

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 AND ITS IMPACT ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The study focuses on the National Education Policy 2020, which was approved on July 29, 2020. The shift in the curriculum is from the Foundation Stage (5 Years of Schooling) to the Preparatory, Middle, and Secondary Stages. The study is based on secondary data collected from government reports, websites, journals, and articles. The objectives of NEP 2020 are Holistic Education Promotion, Flexible Learning Pathways, and Emphasis on Skill Development. The focus of the NEP 2020 is Universal Access to Schooling, Improved Learning Outcomes, Increased Access to Higher Education, and Greater Emphasis on Vocational Education. The impact on the higher education system introduces a flexible four-year undergraduate system allowing multiple exits to cater to diverse student needs upon completion, and for Ph.D. Programs, no M.Phil will be required. PG will be for 1 year only. Some of the prominent initiatives that increase access to education include the National Skill Development Corporation NSDC, DIKSHA, SWAYAM, and NMEICT. Challenges in implementation, Infrastructure Deficits, Funding Limitations, and Faculty Development Needs.

Keywords: Flexible Curriculum, Holistic Education, Higher Education, Technology, Teaching and Learning Quality.

Introduction

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) is a comprehensive framework approved on July 29, 2020. NEP 2020 emphasizes transformative reforms in higher education, aligning with contemporary societal and economic needs. The policy addresses modernization challenges by integrating technology and innovative pedagogical practices into higher education. NEP 2020 aims for heightened academic standards, fostering research and critical thinking to elevate educational quality.

Highlights of NEP 2020

- A committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Ex-Chief of ISRO Sri Kasturi Rangan, and a draft of NEP2020 was prepared in May 2019.
- NEP 2020 is the 3rd Education Policy after 1968 and 1986/1992.
- There is a target to spend 6% of GDP on the states and the Central Government.
- Up to 2030, Integrated 4-year B.Ed. degree will be compulsory for teaching as a minimum qualification.
- It will replace the 10+2 policy with 5+3+3+4 for 3-18 years old children.

Shift in Curriculum

- Foundation Stage (5 Years Schooling): No Examination, Entry of Child will be 3 years, three years – Play Group and two years – Class 1 and 2.
- Preparatory Stage (3 Years Schooling): Classes 3, 4, and 5, and the language will be the mother tongue.
- Middle Stage (3 years Schooling): Class 6,7 and 8. Computer Coding and Vocational Courses + Mathematics, Science, Art, and any Indian Language
- Secondary Stage (4 Years Schooling): Class 9,10,11, and 12, Examination Pattern will be semester, no specific stream, multiple subjects, Critical thinking type syllabus, and any foreign language, but no Chinese language.

Purpose of NEP 2020

1. **Holistic Education Promotion:** NEP 2020 advocates for integrated learning approaches that enhance student development and well-roundedness.
2. **Flexible Learning Pathways:** The policy offers diverse educational pathways catering to varied learner interests and individual pace.
3. **Skill Development Emphasis:** Prioritizes alignment of education with industry needs, fostering employability and practical skills in graduates.

Objectives

- To study the NEP 2020 higher education system.
- To study the impact of NEP 2020 on the higher education system.

Research Methodology

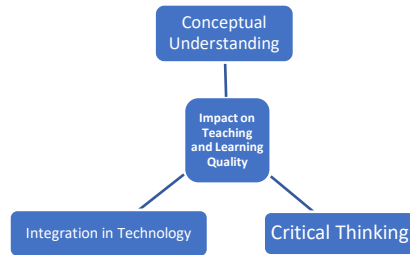
In this study, data were collected from secondary sources, such as government reports, journals, and articles. The study is descriptive in nature and focuses on the NEP 2020, the higher education system.

