

Educational New Revelation new Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP/ 2020) was formally approved by the Cabinet of India on 29 July 2020, replacing the previous policy of 1986 (revised 1992) and marking the first major update in thirty four years. It aims to transform India into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by making high quality education accessible to all and positioning the country as a global education hub.

*At its core, NEP/ 2020 is guided by five pillars: **Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability**. It seeks to overhaul both **school education and higher education**, introducing a new curricular framework, reforms in assessment, teacher training enhancements, and governance restructuring.*

*This research paper critically analyses NEP/ 2020's **salient features, implementation mechanisms, expected impacts, and key challenges**. It draws on government documents, academic studies, and contemporary commentary to assess how well NEP/ 2020 may deliver its ambitious aims.*

1. Introduction

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) was formally approved by India's Union Cabinet on July/ 29,/ 2020, replacing the 1986 Education Policy. It marks a sweeping vision for transforming the entire education system—from early childhood through higher education and vocational learning—guided by five pillars: Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability. NEP 2020 aims to prepare Indian learners for the 21st century by promoting critical thinking, creativity, equity, multilingualism, and integration of Indian knowledge systems.

2. Objectives and Guiding Principles

At its core, NEP 2020 sets out to universalize quality education from ages 3 to 18, achieve 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030 and 50% GER in higher education by 2035. It seeks to overhaul assessments by shifting from rote memorization to competency and outcome based evaluation, restructure curriculum, and foster learner centric environments. The Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) allows flexible course selection and multiple entry exit options in tertiary education, transforming degree structures into modular formats.

3. School Education Reforms :-

NEP replaces the outdated 10+2 system with a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure, incorporating three years of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for ages 3–6 followed by eight years of foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary education. Emphasis is placed on multilingual education, with instruction in the mother tongue/local language until Grade 5 (and beyond where feasible) to improve comprehension and reduce cognitive barriers. Vocational education begins from Grade 6, seamlessly integrated into the curriculum alongside coding, arts, and life skills for holistic development.

Assessment is reimagined in NEP 2020, emphasizing formative assessments, holistic progress cards, and no high stake board exams at an early stage. This is meant to shift towards continuous, competency based evaluation and reduce academic stress.

4. Teacher Education and Capacity Building :-

A central reform in NEP 2020 is the overhaul of teacher education: all teachers must have a four year degree by 2030 and continuous professional development through new bodies like the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) and academic mentorship programs. These aim to transition teachers from traditional instructors to facilitators and mentors in learner centric classrooms.

5. Higher Education Transformation :-

NEP proposes a 4 year multidisciplinary undergraduate degree with multiple exit options—certificate after year one, diploma after two years, a double major after three, and honours with a research-based fourth year—supported via the ABC system. Institutions are encouraged to offer cross disciplinary majors and minors spanning humanities, sciences, arts, commerce, and vocational subjects in one single degree program.

Regulatory reform consolidates existing bodies into a singular Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) with four verticals dedicated to regulation, accreditation, funding, and academic planning. A new National Research Foundation (NRF) will support a research ecosystem and foster innovation at scale.

6. Technology and Digital Initiatives :-

NEP 2020 emphasizes the pivotal role of technology through the establishment of a National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) to advise on digital tools, e learning, assessment, and innovation in pedagogy. Online learning, MOOCs, and blended approaches are encouraged to ensure education access to remote and underserved communities. The ABC serves as a digital credential repository, enabling portability of credits.

7. Indian Knowledge Systems & Value Education :-

NEP 2020 re emphasizes Indian knowledge systems (IKS)—classical languages, traditional arts, indigenous sciences, yoga, Ayurveda, and philosophy—as integral to the curriculum across all stages. This reflects a culturally grounded pedagogy aimed at rekindling India’s intellectual heritage. The policy also mandates universal human values, ethics, environmental consciousness, and community service as part of holistic development.

8. Equity, Inclusion & Lifelong Learning :-

NEP 2020 pledges to bridge disparities for rural, socio-economically disadvantaged, and differently-abled learners by reserving education zones, expanding schooling through Anganwadis and middle of the night digital classes, and augmenting adult literacy programs. Open schooling, flexible modular courses, and National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) backed initiatives aim to universalize foundational literacy and numeracy.

9. Implementation Status & Challenges :-

Five years into NEP 2020, progress includes gradual rollouts of the 4 year UG structure at select universities, Indian knowledge systems cells, and digital

learning platforms. Yet challenges remain: only ~36% of higher education institutions have adopted multiple entry exit, and just ~14% have enabled industry-linked “Professors of Practice”—showing slower reform in autonomy and innovation. Infrastructure gaps, teacher shortages, urban rural disparities, and fiscal constraints continue to hamper progress. Experts warn the full impact will only be visible in 15 years, when a cohort completely exposed to NEP completes education.

10. Stakeholder Perspectives :-

Educators like Dr. Sanjay Kavishwar assert NEP’s intent to shape learners with “character, courage and competence,” emphasizing flexible curricula, experiential learning, outcome oriented evaluation, and ethical education. Meanwhile, educators in Maharashtra highlight NEP as a “survival strategy” for institutions amid low university enrolment, noting an urgent need for internationalization and stronger academic industry linkages to stem outbound Indian student flows (~1.4/ million studying abroad vs 55/ 000 inbound foreign students).

11. Strengths and Opportunities :-

NEP 2020 is praised for its futuristic approach—flexible degree structures, cross disciplinary learning, vocational integration, and digital credits offer a modern educational model. The unified regulatory architecture and NRF emphasize quality and research. The policy also significantly aligns with UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education.

12. Limitations and Criticisms :-

Critics argue the policy’s ambitious expansion of infrastructure and teacher capacity may overstretch government finances. The effectiveness of mother-tongue instruction beyond Grade/ 5 in diverse linguistic regions is debated. Uneven state-level implementation and resource gaps risk widening rural urban divides. Additionally, industry collaboration and global academic partnerships remain underdeveloped—a gap NEP aims to bridge but has yet to materialize quantitatively.

13. Recommendations for Strengthening Implementation :-

To ensure NEP’s transformative promise, several recommendations emerge: significantly increase education spending toward 6% of GDP alongside innovative financing; prioritize teacher training infrastructure and recruitment; empower states with implementation units; build stronger academia industry linkages; accelerate international collaborations; and leverage community feedback, as with drafting curricula for Classes 3–5, to broaden stakeholder ownership.

14. Conclusion

NEP/ 2020 stands as India's most comprehensive education overhaul in over three decades. It envisions equity, flexibility, interdisciplinarity, and cultural rootedness—the ingredients for a future-ready education system. Yet, its success hinges on sustained funding, robust infrastructure, capacity building, and institutional alignment at central and state levels. Real transformation may take a generation, but early initiatives and pilot progress signal a promising path toward a globally competitive, inclusive, and holistic learning landscape.

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