

A REVIEW OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020: ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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Abstract : The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a significant reform in the Indian education system, aiming to improve access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability in education. A redesigned curriculum framework, transdisciplinary learning, skill-based education, and technology integration are only a few of the revolutionary features introduced by the policy. Despite its progressive goals, NEP 2020 will not be implemented successfully due to a number of issues, including inadequate infrastructure, teacher readiness, budgetary restrictions, the digital divide, and differences between rural and urban educational institutions. This review study looks at the main features of NEP 2020, evaluates the problems and difficulties in putting it into practice, and considers how the Indian education system could be improved in the future. The study's foundation is an examination of academic papers, policy documents, and current literature. The results indicate that although NEP 2020 has the potential to revolutionize Indian education, its intended goals will require efficient execution, sufficient finance, and ongoing oversight.

IndexTerms - National Education Policy 2020, Challenges, Indian Education System, Future Prospects.

INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental instrument for national development, social transformation, and economic growth. In the twenty-first century, rapid technological advancements, globalization, and changing workforce requirements have significantly influenced educational systems worldwide. To meet these emerging challenges and opportunities, countries are continuously reforming their educational policies and practices. In India, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents one of the most comprehensive educational reforms since the National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1986 (Ministry of Education, 2020).

The National Education Policy 2020 was approved by the Government of India on 29 July 2020 with the objective of transforming India's education system into a globally competitive, inclusive, and learner-centered framework. The policy aims to provide high-quality education to all learners while promoting equity, accessibility, affordability, accountability, and excellence. It envisions an education system that develops critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving abilities, communication skills, and lifelong learning competencies among students (Government of India, 2020).

One of the most significant reforms introduced by NEP 2020 is the restructuring of school education from the traditional 10+2 system to a 5+3+3+4 curricular and pedagogical structure. The policy also emphasizes Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), foundational literacy and numeracy, experiential learning, competency-based assessment, multilingual education, vocational training, and technology integration. Furthermore, it promotes holistic and multidisciplinary learning by allowing greater flexibility in subject selection and reducing rigid disciplinary boundaries (Kumar & Prakash, 2020).

In higher education, NEP 2020 proposes transformative measures such as multidisciplinary institutions, multiple entry and exit options, the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), increased research opportunities, and the establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI). The policy seeks to enhance the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education to 50 percent by 2035 and foster innovation, research, and global competitiveness among educational institutions (Tilak, 2021).

Despite its ambitious vision and progressive reforms, the successful implementation of NEP 2020 faces several challenges. Issues such as inadequate funding, infrastructural disparities, shortage of trained teachers, digital divide, linguistic diversity, and administrative complexities may hinder the realization of the policy's objectives. The transition from policy formulation to effective implementation requires coordinated efforts among governments, educational institutions, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders (Sharma & Sharma, 2021).

Several scholars have highlighted both the opportunities and challenges associated with NEP 2020. While the policy is expected to improve educational quality, employability, innovation, and global competitiveness, concerns remain regarding resource allocation, implementation mechanisms, institutional readiness, and equitable access to educational opportunities. Therefore, a critical examination of the policy is necessary to understand its potential impact on the Indian education system.

The present review paper aims to analyze the major provisions of NEP 2020, examine the issues and challenges associated with its implementation, and explore future prospects for educational development in India. Through a comprehensive review of policy documents, research studies, and scholarly literature, the paper seeks to provide insights into the transformative potential of NEP 2020 and the measures required for its effective implementation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To review the major features of NEP 2020.
2. To analyze the issues and challenges in implementing NEP 2020.
3. To examine the future prospects of educational reforms under NEP 2020.
4. To provide recommendations for effective implementation of the policy.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on a qualitative review of secondary sources, including government reports, policy documents, journal articles, books, conference proceedings, and research studies related to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Relevant literature was collected from various academic databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, ResearchGate, Scopus-indexed journals, and government publications. Official documents released by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, and other educational organizations were also consulted to ensure the authenticity and reliability of information.

The review focused on studies published between 2020 and 2025 that examined the objectives, provisions, implementation strategies, opportunities, and challenges of NEP 2020. Keywords such as “National Education Policy 2020,” “educational reforms,” “implementation challenges,” “higher education,” “school education,” and “future prospects of NEP 2020” were used to identify relevant literature.

The collected literature was systematically analyzed and categorized into major themes, including school education reforms, higher education reforms, teacher education, technology integration, equity and inclusion, implementation challenges, and future prospects. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns, key findings, and critical issues discussed in the literature.

This review does not involve primary data collection; therefore, it relies entirely on previously published scholarly works and official policy documents. The methodology enables a comprehensive understanding of the major provisions of NEP 2020, the challenges associated with its implementation, and its potential impact on the Indian education system.

4. MAJOR PROVISIONS OF NEP 2020

4.1 School Education Reforms

- Introduction of the 5+3+3+4 curricular structure.
- Universalization of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
- Competency-based learning and assessment.
- Reduction in curriculum content.
- Promotion of multilingual education.

4.2 Higher Education Reforms

- Multidisciplinary universities and colleges.
- Multiple entry and exit options.
- Academic Bank of Credits (ABC).
- Establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI).
- Increased Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) target to 50% by 2035.

4.3 Teacher Education and Professional Development

- Four-year integrated B.Ed. program.
- Continuous professional development for teachers.
- Improved teacher recruitment and accountability.

4.4 Technology Integration

- Expansion of digital learning platforms.
- Promotion of online and blended learning.
- Use of educational technology for teaching and assessment.

5. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financial Constraints

Implementation of NEP 2020 requires substantial financial investment. Achieving the target of allocating 6% of GDP to education remains a significant challenge.

5.2 Infrastructural Limitations

Many schools, particularly in rural areas, lack adequate classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and digital facilities.

5.3 Teacher Preparedness

The success of NEP 2020 largely depends on teachers. However, insufficient training and professional development opportunities may hinder effective implementation.

5.4 Digital Divide

The unequal access to digital devices and internet connectivity creates barriers to technology-enabled learning.

5.5 Language and Multilingual Education Challenges

Implementing mother-tongue instruction across diverse linguistic contexts poses practical and administrative difficulties.

5.6 Equity and Inclusion Concerns

Ensuring equal educational opportunities for marginalized and disadvantaged groups remains a major challenge.

6. FUTURE PROSPECTS

- Strengthening digital infrastructure across educational institutions.
- Enhancing teacher capacity-building programs.
- Increasing public investment in education.
- Promoting industry-academia collaboration.
- Encouraging research and innovation.
- Expanding access to quality education in rural and remote areas.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase educational expenditure to meet NEP targets.
2. Strengthen teacher training and professional development.
3. Improve digital infrastructure and internet accessibility.
4. Develop effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
5. Encourage stakeholder participation in policy implementation.
6. Promote inclusive and equitable educational practices.

8. CONCLUSION

The National Education Policy 2020 represents a comprehensive roadmap for transforming India's education system. Its focus on holistic learning, flexibility, skill development, and technological integration aligns with global educational trends. However, the successful implementation of the policy requires addressing challenges related to funding, infrastructure, teacher preparedness, and digital inclusion. With sustained commitment and collaborative efforts, NEP 2020 has the potential to significantly improve educational quality and contribute to national development.

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