

# A Study to Examine the Concerns and Hardships in the Implementation of the 2020 National Education Policy

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## Abstract

*Education plays a crucial role in unlocking human potential, fostering an inclusive society, and driving national development. Ensuring equitable access to quality education is paramount for India's continued growth and global prominence in areas such as economic advancement, social justice, scientific, innovation, national integration and cultural preservation. The National Education policy 2020, introduced on July 29, 2020, acknowledges the need to address the shortcomings of the existing education system, rooted in British and Industrial age influences, and presents a comprehensive framework for reform. However, implementing this transformative vision will require a paradigm shift spanning multiple generations of parents, teachers, grandparents and educators. The transition from a predominantly STEM-focused education to the principles outlined in the NEP necessitates training teachers, educators, and administrative staff while also cultivating a pool of inspiring mentors. These efforts are crucial in realizing the ambitious objectives of the policy.*

**Keywords:** New education policy, Challenges, innovation, STEM education, preservation.

## INTRODUCTION

The new education policy in India represents a positive transformation of the existing education system, incorporating impressive and commendable propositions. The recently revealed National Educational Policy 2020 introduces a multitude of changes at all levels of education in the country, redefining the fundamental understanding of education. It also aims to reform the training of educators in schools, colleges, and universities, as well as their approach to education [1]. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, upon its unveiling, emphasized that the policy is based on the principles of accessibility, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability, with the goal of transforming India into a vibrant

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knowledge hub. The purpose of the education system is to nurture individuals who possess rational thinking and actions, along with qualities such as compassion, empathy, courage, resilience, scientific temper, creative imagination, and strong ethical values. The objective is to develop active, valuable, and involved individuals who contribute to the establishment of a fair, inclusive, and diverse society, in accordance with the principles set forth in our constitution. An exemplary educational institution is one that nurtures an atmosphere where each student feels embraced and supported. It creates a secure and engaging learning environment, provides a broad range of educational opportunities, and ensures equal access to adequate physical facilities and appropriate resources for every student. Every educational establishment should aspire to attain these characteristics. Moreover,

there should be seamless integration and collaboration among institutions at all levels of education to ensure a unified and efficient educational system [2].

### **The creation of the new Education Policy 2020**

It entails the establishment of a fresh and revised framework for the education sector. NEP 2020 marks a significant milestone as the first new education policy introduced in India in 21<sup>st</sup> century, replacing the previous National Policy on Education from 1986, which underwent one modification in 1992. Prior to that, the initial education policy was implemented in 1968. The introduction of a new education policy was a promise made by the Bhartiya Janata Party during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The development of a new education policy commenced in 2015, and by May 2026, the committee for evolution of the new education policy had presented its report. This comprehensive report laid the foundation for the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to compile "Some Inputs for the Draft National Education Policy, 2016." These inputs served as valuable guidance for further shaping the draft of the national education policy, marking an important milestone in the policy development process.

### **Benefits of New Education Policy 2020**

The New Education Policy 2020 brings forth several significant benefits, including:

1. *Emphasis on Pragmatic Knowledge:* The policy shifts focus from rote learning to promoting practical knowledge among students. It encourages a more holistic approach to education, allowing students to develop critical thinking skills and a scientific mindset from an early age.
2. *Global Standard Higher Education:* The NEP aims to facilitate the establishment of new high-quality higher educational institutions that meet global standards. This will provide students with access to top-notch educational opportunities that are on par with international standards.
3. *Enhanced international engagement and opportunities:* The implementation of the NEP allows for increased participation of foreign universities in India, enabling students who may face obstacles in pursuing education abroad to access global educational opportunities. This expanded exposure facilitates a broader understanding of diverse perspectives, fostering personal and professional development.
4. *Emphasis on ethical education:* The National Education policy places significant emphasis on promoting value-based education, nurturing students with a strong foundation in ethics and morals. This focus cultivates individuals who exhibit responsibility, empathy, and actively contribute to the betterment of society.
5. Overall, the New Education Policy 2020 strives to transform the education system by focusing on practical knowledge, global exposure, and value-based education, opening up new avenues and opportunities for students in India.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In their study titled "NEP 2020 and School Education: Perspectives of Academicians from Tamil Nadu," Dr. S Seethalakshmi and Dr. K Shyamala (2022) highlighted that the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes practical learning through experimentation, vocational training, research, and art, providing students with valuable opportunities for hands-on learning [3, 4].

Sunitha Khatak and Naman Madhwa (2020) explored the impact of online versus offline education in India and questioned whether the country is adequately prepared to tackle the challenges associated with online education [5]. They noted that the education sector, from primary to higher levels in schools, colleges, and universities, has been significantly affected during this critical time [6].

Rajni Bansal (Chitkara Business School, Chitkara University) and B. S. Hothi (Gitarattan International Business School (2021)) conducted a comprehensive review on the national education policy 2020 and its impact on academic practices [7].

While acknowledging the policy's competitive aspects, the study emphasized the urgent need for practical implementation, which requires the cooperation of educational institutions and the support of all states to successfully implement this challenging policy [8, 9]. Rajesh Panda (2020) highlighted numerous studies indicating that the new education policy aims to transcend traditional classroom boundaries and encourage students to learn from the real world. This approach aligns with the concept of "learning how to learn," which is another significant feature of the NEP [10].

