



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

New Education Policy 2020 and Its Implications for Higher Education: A Study

Gomati

Assistant professor, A S. Kharb Memorial college of education, Kanshi Jhajjar, Haryana

Abstract

The study looks at India's New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) and its wide-ranging effects on the higher education industry. The study examines the actual implementation and results of NEP 2020's revolutionary reforms by using secondary data, official policy papers, scholarly literature, and interviews with important stakeholders like as educators, administrators, and students. These include encouraging trans-disciplinary education, offering a variety of entry and departure points, implementing flexible curriculum, increasing institutional autonomy, and prioritizing skill development and learning settings that are focused on research.

NEP 2020 has a lot of potential to improve access, foster academic innovation, foster international collaboration, and increase curricular flexibility, but it also confronts significant obstacles, according to the research. These include inadequate infrastructure, disparities in faculty readiness, quality control procedures, and enduring equity problems. According to the research, NEP 2020 will necessitate focused investment, clear policies, faculty development, and institutional responsibility for substantial and long-lasting change in higher education. (Desale, 2025, pp. 22-25)

Keywords

New Education Policy 2020; Higher Education; Multidisciplinary Education; Curriculum Flexibility; Institutional Autonomy; Skill Development; Equity; Policy Implementation.

Introduction

The most extensive and ambitious educational reform in India since independence is represented by the New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). Flexibility, interdisciplinary, and inclusivity are at the heart of its vision for higher education. The creation of multidisciplinary institutions, flexible curricula with multiple entry and exit points, an Academic Bank of Credits, a greater emphasis on research through the proposed National Research Foundation, and increased institutional autonomy are just a few of the major structural changes outlined in the policy. These changes aim to address the evolving skill and employability demands of the twenty-first century while bringing Indian higher education into compliance with international standards. (Modi, 2023, p. 9)

Despite its forward-thinking goals, NEP 2020's implementation in India's heterogeneous higher education system is fraught with difficulties. Public and private institutions differ greatly



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

in terms of infrastructure, governance capability, and faculty preparedness, especially in remote or underfunded places. The shift to a technology-integrated, multidisciplinary, credit-based system necessitates substantial systemic transformation in addition to policy reform. Serious barriers to fair and efficient implementation include things like antiquated infrastructure, restricted access to digital technologies, a lack of faculty training, and unclear regulations. (Chowdhury, 2023, pp. 124-125)

Therefore, it is crucial to look into both the practical limitations that influence NEP 2020's acceptance as well as the goals and promises it contains. A thorough analysis of the policy's interpretation and implementation by institutions, teacher and student readiness, and the larger sociopolitical context is required. Policymakers and educators may more successfully plan changes and guarantee that the desired advantages of NEP 2020 can be distributed fairly throughout the nation by having a better understanding of these processes.

Background of the Study

The low gross enrolment ratio (GER), rote learning, disciplinary silos, mismatch between educational outputs and job market demands, and a lack of research output have long plagued India's higher education system. Prior to NEP 2020, degree programs lacked flexibility and were strict and punishing. Mechanisms for governance and regulation were dispersed, and institutions frequently lacked autonomy in terms of curriculum or rate of development.

By proposing reforms like raising GER to 50% by 2035, encouraging multidisciplinary education, creating the Academic Bank of Credits, guaranteeing multiple exit options, and establishing the National Research Foundation, among other things, NEP 2020 approved by the Indian government in July 2020 aims to address these problems. Additionally, the policy places a strong emphasis on inclusion, equity, and technology integration.

Review of Related Literature

1. Kumari, S. (2024), The article "A Review of NEP 2020 and Autonomy in Higher Education in India" explores the ways in which leadership, institutional management, and governance in higher education are impacted by the idea of autonomy as it is envisioned in NEP 2020. It talks on the opportunities, difficulties, and graded autonomy of granting colleges and universities greater autonomy.
2. Anitha, N.V. (2024), Assessing the National Education Policy's (NEP) 2020 Implementation: Difficulties, Possibilities, and Effects on the Indian Educational System With an emphasis on teacher preparation, rural infrastructure, and competency-based and multilingual education reforms, this mixed-methods study evaluates implementation at all levels.
3. Mittal, S.S., Keswani, A., Garg, A., Khanna, A. Deb. H, & Gupta L. (2024), Examining the National Education Policy 2020 from the Viewpoint of Girls' Higher Education and Employability, this article explores the potential effects of the policy on employability



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal

Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

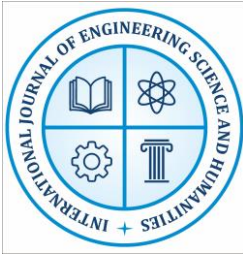
outcomes, female participation in higher education, and whether gender equity is maintained during implementation.

