

# **A Critical Analysis of NEP 2020: Impact on School and Higher Education, Issues, and Challenges in Implementation of NEP In India**

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**Abstract:** *The Indian Education System existing before NEP 2020 placed a strong emphasis on theoretical subjects, depriving students of practical experience and a big barrier to taking advantage of global employment prospects. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has been dubbed the “the computer era.” As the digital age expands and present managerial views to meets its expanding demands, the educational system is the one that gets the least attention while being an enormous burden for developing country such as India. To accelerates the expansion of Indian education industry, after a protracted wait of 34years, the Indian union cabinet agreed the final draft of 66 pages and approved the recently implemented education strategy on July 29, 2020, outlining the concept of India’s new academic system. The economy of the nation depends heavily on the management and commerce education since it affects every sector, including banking services, manufacturing, and research & development. All things considered, the domain of finance is nervous system and management, and commerce deal with finance. NEP 2020 seeks to provide high quality education that will support the growth of Indian economy. The latest policy’s three primary objectives are to maintain the greatest standards of integrity, equality, and excellence across the entire education system from early childhood to post-secondary education and it also includes vocational education in India’s rural and urban part. This policy introduces a no. of fundamental adjustments to the educational system and teacher preparation programs. By 2030, the initiative seeks to reform India’s educational system. Teacher education will gradually move towards multidisciplinary colleges and universities by 2030, as teachers will need to be taught in both pedagogy and high quality-content. This paper highlights the key components of NEP and examines how NEP impact the existing educational frame work including affect both elementary and higher education and what are the issues, challenges in its implementation.*

**Keywords:** *NEP 2020, management and commerce education, educational system*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

A national education policy is detailed framework that directs the growth of education in India. In 1968, the first education policy was approved by Indian parliament, based on the educational recommendations, commissions headed by D.S Kothari, UGC chairperson. The second education strategy reform was executed in 1986 under PM Indira Gandhi and Rajeev Gandhi and later-on revised in 1992 under P.V Narasimha administration. After 34 years long, the Indian government gathered input for two national parliamentary level committees from over two lakh rural stakeholders throughout more than four years of seminars and talks. As a result, based on the suggestions of committee headed by Dr. Kasturirangan, the previous ISRO chairman, the third NEP was established on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020 after approval of honorable Narendra Modi Government. It was crucial breakthrough in education system and updated version of NPE 1986. As NEP launched, COVID-19 has presented a numerous obstacle to educational institutions in its implementation. It was best to wait and see the scenario, as teaching and learning now take place in a different way. The classrooms are currently online. New courses and software gained popularity, which created new avenues for investigation. Over-all it was matter of concern that New Education Policy has been implemented when the world’s GDP was declining. One of the goals of NEP was to raise public spending on education as quickly as feasible from about 4% to 6% of GDP at that moment.

The goal of a top-notch university education must produce brilliant, considerate, and creative people. In depth study of one or more specific subjects of interest must be made possible together with the character development, intellectual, curiosity, scientific temper, moral, constitutional principles, inventiveness, and spirit of services, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in several fields with exception of the social sciences, humanities, arts, languages, technical and occupational fields. With the advancement of technology, the value of education was underlined in addition to the benefits and drawbacks of the NEP policy. The main features of education strategy which includes significant modifications to the current system are the redesigned student curricula and pedagogy as well as the presence of multidisciplinary universities and colleges in every district or close to one. Assessment, encouragement of improved student experiences and creation of nationwide research body to conduct top-notch peer-reviewed studies.

The primary problems facing the Indian higher education system are the early specialization, forced separation of qualifications, and an excess of students in restricted research fields, most of universities, and school's lack of research focus, the large number of affiliated universities that result in low undergraduate levels, and the absence of competitive peer-reviewed funding for academic research. By growing universities in to sizable, multidisciplinary establishments, generating innovative, well-rounded people, and altering the economic and educational environments of other countries. The goal of institutional consolidation and restructuring is to eliminate fragmentation of higher education. By 2035, the proportion of the students engaged in post-secondary education that includes vocational training will rise from 26.3% to 50%. Through comprehensive and interdisciplinary education, human potential should be enhanced on all levels- physical, mental, emotional, cultural, social, and moral. Every undergraduate course of study including those in technical, medical, and vocational fields will eventually use this type of comprehensive training. An encompassing approach comprising adequate content, active teaching, frequent formative evaluation.

## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main elements of NEP 2020 are listed in the paper along with an analysis of their effects on the contemporary educational system. The primary objective of this study is to examine how NEP has affected school and higher education.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is a descriptive Research. A range of website, including newspapers, magazines, and other publications published by Indian government, provided the necessary secondary data. Following the analysis, and processing of this data, conclusion and references were made.

## IV. WHAT is NEP 2020

Education transforms both individual and the country. Every society's social, political, and economic development are greatly influenced by education. To enhance the education's quality and break the barrier to take the advantage of global employment, there was requirement of a new education policy. The New Education Policy also called 5+3+3+4 pedagogical structure replaced the existing traditional education system i.e 10+2 structure of school education. In 10+2 structure frame work, a child's initial preparatory education begins in their sixth year of primary school. Board exams were required for both the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades at the level of upper secondary. Throughout the two years of pre-university level, students select disciplines and areas of special stream such as science, commerce, and arts. NEP calls for 5+3+3+4 design which translates to a foundational phase that covers grades 1-2 (ages 3 to 8), a preparatory stage covers grades 3 to 5 (ages 8 to 11), a middle stage that covers grades 6-8 (ages 11 to 14), and secondary stage covering grades 9 to 12 (ages 14 to 18).

**a) Foundational stage:** It is further subdivided in to two parts say ages 3 to 8 are covered by pre-school/Anganwadi for three years and two-years of elementary school in grades 1-2. This level offers foundational instruction that corresponds to multilevel, flexible, play/activity based and discovery-based learning, and based on pedagogy, curriculum of early child care education (ECCE). The school facilitate the child to play with paints, to do sports activity whatever he/she wants, to create interest to go to school. There is no exam up to grades 1 to 2, so the child does not feel any type of pressure.

**b) Preparatory stage:** The foundational stage will be followed by 3 years of preparatory phase that spans grades 3-5 ages 8-11. This level introduces exams on the bases of experimental learning, formal classrooms learning with text books across the science subjects, mathematics, social science, arts, and humanities. Most of educators believe that kids feel easy to grasp the concepts in mother tongue, however this not mandatory by NEP 2020 policy norms. The schools can select the English or regional language to teach the students.

**c) Middle stage:** This three years stage cover ages 11-14 and grades 6-8. It adopts experimental learning methods with subject teacher in specialized subjects. The students will have to face two class level exams on the bases of semester system. This stage is focused subject-oriented pedagogical and curricular structure. It introduces

computer coding, vocational/technical courses like healthcare nursing, informational technology, culinary arts, automotive engineering, cooking, knitting with embroidery, and graphic design. In this stage, students will have to adopt an Indian language. There will be a Sanskrit option in addition to language of India.

**d) Secondary education stage:** The goal of a 4-years secondary education program is to offer a liberal arts education among other diverse courses. This stage will be based on the curricular and pedagogy i.e subject-oriented but with greater depth, adaptability, critical thinking, and goal-oriented attention. Students who will take five to six subjects each semester, are introduced to the semester system. There will be Board exams at the end of only 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This stage also introduces foreign languages excluding mandarin (Chinese language).

**e) Under graduation education stage:** Every undergraduate will last three or four years, with multiple exit/entry including a certificate at 1<sup>st</sup> year completion, a diploma upon 2<sup>nd</sup> year completion and a bachelor's degree upon 3<sup>rd</sup> year completion. Pursuing an undergraduate degree is advised across four years providing the opportunity to engage with the whole spectrum of multidisciplinary education and comprehensive education including a major, minor and research projects. To electronic document the scholastic credits earned from the various approved higher education organizations, an Academic Bank of credit (ABC) must be established. This will make it possible to award degrees from HEIs while taking into consideration, the overall amount of credit earned. As model public institutions for comprehensive and interdisciplinary education, the establishment of Multidisciplinary Education Research universities (MERUs) would work to raise the bar for multidisciplinary education in India.

