idea. This paper focuses on elucidating the novel developments and adaptations in NEP 2020, in addition to analysing its merits, implications, and enhancements in relation to the current policy.

(K., 2021) Education has been on a continuous evolution since the dawn of time. Whether it be the wisdom imparted by nature during bygone eras, gurukulas during the reign of numerous kings, post-independence government schools and colleges, convents, international schools, or deemed universities in the twenty-first century, the overarching goal of these establishments is to educate the human race. Education encompasses more than mere academic engagement and university graduation; it entails the comprehensive growth and progress of an individual across all domains—physical, mental, financial, and economic. The purpose of education is to foster an individual's holistic development and transform him into a productive member of society for the nation of tomorrow. In order to meet the increasing demand for employment and career prospects, as well as to express and promote its distinct sociocultural identity, each nation develops its own educational system.

(MR Shubadha & MR Nirarth, 2021) On July 29, 2020, the "Union Cabinet of India" granted approval to the NEP 2020. Former ISRO Chairman Dr. K Kasturirangan, who presided over a committee established by the "Ministry of Human Resource Development", delineated the overarching vision for India's forthcoming education system. The New Education Policy addresses Quality, Affordability, Equity, Access, and Accountability, among other challenges confronting the current education system. NEP 2020 proposes an education system centred on India, which actively supports the sustainable transformation of our country into a knowledge-rich, equitable society by ensuring that all individuals have access to high-quality education. This article highlights the significant distinctions between the present education policy, specifically the New Education Policy of 1986, and the New Education Policy of 2020.

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(Santoshi, 2021) Education is a pivotal determinant in the progress and advancement of a nation. A significant allocation of resources towards human capital development fosters the long-term viability of the economy. It increases human capital, fosters entrepreneurship, and promotes technological progress. In essence, it serves as a catalyst for promoting social and economic advancement while also coordinating the distribution of income. The Finance Minister stated in the Union Budget 2021-22 that the recently launched NEP with the theme "reinvigorating human capital" has been well received. The current paper provides an overview of national education policies as well as major transformations that have occurred within the education sector over the past decade. The information for this descriptive study is gathered from secondary sources. Finally, the paper disclosed that the education sector underwent profound transformations.

(Sc & Scholar, 2022) The foundation of national development is education. Economic growth, social justice as well as equality, scientific progress, national integration, as well as cultural preservation are all dependent on it. It can increase the universal value of our nation. India is a youthful nation, with the majority of its population consisting of individuals between the ages of 20 and 40. The country's future will be determined by its capacity to offer these individuals high-quality educational opportunities. Therefore, it is imperative to revise the educational policy of 1986, which was reevaluated in 1992, in light of the rapid transformations occurring in the global knowledge environment. Our ancient frontier has been renowned for its educational knowledge, as eminent saints such as Chanakya, Aryabhata, and Shankracharya contributed significantly to the advancement of education. Character can be developed through education; students can become rational, compassionate, and ethical while also being prepared for gainful, satisfying employment.

(Lowe & Galhotra, 2023) This scholarly article undertakes an exhaustive comparative examination of rural education reforms in India, specifically comparing the modifications enacted prior to and subsequent to the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020. The principal aim of this research is to evaluate the consequences of the NEP 2020 upon rural education through an analysis of the significant policy changes, ramifications, and results within rural educational environments. Prior to the National Education Policy 2020, rural education faced numerous obstacles, such as insufficient infrastructure, restricted availability of high-quality education, and substantial discrepancies in academic achievements between urban and rural areas. In an effort to tackle these concerns, the NEP 2020 implemented a sequence of paradigm-shifting reforms. In order to accomplish this, the research utilises qualitative interviews with crucial rural education stakeholders. Curriculum reforms, teacher preparation, infrastructure development, as well as the incorporation of technology within rural classrooms will all be included in the analysis.

(Rajitha, 2023) On July 29, 2020, Union Cabinet of India granted its approval to the NEP 2020. Former ISRO Chairman Dr. K. Kasturirangan, who presided over a committee established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, delineated the overarching vision for the new education system in India. The New Education Policy addresses Quality, Affordability, Equity, Access, and Accountability, among other challenges confronting the current education system. In order to attain developed status, India must

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not only establish a knowledge-driven economy that is thriving, but also a new society that prioritises justice and human values.

(Mahanta, 2023) On July 29, 2020, Union Cabinet of India granted approval to the NEP 2020. Former ISRO Chairman Dr. K Kasturirangan, who presided over a committee established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, delineated the overarching vision for India's forthcoming education system. Quality, Practicality, Equity, Access, as well as Accountability are a few of the issues that the New Education Policy seeks to rectify in the existing educational system. NEP 2020 proposes an education system centred on India, which actively supports the sustainable transformation of our country into a knowledge-rich, equitable society by ensuring that all individuals have access to high-quality education. The Government of India has devised National Policy on Education (NPE) with the intention of promoting and regulating education in the country. The policy encompasses higher education as well as primary education in urban as well as rural regions of India. NPE 1986 was issued by the Indian government under the leadership of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

(B & N, 2024) The educational system in India is a fusion of modernity and tradition, contending with obstacles while adapting to the requirements of an ever more dynamic global landscape. Furthermore, it embodies a variety of pedagogical approaches that reflect the nation's abundant cultural legacy. An essential aspect of it is the establishment of a competitive atmosphere, which promotes scholarly rigour. Nonetheless, this frequently places students under tremendous stress, which negatively impacts their mental health. There are times when the prioritisation of academic performance diminishes the significance of practical abilities and comprehensive growth. Notwithstanding its difficulties, the education system in India possesses a resilient framework. Furthermore, endeavours such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 endeavour to overhaul the system by emphasising curriculum flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, and skill-based education; this represents a turning point in the educational milieu of India.

(Rajeev & Naik, 2024) The New Education Policy (NEP 2020), which was declared by Government of India, came as a welcome respite and novel development amidst the global downturn brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. The NEP 2020 announcement came as an absolute surprise to many. Many education professionals failed to observe the modifications that NEP 2020 has suggested. While education policy has had an equal impact on both secondary and tertiary education, this article is predominately concerned with NEP 2020 and its implications for higher education. In addition, this article examines the impact of NEP's prominent characteristics on the current educational system.

3 Conclusion

Upon careful examination of the numerous papers referenced in the reviews, it has been determined that the two preceding national educational policies have contributed to the development of India's educational system. Additionally, the National Curriculum Framework's curricular development approaches, which describe how they have facilitated the alignment and integration of pedagogical

practices and assessment methodologies, have provided valuable insights for the formulation of future policies.

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