4. Narkhede, Pasi, Dhamak, Mahalle & Ambhore (2025), Investigating CSFs for implementing NEP 2020 to reshape the higher education ecosystem in the interest of educational excellence Critical success factors (CSFs) for implementing NEP 2020 in higher education are identified in this recent study. These include quality assurance, digital transformation, equality policies, and institutional reform.
5. Acharaya, S.C. (2025), The case study "Digital Application of NEP 2020 in Higher Education: An Open University Case" examines how an Open University is implementing digital technologies (ICT, blended learning, digital libraries) in accordance with NEP's guidelines, examining both the advantages and disadvantages, including faculty capacity and digital access.
6. Sivaram, K. (2022), A review of NEP 2020's impact on higher education and school education. Early reflections and preparedness deficiencies are highlighted in this comprehensive analysis of NEP 2020, which looks at both school and higher education components. It also looks at curricular improvements, skill development, multidisciplinary education, and alignment with industry.
7. Kumari, S. (2023), Higher Education under National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020: A Teacher's Perspective Study gathers information from higher education instructors to assess their knowledge, opinions, and worries about NEP 2020; subjects covered include affordability, quality, equity, and real-world difficulties in putting the policy into practice in classrooms and institutions.
8. Chopra, R. & Pandey, S. (2023), This article, National Education Policy 2020: Promises and Prospects for Higher Education in India, highlights the difficulties with funding, regulation, and institutional capacity while outlining the qualitative changes in higher education multidisciplinary institutions, autonomy, and progressive pathways that are anticipated under NEP 2020.

Statement of the Research Problem

Although NEP 2020 outlines a revolutionary vision for higher education, little empirical data is available regarding the amount of its impact, the obstacles to its efficacy, and how its changes are being applied in various institutional contexts. Important unknowns consist of:

1. The practical implementation of credit bank systems, multiple exit/entry, and diverse curricula in higher education institutions.
2. The infrastructure and faculty's preparedness to support the reforms in NEP 2020.
3. How NEP's directives are being applied to guarantee equity and inclusion across a range of institutions and geographical areas.



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

4. What unforeseen repercussions or obstacles show themselves during the initial stages of implementation?

Objectives of the Study

1. To outline the major higher education-related reforms brought about by NEP 2020.
2. To evaluate the ways in which these reforms are being applied in various public and private, urban and rural institutions.
3. To assess the initial effects of NEP 2020 on quality, research, skill development, curriculum, and access.
4. To determine the obstacles and difficulties in putting the NEP 2020 reforms into practice.
5. To make suggestions to interested parties to improve NEP 2020's execution and results.

Research Questions

1. Which NEP 2020 measures have the biggest effects on higher education?
2. How much are institutions of higher learning operationalizing these reforms?
3. What are the quantifiable and perceived effects of NEP 2020 on research, skill development, curricular flexibility, and access?
4. What obstacles must institutions overcome in order to put these reforms into practice?
5. How can institutional procedures and policy be enhanced to meet the objectives of NEP 2020 in higher education?

Hypothesis

H1: The NEP 2020 reforms are being implemented more successfully by institutions with more infrastructure and resources than by those with less.

H2: The successful implementation of NEP 2020 changes is favorably correlated with faculty preparedness in terms of training, attitude, and capacity.

H3: Student access, skill development, and curriculum flexibility in higher education are all benefiting from NEP 2020 reforms.

H4: Issues with equity Deficits in infrastructure, institutions, socioeconomics, and geography pose serious obstacles achieving NEP 2020's full potential.

Research Methodology

A mixed methods strategy is used in this study, integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques. Policy documents, secondary literature, a survey of administrators and faculty in a sample of universities, and interviews with students and institutional leaders are some of the data sources. HEIs from both public and private sectors, in both urban and rural areas, are included in the sample. To test hypotheses, quantitative data will be analyzed using regression, correlation, and descriptive statistics. Thematic coding of the qualitative data will reveal perceptions, difficulties, and success stories. Fairness, anonymity, and informed permission are among the ethical principles upheld.