**f) Post-Graduation Education stage:** Two-year programs, a five year-integrated program are open to those with three-year bachelor's degrees that emphasizes excellent research in the last year, or a one-year master's program. The post-graduate program will include a substantial research component to enhance professional competency and prepare students for research degrees.

**g) Research stage:** The phase of research involves three to four years of minimum study time for both full-time and part-time students pursuing Ph.D. degrees via outstanding research in any core topic, interdisciplinary subject, and multidisciplinary subjects. In-order to earn the Ph.D. degree, the candidates must finish eight course credits in pedagogy, teaching, and education in the field of their choice. There will be no more of previous one-year MPhil program.

## V. IMPACT OF NEP 2020 ON SCHOOL EDUCATION

NEP 2020 was launched to revolutionize the education framework and to get it more adaptable, inclusive, and all-encompassing. The strategy focuses on important areas such as curriculum and pedagogy reforms for pre-school care and education methods of assessment and revolution. Professional development for teachers, and the technology utilization in the classroom. The goal of NEP 2020 is to turn schools in to dynamic, learner-centered organizations that promote creativity, innovation, and critical thinking.

NEP 2020 has significantly altered the educational landscape, improving the system effectiveness, efficiency, and learner friendliness. The way that NEP 2020 affects school administration is one of its main effects. With the advent of cutting-edge tools and technology, educators and school administrators can now simplify their work and improve operational efficiency.

**a) ECCE: The basis of education:** Six-years old child's brain has reached to full potential. Most of the children's physical and mental development is stunted as result of malnutrition. Millions of children in India lack access to high-quality early childhood development, schooling, and learning opportunities. It may therefore be provided to all children in the country throughout early childhood supervision and education. The public access Anganwadi Center infrastructure will be updated and trained teachers and Anganwadi staff will be equipped for ECCE. Before the age of five years, every child will be move to an elementary school. Every child's educational plan will take in to account their cognitive, emotive, and functional development on play-based education.

**b) Development in basic literacy and numeracy:** The literacy rate was 12% in 1947 when India became independent. After enactment of various education commission, education policies such as Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, and RTE Act 2009 the literacy rate was 74% by census 2011. It means that India is falling short of its goal of 100% literacy. The main aim of NEP 2020 is to ensure high quality education with 100% enrollment. Numerous surveys have revealed that children are facing significant difficulties with their learning. Millions of elementary school students are not even proficient in basic reading and mathematics. It is crucial to able to read, write and do some simple operations with numbers for additional learning. The promotion of universal basic literacy and numeracy skill will span the country. Thus, the primary goal of education system is to provide a basic literacy and numeracy curriculum in elementary schools by 2025. By occupying the positions left vacant by teachers, the pupil-teacher ratio is expected to be 30:1 with ratio lower than 25:1 in socioeconomically challenged areas. Children who are undernourished are incapable of learning. As a result, children who receive proper nutrition are strengthened both physically and mentally. The Mid-Day Meal scheme and Anganwadi centers would be connected for this purpose. Significant changes have been made to the curriculum and methods of instruction in

NEP 2020, to guarantee that pupils develop cognitive abilities including logical, technical, and scientific thinking abilities. Student's development of these abilities will get them ready for future occupations.

**c) Modified pedagogy:** To support a more all-encompassing approach to learning, NEP 2020 suggests to modifying the curriculum and pedagogy structure to a 5+3+3+4 approach in place of 10+2 structure expanding to 5 (foundation) + 3 (preparatory) + 3 (middle) + 4 (secondary). Based on this structural shift, the focus of educational system is now on information and comprehension rather than full development of the pupils. Education aims to develop student's character as well as provide them with essential 21<sup>st</sup> century abilities. Only critical thinking, discovery-based, analysis and discussion-based learning are new included in the curriculum. At secondary level, the students have options for their course selection.