Result and Discussion

Impacts on the Higher Education System

- **Four-Year Undergraduate Degrees:** Introduces a flexible four-year undergraduate system allowing multiple exits to cater to diverse student needs. On the completion of one year, a Certificate of U.G. will be awarded to the candidate, on the completion of two years, a Diploma will be awarded, on the completion of three years, a Degree of graduation will be provided, and on the successful completion of four years, a Degree with Honors/ Research will be provided to students.
- In other words, it is a Multiple Exit/Entry Options Policy. For this purpose, the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) is established.
- **For Ph.D. Programs,** no M.Phil will be required. PG will be for 1 year only.
- **Vocational Education Integration:** Seamlessly incorporates vocational training within higher education, promoting skill-based learning and employability enhancement.
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Impact of NEP 2020 on the Quality of Teaching and Learning



Sources: <https://www.education.gov.in>

Conceptual Understanding: The National Education Policy 2020 focuses on conceptual understanding, grounded in a critical analysis of rote learning in educational paradigms.

Integration in Technology: The National Education Policy 2020 utilizes digital platforms such as NSDC, DIKSHA, SWAYAM, and NMEICT to facilitate interactive, effective learning, thereby enabling learners to engage with and perform well in academic work.

Critical Thinking: National Education Policy 2020 encourages the students' innovation and analytical reasoning. Engaging students in collaborative projects helps them connect with real-world problem-solving.

Research and Development Innovation Boost:

National Research Foundation	Established a body to fund that supports collaborative projects and advances research initiatives
Increased Research Funding	Provided accurate financial resources to institutions, incentives for high-quality research outputs, and support for the development of infrastructure.
Interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary Studies Promotion	Encourages multidisciplinary studies that help learners gain knowledge of the field or subject of interest and diverse academic perspectives.

Establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI)

- The Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) is a proposed unified regulatory body that will establish a single arching regulator for Higher Education, HECI, and UGC, and AICTE will be abolished.
- It is established for robust regulatory oversight, ensuring quality assurance, and enhancing institutional accountability.

- The function of HECI is to regulate, provide funding, accreditation, and set learning standards and their outcomes.

Expanding Open Learning Programs

- Enhances open and distance learning initiatives to increase flexibility and accessibility for all learners nationwide.
- The National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) is being established. It will help facilitate the exchange of free ideas in schools and higher education. It will help assess and plan education.
- CUET has been started by a separate agency, N.T.A., for admission to other courses.

Integration of I.T. technology: The following outcomes are observed. By digital technology, virtual learning environments have been created, and these initiatives are:

- i. **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC):** This was created by the government to promote skill development in India. It sanctions funds, training, and support to various organizations
- ii. **Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA):** This is a national digital infrastructure (Platform) for teachers of different universities and colleges in India
- iii. **Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM):** This initiative is taken by the Indian Government to provide free online courses.
- iv. **National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT):** This step is taken by MHRD to promote the integration of I.T. technology in higher education.

Challenges in Implementation

Infrastructure Deficits: There are significant gaps in educational infrastructure, hindering the effective rollout of NEP 2020 initiatives.

Funding Limitations: Insufficient funding hindered the implementation of necessary reforms, impacting resource availability and sustainability.

Low weightage is given to English. Focus on the local language is given.

Faculty Development Needs: Provide ongoing faculty development training to ensure educators can effectively adapt and apply innovative teaching methodologies.

Findings

1. NEP 2020 aims to provide learners with critical thinking over rote learning and memorization.

2. The education is based on competency-based learning and learner-centric approaches.
3. Introduces a flexible four-year undergraduate system allowing multiple exits to cater to diverse student needs.
4. NEP 2020, focus on a continuous faculty development program to update them with innovative teaching-learning strategies and pedagogical skills.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the implementation of the NEP 2020 brings changes to the teaching-learning system. It adopts critical-thinking-based learning to avoid a rote-learning approach. Learners are free to select subjects regardless of their stream, based on their areas of interest. This helps students gain knowledge and develop an interest in learning. It is beneficial for students to adopt a flexible four-year undergraduate system so they do not lose time if programs are disrupted and receive a specific certificate for their efforts. The involvement of technology is beneficial in higher education; learners have access to online teaching and recorded lectures. With the help of technology, the FDP program offers a hybrid format, allowing participants to attend in person and update their innovative teaching and learning strategies.

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