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

The implementation of education reform is intricate and multi-layered, which is why a mixed approaches design is used. While qualitative data documents complex experiences, resistance, flexibility, and new developments on campuses, quantitative data offers quantifiable insights into teacher awareness, institutional preparedness, and early results. Cross-comparative insights are made possible by a purposive selection technique, which guarantees representation from a variety of institutional kinds and geographical areas. Findings are more reliable and valid when data sources are triangulated. While surveys are designed to capture factors related to the study's goals and hypotheses, interviews are semi-structured to allow for flexibility and depth. In order to create a thorough knowledge of how NEP 2020 reforms are being implemented on the ground, data integration takes place throughout the analysis stage.

Discussion and Results

Putting Reforms into Practice

The implementation of NEP 2020 changes is still in its early phases at several HEIs. certain public institutions are implementing multidisciplinary courses; certain undergraduate programs are accepting numerous exit alternatives; and the Academic Bank of Credits system is being developed. Institutions in underfunded or rural locations, however, exhibit partial adoption or delays.

Numerous institutes of higher learning have started putting the NEP 2020 reforms into practice. A number of public universities are implementing multidisciplinary courses, some undergraduate programs have accepted numerous entry and exit possibilities, and some institutions are developing and implementing the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) system. The scope and speed of implementation, however, vary greatly. Institutions in underfunded or rural locations are exhibiting incomplete or delayed adoption, which is frequently hampered by regulatory lethargy, faculty and governance body ambiguity or lack of preparation, and infrastructure limitations. (ReTHINK, 2025, pp. 1-2)

Effects on Equity and Access

NEP 2020 seeks to enhance inclusivity and raise GER to 50% by 2035. Increased enrollment among underserved groups, online/university distance learning, and open learning initiatives are some areas that have seen gains. However, faculty shortages, the digital divide, and infrastructure deficiencies restrict equal access.

The lofty goals put forth in NEP 2020 include boosting the inclusion of socially and economically disadvantaged groups and raising the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) to 50% by 2035. There have been some notable changes, including an increase in enrollment among underserved groups and the use of online, distance, and open learning programs to reach students in far-flung locations. However, these advancements are tempered by significant, ongoing obstacles. Inadequate infrastructure, a lack of trained teachers, and the digital divide (lack of



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

dependable internet and gadgets) continue to be major barriers to fair access. (Kumari, 2025, pp. 6-10)

Research, Skill Development, and Curriculum Flexibility

Positive aspects include curriculum flexibility, the incorporation of life and occupational skills, and increased emphasis on research through the National Research Foundation. Research funding varies throughout schools, assessments and certification systems are still not completely coordinated, and many faculty members complain that they lack the expertise necessary to teach in multidisciplinary contexts.

NEP 2020's emphasis on curriculum flexibility, integration of life and occupational skills, and support of research through the National Research Foundation are some of its strong points. Many stakeholders see these improvements favorably because they bring higher education into line with innovation and employment. Research funding is still unequal across institutions, with many colleges finding it difficult to obtain resources for high-quality research; assessment and accreditation frameworks are still largely tied to older disciplinary notions; and faculty members lack training in multidisciplinary teaching, according to a number of institutions. (Yadav, 2023, pp. 509-514)

Institutional Readiness and Infrastructure

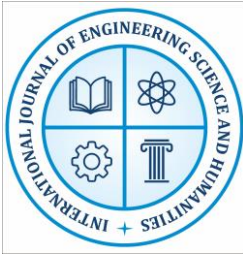
There are significant differences in HEIs' preparedness to adopt NEP reforms. While many institutions in rural locations struggle with a lack of labs, internet connectivity, qualified teachers, and funding, public universities in urban areas are better equipped.

There is significant diversity in HEIs' readiness to adopt NEP reforms. Reforms can be adopted more quickly in public universities in urban or well-resourced areas because they typically have more qualified professors, greater physical infrastructure (labs, ICT facilities), and stronger financial resources. On the other hand, colleges in isolated or underdeveloped areas frequently experience severe difficulties, such as a lack of labs, erratic internet or power supplies, a paucity of professors with the necessary training, and limited funding, all of which make it difficult for them to adequately satisfy NEP requirements.

Perceptions and Difficulties of Stakeholders

Interviewees are hopeful about the prospects of NEP 2020. Major worries, however, include how quality will be preserved during rapid expansion, whether regulatory bodies will support autonomy without sacrificing standards, whether commercialization or privatization may have unintended consequences, whether faculty burdens will increase, and whether students will truly benefit from a variety of exit/entry options in a way that the labor market recognizes.