**d) Less dropout and every child in school by 2030:** NEP 2020 aims to ensure that every child whether in public or private schools has access to excellent educational opportunities by providing options for entry and exit in to the educational system. This will reintegrate over 3.22 crore out of school children in to the mainstream in education system. NEP 2020 calls for action that should reduce the number of students from socially and economically disadvantage backgrounds who drop out of school including the establishment of special education zones, a gender inclusion fund and enhanced access to open distance learning program of NIOS and states. (or and remote learning opportunities)

**e) Interest in learning and developing competency:** NEP 2020 promotes the transition from summation assessment, which focuses on the memorizing and remembering skills to formative assessment system which improve teaching -learning process and development skills in our students. The extensive range of competencies such as research, logical, and imaginative thinking are clearly captured by formative assessment. A new format for students, multidimensional progress report card evaluating functional, affective cognitive abilities will be generated under the direction of NCERT and SCERT, the national assessment centers. The progress report comprises project tasks, discovery-based, peer, and self-assessments, roleplaying, performance-based work etc. The easier board exams will be taken for 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. There are two possible parts for Board exams. There are multiple-choice questions in the first segment and descriptive questions in the second. It helps them feel less anxious about exams and give more opportunities to show what they have learned.

## VI. IMPACT OF NEP 2020 ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**1. Regulatory framework for higher education:** A significant change is represented by the NEP 2020 proposal to create the higher education commission of India (HECI) as regulatory agency for higher education, with exception of legal and medical education. The purpose of HECI is to restructure the higher education sector; the bill will separate the academic and financial aspects of the sector. The four independent agencies are anticipated to comprise HECI.

➤ **The National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC)** is responsible for overseeing teacher preparation programs and higher education, with exception of legal and medical education.

➤ **The General Education Council (GEC)** is an institution that sets expert standard.

➤ The MHRD-managed University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) will be replaced by the **Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC)**, which will henceforth manage university and college funding and financing.

➤ **The National Assessment Accreditation Council (NAAC)** is an accreditation meta-accrediting organization.

To guarantee consistency in educational standards many educationalists have long held the view that a single umbrella organization is required. This is thought to be suitable step in streamlining education policy. However, educational institute must be assessed based on relevant factors including academic excellence, industry linkage, research, and placements in-order to ensure the quality of higher education.

**2.** NEP 2020 suggests an important change that National Testing Agency (NTA) as autonomous, expert, and premier organization will conduct one common entrance examinations for undergraduate and graduate admission in most universities, and qualifying examination like fellowship in higher education. It reduces drastically any kind of burden on students, and on entire education system in colleges and universities like assessment for their admission. Additionally, it facilitates the students easy transfer of credits and degrees to universities outside.

**3.** The concept of \*empowerment and autonomy to innovate\* is a key element of NEP 2020 which advocates for a phase-out strategy from affiliated colleges to autonomous institutions. "Together with graded autonomy and accreditation," hope for curriculum enrichment is also raised by the greater flexibility granted to independent universities. It states that such autonomous institution that offer degrees, could develop in to teaching-intensive or research-intensive universities with right accreditation. For Indian students, the announcement of creation of multidisciplinary education and research universities (MERUs) offers greater promise to get multidisciplinary education in the country. These autonomous universities will be comparable with existing IITs and IIMs.

4. Globalization at home: with more than 1000 universities and 45000 colleges, India has one of the world's largest higher education networks. Despite this, as per report in 2023, over 13 million Indian students are pursuing studies overseas. It has a major impact on India's higher education gross enrolment ratio (GER), i.e 28.4% in year 2021-22 which is much lower when compared with either any country of BRICS group or with north American and European countries. NEP 2020 promotes foreign universities and colleges to establish their campuses in India to offer top-notch instruction locally at much reduced fees without having to fly. As a result, native institutions will have to overcome the obstacles in-order to raise the standard of education that is offered to them. India must expand its worldwide higher education sector, which should be powered by information resources rather than natural resources, if it is achieve sustained economic growth. In-order to strengthen capital investment for the education sector, India wishes to increase foreign direct investment (FDI), and open-up the external commercial borrowing (ECB) channel. Many international surveys indicates that cross-border education boost the economy and increases person's degree of competitiveness, cultural sensitivity, and global awareness. Through foreign partnership, local institutions can offer pupils with a variety of fields and specialization while designing their curriculum in accordance with international pedagogy.