### **AIMS OF THE STUDY**

1. To identify the challenges and concerns encompassed by the new education Policy.
2. To analyze the impact of education system in India.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The implementation of new education policy presents several challenges. There is an overlap in the emphasis placed on 12<sup>th</sup> grade board exams and the subsequent common university entrance examinations. Furthermore, the linkage of funding to state performance may result in disadvantaged states with lower income and academic performance facing potential financial constraints in the future, thereby exacerbating social and educational disparities.

### **MAJOR CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020**

1. *Establishing Universities on a regular basis poses a significant challenge:* Opening a new university every week for the next 15 years, as envisioned by the policy to double the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education by 2035, is an immensely daunting task. The scale of this endeavor cannot be under estimated.
2. *Reforms in the school system present formidable numbers:* The National Education Policy 2020 aims to reintegrate 2 crore out-of-school children into the education system. Achieving this target within 15 years necessitates the establishment of approximately 50 schools every week. This demands substantial investments in infrastructure and campuses, making it a highly challenging endeavor.
3. *Funding constraints in the era of COVID-19 pose a significant obstacle:* Securing adequate funding is a major challenge. The policy proposes an increase in education spending from 4.6% to 6% of GDP, amounting to approximately INR 2.5 lakh crore per year. However, the current economic situation, impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, has led to reduced tax revenues and increased fiscal deficits, making financial allocation for education demanding.
4. *Competing priorities on healthcare and economic recovery may slow down implementation:* Given the current emphasis on healthcare and economic recovery, there might be delays in the initial years of implementation. The government's focus and budgetary allocations may be directed towards urgent needs, potentially affecting the swift progress of the National Education Policy.
5. *Demand for a large pool of trained teachers:* The policy emphasizes significant changes to the curriculum in school education, requiring mindset shifts among teachers and parents. Creating a large pool of trained teachers who can adapt to the reformed curriculum poses a considerable challenge.
6. *Cultural shift required for interdisciplinary higher education:* The NEP 2020's emphasis on interdisciplinary learning in higher education is a positive step. However, it necessitates a cultural shift within the higher education ecosystem. Encouraging professors to engage with other disciplines while maintaining expertise in their own fields will require substantial changes over the next 15-20 years

### **Issues with the NEP-2020**

The NEP-2020, despite its attempts to cater to various stakeholders, faces several issues that are evident within the policy document itself. Some of the key challenges include:

*Lack of integration:* The policy exhibits gaps in integrating technology and pedagogy, as well as the incorporation of lifelong learning as a crucial element in the advancement of emerging sciences.

*Language barrier:* The NEP aims to promote learning in the home language up to grade five to enhance learning outcomes. While understanding concepts in the home language is important for a strong foundation, it is also essential to acknowledge that English serves as a language of social and economic mobility in India.

*Multilingualism debate:* Effective implementation of home language learning requires a comprehensive ecosystem that extends from primary education to higher education and employment. Without such an ecosystem, the policy may fall short. Moreover, some states perceive the NEP as an attempt to impose Hindi, leading to debates on multilingualism.

*Lack of funds:* Public spending on education in India, according to the Economic Survey 2019-2020, accounted for only 3.1% of the GDP. Implementing the NEP's ambitious goals necessitates significant financial resources. While achieving a funding level of 6% of GDP remains uncertain, cost-effective measures could be explored to facilitate large-scale transformations.

*Hasty implementation:* The policy's development coincided with the COVID-induced lockdowns, limiting opportunities for comprehensive parliamentary discussions and deliberations. Diverse opinions could have been better considered through a more extensive and inclusive debate process.

*Overambitious targets:* The NEP sets a challenging target of allocating 6% of GDP to public spending on education. Given the current tax-to-GDP ratio and competing demands on the national exchequer for healthcare, national security, and other sectors, achieving this target presents significant challenges.

*Pedagogical limitations:* The NEP emphasizes flexibility, choice, and experimentation in higher education. However, if these options are mandated within single institutions, it can lead to difficulties in designing a curriculum that accommodates both diploma and degree programs, compromising the identity of the institution.

*Institutional limitations:* A well-functioning education system should encompass diverse institutions, allowing students to choose institutions that cater to their specific needs. The policy runs the risk of creating a uniform institutional structure imposed by the central government, potentially undermining institutional diversity.

*Issues with examinations:* High-stakes exams in India create immense pressure and competition, with significant consequences for students' opportunities. Addressing this challenge requires a more equitable society, ensuring equal access to quality institutions and reducing income disparities resulting from access to education.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020**

1. Revamping the school curriculum to integrate early childhood care and education
2. Implementing measures to reduce dropouts and ensure universal access to education.
3. Working towards achieving a gross enrolment Ratio of 50% in higher education by 2035.
4. Establishing a research foundation to enhance research activities in higher education institutions.
5. To enhance research activities in higher education institutions.
6. Requiring all state governments to develop detailed implementation plans to achieve the policy's goals by 2035.
7. Ensuring an optimal pupil-to-teacher ratio of 30:1 to facilitate effective teaching and learning.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion the national education policy 2020 holds great potential for the future of education in India. It aims to bring about substantial changes that promote inclusivity, quality and innovation. However, its effective implementation requires significant simplification of decision-making processes and the reallocation of budgetary resources in the coming months and years. With approximately 350 million individuals in India's school and college-going age groups, the implementation of this policy demands a large-scale effort of unprecedented magnitude. It is crucial to streamline administrative structures and prioritize funding in order to realize the goals set forth in the NEP. This endeavor represents a unique opportunity for India to set a new benchmark in education reform, surpassing any previous attempts undertaken globally.

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