Stakeholders, including students, faculty, and administrators, are cautiously optimistic about NEP 2020's capacity to reform. They value the inclusive, flexible, and independent perspective. The risk of commercialization creeping in, the possibility of faculty being



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

overburdened with new responsibilities, the need to maintain quality in the face of rapid expansion, the uncertainty surrounding market recognition for degrees or credentials earned via new multiple entry/exit pathways, and the need to ensure that regulatory bodies uphold standards while granting autonomy are all major concerns. In addition, a lot of stakeholders doubt that the reforms will have any impact on institutions with inadequate funding. (Joshi, 2023, pp. 115-120)

Dimension	Policy Reform Under NEP 2020	Implications for Higher Education
Structure of the Curriculum	Flexible curricula, multidisciplinary instruction, and a credit-based system	Calls for program restructuring, multidisciplinary instruction, and modular course options.
Equity and Access	GER goal of 50%, underprivileged groups' inclusion, and online education	Demands for inclusive pedagogy, scholarships, and digital infrastructure
The Academic Bank of Credits	Multiple entry/exit options and credit transfer	Restructuring the institution and closely monitoring students' academic development
Focus on Employability and Skills	Combining soft skills, internships, and vocational education	Industry cooperation, hands-on instruction, and updated evaluation frameworks
Investigation and Creativity	The National Research Foundation (NRF) was established.	Increased financing, institutional backing for research, and faculty development
Development of Faculty	Emphasis on training, ongoing professional development, and teacher autonomy	Investing in systems for teacher evaluation and up skilling
Independence and Leadership	independence from leading organizations and a single regulatory body (HECI)	Changes to the structure of accountability and governance
Quality and Accreditation	New methods of accreditation that take institutional performance and results into account	Internal quality assurance systems and compliance are necessary.
Integration of Technology	Blended learning using EdTech and online resources	requires training, infrastructure, and the digitization of content.



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

Table: Important Aspects of NEP 2020 and How They Affect Institutions of Higher Learning

Major Findings of the Study

1. With a focus on research, skill integration, flexible curricula, multidisciplinary education, and greater institutional autonomy, NEP 2020 brings revolutionary changes to Indian higher education.
2. There are still disparities in implementation; resource-rich universities and metropolitan HEIs are implementing reforms more quickly, while underfunded and rural institutions have significant delays because of regulatory uncertainty, faculty shortages, and infrastructure constraints.
3. Although there have been some noticeable early improvements in access and inclusion, especially with digital and open learning platforms, ongoing digital divides, regional disparities, and financial constraints have hampered development.
4. One important facilitator or obstacle is the preparedness of the administrators and faculty. Many stakeholders agree that new curricular and pedagogical methods cannot be implemented without sufficient training, orientation, and professional development.
5. Regulatory and accrediting organizations are finding it difficult to stay up with the goals of the policy. The new interdisciplinary, adaptable structure that NEP advocates frequently clashes with existing quality assurance frameworks.
6. Although the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) system is a good invention, many institutions are still in the early stages of its development, with issues with administrative coordination, student awareness, and technical integration.
7. Although there is theoretical flexibility in having several entry and departure choices, many institutions are unsure of how to put them into practice, and stakeholders are worried about how these credentials will be viewed in the labor market.
8. Although expectations have been increased by research and innovation reforms, such as the proposed National Research Foundation (NRF), inequalities in research financing and capacity still exist, particularly in Tier-II and III universities.
9. While some institutions are piloting the merger of vocational education and life skills, mainstream acceptance is sluggish because of inflexible course formats, a lack of industry connections, and faculty members who are not experienced with vocational pedagogy.
10. Although NEP has encouraged the growth of digital learning and mixed education models, there are significant differences in quality, accessibility, and engagement. Many pupils don't have consistent access to devices or internet.
11. Stakeholder attitudes show cautious optimism; the majorities supports the policy's vision but have reservations about its viability, pace, and support systems for real change.



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal
Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

12. Constant capacity building, monitoring, and policy coherence are desperately needed. This includes improved funding models, more precise implementation plans, and alignment between institutional reality and national goals.