5. By NEP 2020, time duration of any undergraduate degree in any professional and vocational course as per institution will be of three or four years with multiple entry/exits providing a certificate after completion of one year, a diploma after completing two years, degree for those students who complete three years of study. NEP 2020 allow the higher education institutions to give freedom to carry forward PG courses, however faces some challenges in designing two-year PG courses for students completing three years UG program and one year PG course for candidates who completed four years undergraduate courses.

## VII. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF NEP 2020

1. **Inadequate Funding:** The NEP 2020 mentions many significant changes in existing education framework from pre-primary education to higher education. This pedagogical education structural change needs more financial resources for teacher training, school and college infrastructure, curriculum, and educational technology etc. to achieve the targets setup in the policy within appurtenant time. India committed approximately 4.1% to 4.6% of its GDP to education Between 2015 and 2024 aligning with global standards established by 'Education 2030 frame work action', which advises the nations to allocate 4-6% of their GDP to education. The country has been severally damaged by Covid-19 pandemic, at the time NEP 2020 was adopted. As a result, the government places greater attention on the health and economic sectors, which further postponed the NEP's implementation. Therefore, the most challenging task facing the state and federal government in executing the NEP and advancing towards SDG4 in increasing budgetary allocation for education.

2. **Lack of trained teacher:** Teachers have a crucial role in implementing the policy's provisions which include the basic mission for literacy, numeracy, assessment reforms, and the use of technology in instruction, learning and evaluation among other things. Since today's education is centered on technology, the same old instructors who were appointed to various positions in Indian schools are still not qualified and trained in accordance with new curriculum. These educators are lack both training and advanced credentials. Second, schools are experiencing a teacher shortage. It will be challenging to reach 50% gays students in higher education and 100% non-gays students in school, if teachers are not appointed in sufficient number on time.

3. **Vocational Education:** NEP 2020 mandates that vocational education begin in class 6 and that by 2025, 50% of the pupils will get instruction in traditional and local arts, crafts, cuisine, gardening and entrepreneurship through both higher education and schools. Once Again major issue is the inadequate funding for resources, qualified staff, and structure etc. Secondly, it can be difficult to change parent's and student's negative attitudes regarding vocational education.

4. **Lack of school and universities:** By UDISE 2020-21 report, over 14.89 lakh schools are running and out of them 10.2 lakh schools are managed by the state and central government to achieve 100% GER in schools by 2030, we need more school. As per report 2023, there are more than 1000 universities with 45000 colleges in India, however in year 2020-21, 28.4% GER was found in higher education due to migration of students to abroad for higher study. Therefore, we need to open more new universities providing worldclass higher education to achieve 50% GER in higher education by 2035.

5. **Digital Literacy:** In India, especially in rural areas, it is more challenging to enhance the digital literacy because of lack of availability of electronic gadgets and poor internet connectivity. The virtual education could not take proceed always through the smartphone. A PC or laptop is required for digital education. In India just, 8% houses hold own a PC or laptop but most have a smartphone, which is insufficient to promote digital education in the country.

During covid-19 i.e lockdown, the children of governments schools particularly in Bihar, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh were unable to access digital devices and e-learning resources and they were not provided with any educational material. In both public and private schools, WhatsApp was the primary means by which the instructions were delivered in home with internet. Because of lack of internet

connection/poor quality internet or inability of most parents to afford it, they faced difficulties to ensure WhatsApp lessons. Therefore, there are enormous obstacles in granting digital education initiative for NEP to attain the targets set up by SDG4.

