

Awareness of NEP 2020: Review of Existing Scenario

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a major restructuring of the Indian education system, with considerable emphasis on transforming school education through learner-centred pedagogy, competency development, foundational literacy and numeracy, vocational exposure, flexible curricular choices, technology integration, and continuous professional development of teachers. Since teachers are directly responsible for translating policy recommendations into classroom practices, their understanding of NEP 2020 is an important factor in its effective implementation. The present review examines the existing research concerning school teachers' awareness of NEP 2020. Published studies conducted after the introduction of the policy were reviewed thematically, with particular attention to teachers' general awareness, knowledge of specific provisions, demographic variations, professional differences, and challenges associated with implementation. The reviewed literature indicates that a considerable proportion of teachers are familiar with the broad objectives of NEP 2020; however, their understanding of several specific provisions remains comparatively limited. Research findings regarding differences based on gender, locality, and type of school are not uniform across studies. Another recurring issue is the difference between knowing about the policy and being adequately prepared to implement it. The review identifies the need for larger samples, standardised measurement tools, longitudinal investigations, intervention-based studies, and research connecting teacher awareness with actual classroom practices. Strengthening continuous professional development and providing institution-level implementation support may facilitate deeper understanding and meaningful adoption of NEP 2020.

Keywords

NEP 2020, teacher awareness, school teachers, school education, educational reform, teacher preparedness, policy implementation

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1. Introduction

The National Education Policy 2020 was introduced by the Government of India with the objective of bringing comprehensive changes across different levels of education. In school education, the policy proposes significant reforms related to curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, teacher education, vocational learning, technology, inclusion, and the overall development of learners. The policy also seeks to move the education system away from excessive dependence on rote memorisation towards competency-oriented and experiential forms of learning.

One of the important structural recommendations of NEP 2020 is the replacement of the earlier 10+2 structure with the **5+3+3+4 curricular and pedagogical framework**. The policy gives considerable importance to foundational literacy and numeracy, particularly during the early years of schooling. It also promotes activity-based learning, critical thinking, creativity, multidisciplinary learning, vocational exposure, formative assessment, and the use of technology in education.

Teachers occupy a central position in this transformation. Policies may provide a framework for educational change, but their actual influence depends substantially on how teachers understand and translate those recommendations into classroom practices. Consequently, awareness of NEP 2020 among school teachers has become an important area of educational research.

Teacher awareness should not be understood merely as familiarity with the name or general objectives of the policy. Meaningful awareness includes knowledge of its major provisions, understanding of their educational implications, and familiarity with proposed changes in curriculum and assessment, and an understanding of the teacher's changing responsibilities under the new framework.

Several studies have investigated teachers' perceptions and awareness of NEP 2020 since its introduction. However, the findings differ with respect to the level of awareness, demographic variables, school type, and particular dimensions of the policy. Therefore, a systematic examination of existing research is useful for identifying established findings as well as areas requiring further investigation.

2. Objectives of the Review

The present review was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To examine the existing research on school teachers' awareness of NEP 2020.
2. To identify the major dimensions of NEP 2020 that have been studied among teachers.
3. To analyse the major findings reported in previous studies.

4. To examine variations in awareness in relation to selected demographic and professional variables.
5. To identify recurring trends and inconsistencies in the existing literature.
6. To determine major research gaps related to teachers' awareness of NEP 2020.

3. Review Method

The present study follows a **narrative review approach**. Research papers and scholarly publications dealing with NEP 2020 and school teachers were considered for the review. Priority was given to studies published after the introduction of NEP 2020 in 2020.

The literature was examined under broad thematic categories such as:

- general awareness of NEP 2020;
- awareness of curricular and pedagogical reforms;
- foundational literacy and numeracy;
- vocational and skill-based education;
- assessment reforms;
- teacher professional development;
- technology and digital education;
- demographic differences;
- teacher preparedness and implementation challenges.

The review also considered the official policy document of NEP 2020 to establish the conceptual framework against which the findings of empirical studies were examined.

4. NEP 2020 and School Education

NEP 2020 proposes a learner-oriented and competency-focused approach to school education. Some of its major areas of relevance to school teachers are discussed below.