Conclusion

To sum up, NEP 2020 is a historic strategy for Indian higher education that presents a daring vision for an educational system that is more adaptable, inclusive, multidisciplinary, and skill-oriented. Its suggested changes, which range from more institutional autonomy and a focus on research to curriculum flexibility and multiple exit/entry points, mark a break from the strict, discipline-bound models of the past. However, how successfully institutions, regulators, and stakeholders handle the shift will determine how well policy becomes practice. Whether the policy's promise is realized in actual educational contexts depends critically on a number of factors, including faculty capacity, institutional preparedness, proper infrastructure, and developed regulatory and quality assurance systems. In order to genuinely revolutionize higher education, NEP 2020 must guarantee that institutions and students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, geographical locations, and rural-urban divisions benefit from it. **(Bharucha, 2024, pp. 5-8)**

Higher education institutions need to take advantage of the early momentum and implement the plan in stages going forward. This entails making significant investments in faculty training and development to give academic staff the pedagogical, interdisciplinary, and digital skills they need; modernizing infrastructure, especially for digital learning, lab resources, and library support; creating responsive, transparent accreditation and governance systems that are in line with NEP's goals; and putting in place systems for ongoing monitoring, assessment, and feedback to make necessary course corrections. To guarantee that NEP 2020's aspirational aims become actual educational reform rather than just theoretical aspirations, policymakers must commit to consistent funding, encouraging oversight, and clear implementation standards. **(Chowdhury, 2023, pp. 12-15)**

A new age in Indian higher education could be ushered in by NEP 2020 if the higher education ecosystem can match capacities with the policy's goal while also being cognizant of institutional variety, resource limitations, and local differences. However, there is a chance that the policy's effects will be uneven, favoring institutions that are already strong while leaving weaker ones behind, if there isn't constant political will, cooperation between central and state actors, and mechanisms to protect inclusion, quality, and equity. If the revolutionary promise of NEP 2020 is to become a sustainable reality nationwide, careful, inclusive implementation paired with flexible policy support is crucial.



International Journal of Engineering, Science and Humanities

An international peer reviewed, refereed, open access journal

Impact Factor: 8.3 www.ijesh.com ISSN: 2250 3552

References

1. Anitha N.V. (2024). Evaluating the Implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Challenges, Opportunities, and Impact on Indian Education System, International Journal of Teacher Education Research Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 6-12.
2. Bharucha, J. (2024), India's Realignment of Higher Education, American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Spring 2024, pp. 5-8.
3. Chowdhury, I. B. (2023), Implementation of Educational Policy (NEP 2020): Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education in India, EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, Vol. 9(6), pp. 124-125.
4. Chowdhury, I.B. (2023), "Implementation of Educational Policy (NEP 2020): Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education in India," EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, Vol. 9 Issue 6 (2023), pp. 12-15.
5. Desale, V. J. (2025), Impact of NEP 2020 on Higher Education, International Education and Research Journal, 11(3), pp. 22-25.
6. Joshi, D. (2023), Vineet Sakate, Milind Khabale, National Education Policy 2020 and its Challenges for Implementation in India, Anveshak International Journal of Management, Vol.12, No.1 (2023) pp. 115-120.
7. Kumari, B. (2025), NEP 2020 and Inclusive Education: Potential for Enhancing Access and Equity, International Education and Research Journal, IERJ VII/07 (2025) pp. 6-10.
8. Kumari, S. (2023), Higher Education under National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020: A Teacher's Perspective Study, Journal of Visual and Performing Arts, Vol. 4, pp.22-25.
9. Kumari, S. (2024), "A Review of NEP 2020 and Autonomy in Higher Education in India" by Sweta Kumari (2024). MSW Management Journal, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 107-125.
10. Mittal, S.S., Keswani, A., Garg, A., Khanna, A., Deb, H. & Gupta, L. (2024), Examining the National Education Policy 2020 from the Perspective of Girls' Higher Education and Employability, EPH-International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Vol. 9, p. 2
11. Modi, T. B. (2023), The Impact of the National Education Policy on Higher Education in India, Research Review Journal of Social Science, 3(2), p. 9.
12. ReTHINK (The eventual implementation of NEP2020 is constrained by logistical, financial, and systemic challenges as of March 20th, 2025) pp. 1-2.
13. Sivaram, K. (2022), Role of NEP 2020 on School Education and Higher Education: A Review by. Elementary Education Online, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 556-562.
14. Yadav, A. (2023), National Education Policy 2020: Impact on Higher Education based on Theoretical Analysis, IJARST, Vol.3, Issue 7 (2023) pp. 509-514.