**6. Gender Inequality:** In our society, women confront several challenges such as parental attitudes, socioeconomic status, and lack of facilities like transportation, toilets, security in schools and universities are main obstacles to female education in India. The gender gap in higher education is more pronounced than in basic school. The majorities of rural residents continue to be against girls pursuing higher education due to cultural and traditional views. Another typical obstacle that keeps individuals from getting the degree is getting married at young age. Approx. 50% girls of socioeconomic disadvantaged group (SEDG) faced additional challenges due to their gender. NEP 2020 is based on equality and providing education regardless of gender. However, gender inequality is unfortunate reality and significant challenge in successful implementation of NEP.

**7. Challenges of Geographical identity:** NEP 2020 can achieve the goals set up by in SDG4, if it ensures to provides good quality education to students of rural, and disadvantaged areas as they have limited access to advance tools such as computer learning, digital learning, and non-academic books. More than 55% of students have never used a computer. Children in rural areas go to school but do not receive good quality instruction. They struggle with fundamental mathematics, reading, and writing skills. The students-teacher ratio is very low in rural areas as teachers prefer urban than rural schools. It will be difficult for the government to provide basic infrastructure, transportation, and study material in rural areas while hiring high quality and trained teachers that are needed.

**8. Challenge of socio-economic identities:** During lockdown, workers of informal sectors have been faced numerous challenges and migrates to their native places. Therefore, due to economic issues their children drop out of school. The drop-out rates among the socially disadvantage SC and ST students are found to be higher even greater declines for female students in India and the NEP also emphasized. It is one of the administration's biggest challenges to getting them back

## VIII. CONCLUSION

The NEP 2020 introduces several significant changes in existing education framework for education spanning from pre-school to university, and suggest to modifying the curriculum & pedagogy structure to a 5+3+3+4 approach in place of 10+2 structure. NEP 2020 is based on equality and providing education regardless of gender. The policy was launched to revolutionize the education framework and to make it more adaptable, inclusive, and holistic. The strategy focuses on important areas such as instruction and curriculum reforms for early childhood supervision, and education methods of assessment and revolution. Professional development for teachers, and the use of technology in the classroom. The goal of NEP 2020 is to turn schools in to dynamic, learner-centered organizations that promote creativity, innovation, and critical thinking. NEP 2020 has significantly altered the educational landscape, improving the system effectiveness, efficiency, and learner friendliness.

Every undergraduate will last three or four years, with multiple exit/entry including a certificate at end of the first year, a diploma at the end of the second year or a bachelor's degree upon completion of the third year. The proposal in NEP 2020 to establish the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) as governing body for higher education with exception of legal and medical education-represent a major shift. To digitally record the academic credits earned from various approved higher education institutions (HEIs), an Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) must be established. This will make it possible to award degrees from HEIs while taking into consideration the overall amount of credit earned. Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), which will be established as model public universities for holistic and interdisciplinary education would work to raise the bar for multidisciplinary education in India. There will be no more of previous one-year MPhil program.

The announcement of establishing up multidisciplinary education and research universities (MERUs) gives more hope for Indian students to get multidisciplinary education in the country. These autonomous universities will be on par with current IITs and IIMs. NEP 2020 suggests an important change that National Testing Agency (NTA) as autonomous, expert, and premier organization will conduct one common entrance examinations for undergraduate and graduate admission in most universities, and qualifying examination like fellowship in higher education. NEP 2020 calls for action that should reduce the number of students from socially and economically disadvantage backgrounds who drop out of school including the establishment of special education zones, a gender inclusion fund and enhanced access to open distance learning program of NIOS and states.

Overall, the necessity to produce specialists in a range of disciplines, from agriculture to artificial intelligence is addressed by NEP 2020. This policy lays the groundwork for many young aspirational students to have the necessary skill set in order, for India to be prepared for the future. Although the new education policy has a noble goal, its effectiveness will depend on how well it can work with other government policy initiatives,

such as the new industrial policy, Digital India, and skill India, to create a cohesive structural change. NEP has made reassuring provisions for a consultative monitoring and review framework and real-time evaluation tools. The NEP 2020 is defining movement for higher education and its true groundbreaking nature will depend on how well and quickly it is implemented.

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