New Curricular and Pedagogical Structure

The policy introduces the 5+3+3+4 structure corresponding broadly to the foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary stages. This framework requires teachers to understand the developmental characteristics and learning needs associated with different stages.

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

Foundational literacy and numeracy are given high priority under NEP 2020. Teachers at the foundational and primary stages are expected to employ appropriate

pedagogical strategies to ensure that children develop essential reading, writing, and numeracy abilities.

Experiential and Competency-Based Learning

The policy encourages learning through activities, experiences, projects, discussions, experimentation, and problem-solving. Teachers are therefore expected to design learning situations that develop competencies rather than concentrating exclusively on textbook-based information.

Assessment Reform

NEP 2020 advocates a shift from assessment primarily focused on memorisation towards assessment of understanding, competencies, application, and holistic development. This has implications for classroom assessment practices as well as teachers' understanding of learning outcomes.

Vocational and Skill Education

The policy promotes exposure to vocational education and practical skills. School teachers need awareness of the role of skill development and work-based learning in the broader educational process.

Use of Technology

Technology is viewed as an important component of contemporary education. Teachers are expected to develop the ability to use appropriate digital resources to support teaching, learning, assessment, and communication.

Continuous Professional Development

NEP 2020 places emphasis on the continuous professional development of teachers. Regular training and professional learning are therefore important for helping teachers understand and apply the reforms proposed by the policy.

5. Review of Existing Research

Sharma and Akalamkam (2021) investigated school teachers' perspectives regarding NEP 2020. Their study considered several policy-related areas, including early childhood education, curriculum and pedagogy, assessment, and educational governance.

The findings indicated that teachers had differing levels of agreement and understanding regarding various policy provisions. While several aspects of the policy were viewed positively, concerns were also expressed regarding the practical conditions necessary for implementation. The study did not report a significant difference between government and private school teachers in relation to several of the examined perceptions.

The study highlights the importance of considering teachers' perspectives alongside policy recommendations because implementation depends upon their understanding and acceptance of proposed reforms.

Sowmya et al. (2022) examined teachers' perceptions of NEP 2020. Their work addressed fundamental principles of the policy along with its philosophical, curricular, and teacher-related dimensions.

The findings suggested that teachers possessed awareness of several major elements of NEP 2020, although their understanding was not equally strong across all areas. The study also pointed towards difficulties that teachers may encounter when policy recommendations have to be converted into actual educational practices.

This research indicates that awareness should be viewed as multidimensional rather than as a single general construct.

Shobha (2022) studied awareness of NEP 2020 among secondary school teachers. The findings indicated that the majority of participants fell within the average awareness category, while a smaller proportion demonstrated high awareness and only a very small proportion showed low awareness.

The study also examined selected demographic variables. No significant differences were observed in relation to gender and rural-urban background, whereas a difference was reported in relation to the management type of schools.

These findings suggest that institutional context may influence teachers' familiarity with educational reforms, although such relationships need to be investigated across wider populations.

Vatta, Kumari and Ranawat (2024) examined awareness of NEP 2020 among primary and secondary school teachers. The study included teachers from both levels and explored awareness of several policy provisions.

Teachers demonstrated comparatively greater familiarity with areas such as curricular restructuring, skill-oriented education, foundational literacy and numeracy, creativity, and experiential learning. On the other hand, awareness was relatively weaker concerning some specialised provisions, including flexibility in course selection, internships, ethical and value-oriented learning, specific traditional learning approaches, and the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

The findings also indicated differences between primary and secondary school teachers, with secondary teachers demonstrating comparatively greater awareness in the areas examined.

The study is important because it demonstrates that teachers may possess general knowledge of NEP 2020 while remaining less familiar with particular policy provisions.

Florence (2024) examined the awareness of school teachers regarding NEP 2020 across selected areas of Maharashtra. The study involved teachers from Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Kalyan, and Thane.

The findings indicated variations in awareness according to selected demographic characteristics. Differences were reported in relation to gender and locality, with female teachers showing comparatively greater awareness than male teachers in the study and teachers from Navi Mumbai demonstrating higher awareness in comparison with some other locations.

However, findings from an individual geographical region should not automatically be generalised to the entire school-teacher population of India. Further studies involving diverse geographical and institutional contexts are necessary.

Ghatak (2024) examined teachers' perceptual understanding of NEP 2020. The study indicated that many teachers were familiar with the general idea and objectives of the policy but did not necessarily possess detailed knowledge of every provision.

Some teachers were reported to have limited familiarity with specific components, including the 5+3+3+4 curricular structure. The study also drew attention to practical barriers such as inadequate resources, staffing concerns, and difficulties associated with implementation in particular school contexts.

The findings reinforce the distinction between general policy awareness and detailed operational understanding.

Neelofar and Suneetha Bai (2024) examined awareness and attitudes of secondary school teachers towards NEP 2020 in relation to school education. Their work contributes to the growing literature examining teachers' responses to the policy. The study and related literature indicate that teachers' awareness is closely connected with their attitudes towards proposed educational changes. Understanding the policy in sufficient depth may influence teachers' preparedness to engage with its recommendations.

Sharma (2026) investigated awareness and implementation-related challenges of NEP 2020 among secondary school teachers in Mathura District. The study involved a comparatively larger sample of teachers and reported a generally high level of awareness.

At the same time, the study highlighted a distinction between teachers knowing about NEP 2020 and being able to implement its recommendations effectively. Factors such as infrastructure, professional training, availability of digital resources, institutional support, administrative issues, and resistance to change were identified as relevant implementation concerns.

This finding is particularly significant because it indicates that increasing awareness alone may not be sufficient for successful educational transformation.

6. Major Trends Emerging from the Literature

The reviewed studies reveal several important patterns.

General Awareness is More Common than Detailed Knowledge

Across several studies, teachers appear to possess familiarity with the broad objectives of NEP 2020. However, awareness becomes less consistent when specific provisions are examined.

Teachers may know that NEP 2020 promotes experiential learning, skill education, competency-based learning, and foundational literacy, while having comparatively limited knowledge about particular frameworks, standards, structures, or specialised provisions.

Awareness is a Multidimensional Construct

The literature indicates that awareness cannot appropriately be measured through a few general questions about NEP 2020. It includes several components such as curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, vocational education, technology, teacher development, inclusion, and foundational learning.

Therefore, future studies should consider domain-specific awareness rather than relying exclusively on an overall awareness score.

Secondary Teachers Often Show Greater Awareness in Some Studies

Some research has reported comparatively greater awareness among secondary school teachers than primary teachers. One possible explanation may be differences in professional responsibilities, exposure to curriculum-related discussions, or access to professional development opportunities. However, this observation cannot be treated as a universal pattern because available studies are limited in number and context.

Findings Regarding Gender are Inconsistent

The available literature does not provide a uniform conclusion regarding gender differences. Some research has reported significant differences, while other studies have found no significant difference.

This inconsistency suggests that gender should be examined alongside contextual variables such as teaching experience, professional development, school location, subject specialisation, and institutional support.

Rural-Urban Findings are Not Consistent

Studies have produced different findings regarding locality. Some investigations have reported differences between teachers from different geographical

settings, while others have not found statistically significant differences.

This indicates the need for larger studies that examine access to training, digital resources, infrastructure, and professional networks along with locality.

School Management May Influence Awareness

Evidence concerning government and private schools is also mixed. Some studies have reported differences, whereas others have not found significant variation.

Rather than treating school management as an isolated variable, future studies could investigate the influence of institutional training, leadership support, teacher workload, and access to professional development.

7. Awareness of Different Dimensions of NEP 2020

The literature suggests that teachers' awareness differs across various dimensions of the policy.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

Teachers generally appear more familiar with broad curricular and pedagogical reforms such as experiential learning, activity-based learning, creativity, and competency development.

However, familiarity with these concepts does not necessarily indicate that teachers understand how to design classroom activities or assessments based on them.

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

Foundational literacy and numeracy have received substantial attention in the policy and professional discussions. Teachers appear to have reasonable awareness of their importance, although more detailed knowledge about assessment and pedagogical strategies may require additional professional development.

Vocational and Skill Education

Teachers are generally aware that NEP 2020 promotes vocational exposure and skill development. Nevertheless, awareness of specific arrangements, internships, local skill integration, and work-based learning may be comparatively limited.

Assessment Reforms

Assessment is another important area requiring deeper understanding. Teachers need to distinguish between traditional testing practices and assessment approaches that examine competencies, application, understanding, and holistic development.

Teacher Professional Development

The policy gives substantial importance to continuous professional development. Awareness of professional development provisions is essential because

teachers themselves are expected to continually update their knowledge and pedagogical skills.

Technology-Enabled Education

Digital learning has become an important part of educational reform. Awareness of digital education, however, must be considered together with teachers' actual digital competence and access to technological infrastructure.

8. Teacher Awareness and the Implementation of NEP 2020

One of the most significant issues emerging from the reviewed literature is the difference between **awareness and implementation**.

A teacher may know about the major recommendations of NEP 2020 but may still experience difficulties in applying them in the classroom. Implementation requires more than information. It involves understanding, professional competence, confidence, resources, institutional support, and opportunities for practice.

The process can therefore be understood through the following sequence:

Awareness → Understanding → Attitude → Preparedness → Classroom Implementation

If professional development stops at the awareness stage, meaningful educational transformation may remain limited.

For example, knowing that experiential learning is encouraged does not automatically equip a teacher to design effective experiential activities. Similarly, knowing about competency-based assessment does not necessarily mean that a teacher can construct valid competency-oriented assessment tasks.

Therefore, professional development programmes should combine conceptual information with practical demonstrations, lesson planning, peer collaboration, classroom experimentation, and reflective practice.

9. Major Research Gaps

The existing literature provides useful information but also reveals several areas requiring further investigation.

Limited National-Level Evidence

Many available studies are conducted within particular districts, cities, or states. There is a need for broader studies representing different regions of India.

Small and Localised Samples

Several studies rely on relatively small samples. Larger and more diverse samples would improve the generalisability of findings.

Absence of Longitudinal Research

Most studies provide a picture of awareness at one point in time. Longitudinal research could determine whether teachers' awareness changes after training and exposure to implementation.

Lack of Standardised Measurement Instruments

Different studies use different questionnaires and awareness measures. Development and validation of a standardised NEP 2020 awareness scale could improve comparability across studies.

Limited Intervention-Based Research

There is a need for studies examining whether structured orientation programmes, workshops, online training, or professional learning communities actually improve teachers' understanding and preparedness.

Limited Classroom-Based Evidence

Much of the existing literature depends on self-reported awareness. Classroom observations, teacher portfolios, lesson plans, and assessment practices could provide stronger evidence regarding actual implementation.

Insufficient Domain-Specific Research

More research is needed on teachers' awareness of individual components such as:

- foundational literacy and numeracy;
- competency-based education;
- vocational education;
- assessment reform;
- inclusive education;
- technology integration;
- multidisciplinary learning;
- experiential pedagogy;
- teacher professional standards.

Limited Qualitative Evidence

Interviews, focus groups, case studies, and classroom observations could provide deeper insight into how teachers interpret NEP 2020 and what challenges they experience while implementing it.

10. Conclusion

The reviewed literature indicates that NEP 2020 has received considerable attention among school teachers and that a substantial level of general awareness exists in many contexts. Nevertheless, awareness is not uniform across all dimensions of the policy. Teachers tend to demonstrate greater familiarity with broad ideas such

as experiential learning, competency development, foundational literacy and numeracy, skill education, and curricular reform, while knowledge of several specific provisions appears comparatively weaker.

Research findings concerning gender, locality, and school management are not consistent, indicating that these relationships require further investigation using larger and more representative samples. An important issue emerging from the literature is the distinction between awareness and implementation. Knowledge of a policy does not automatically ensure the capacity to translate its recommendations into classroom practice.

Consequently, successful implementation of NEP 2020 requires a comprehensive professional development framework that connects awareness with understanding, practical competence, institutional support, and reflective classroom practice. Future research should therefore move beyond measuring general awareness and examine teachers' detailed knowledge, preparedness, professional learning experiences, self-efficacy, and actual implementation of NEP 2020 in schools.

The existing body of research provides an important foundation, but further systematic and empirical investigation is necessary to understand how teachers are engaging with the policy and how professional support can strengthen its implementation at the school level.

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