

# NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020:

## A Comprehensive Framework for the Indian Education System

*Dr. Ashwini Jagannath  
Mahamuni*



**E**ducation is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society, and promoting national development (Ministry of Education, 2020). With this target, various Committees and Commissions have been established to enhance the standard of higher education and provide Quality Education in the Indian Context considering the demographic dividend of the country. After a gap of 34 years, the Indian Government consolidated feedback from 2.5 lakh village-level stakeholders to two national parliamentary-level committees, over more than 50 months of consultations and workshops (Sharma, M. and Sharma, S. 2020). Previous Policy frameworks released in 1968 and 1986 showed a huge gap in the reform of the education system. The recent reform in the Policy of Education after 1986 was an initiative that endeavored to bring about a transformational change to accomplish the goal of Quality Education. The proposed National Education policy (2020) laid out a range of reforms for primary, secondary, higher secondary, and higher education, encompassing technical and vocational education. This Policy, NEP 2020, has been formulated to position India as a dominant player in the global education

landscape. This policy seeks to enhance accessibility, fairness, and standards of education across all tiers, from pre-primary to tertiary education, and skill-based training. The objective of the policy is to ensure that every child in India receives an education that is both high quality and equally accessible.

Post-pandemic upshots on the economy and other sectors of society, such as education, will linger in the minds of the people until we get relief and recover nicely to develop and excel to the fullest potential. The entire world faced a lockdown that disconnected the society that would perhaps no longer be the same. People not only lost lives, but jobs, basic needs, medical assistance, and education. (Kumar, S. 2020). This policy is a stepping stone towards creating knowledge-based citizens, and the following features help plot the roadmap for this. The NEP maintains the point of view of inclusive education for all students, including those in Class 5, by implementing uniform regulations at all levels of school education. The policy aims to provide education for all students, including those who may have been historically marginalized from such opportunities. The objective of the policy is to enhance the

Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in tertiary education, encompassing vocational education, with the target of increasing it from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by the year 2035.

One of the world's largest networks of institutes of higher learning has been found in India. As Indian Society is multicultural and multilingual in nature, the education system should provide a kind of environment that will accommodate the diverse people of society. Keeping this view in mind, NEP 2020 endeavors to establish an adaptable, interdisciplinary, and comprehensive educational framework congruent with contemporary demands. The NEP 2020 aims to foster the use of multiple languages in India. The objective of the policy is to offer instruction in the native language or regional dialect until the completion of fifth grade. The policy also endeavors to facilitate the acquisition of both Indian and foreign languages as part of the educational curriculum.

It also aims to revolutionize the landscape of tertiary education in India by incorporating multidisciplinary approaches, holistic perspectives, and enhanced flexibility. NEP 2020 endeavors to revolutionize teacher education in India by incorporating multidisciplinary, holistic, and flexible approaches. The policy's objective is to augment the number of teacher training establishments in India and to provide teachers with ongoing professional growth opportunities. The policy also endeavors to augment the number of higher education institutions in India, including universities and colleges. It endeavors to foster innovation and unconventional ideas by utilizing autonomy, effective governance, and empowerment. Thus, Indian citizens will achieve more in every field and address future challenges. The National Education Policy aims to create an education system that offers superior-quality education to transform individuals and prepare them to provide quality outcomes. This laid the groundwork for a multitude of noteworthy transformations within the educational framework of India. Hence, it is intended to facilitate India's transformation into a knowledge society that is both equitable and

dynamic on a sustainable basis, thereby enhancing its global standing.

**“The most important factor in growth and development is measured by the applicability of knowledge in the real world to achieve good placement in industries or any field.”**



Hence, NEP 2020 endeavors to provide children with an increasing number of vocational education opportunities to equip them with skills that are relevant to the job market. The policy aims to offer vocational education to pupils starting in the sixth grade and beyond. Vocational education is very important to develop life skills, which is in line with this aim of establishing a National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education as NCIVE. It integrates the general stream of education with vocational education, which is the biggest and most influential step that has been prioritized here. Considering the Technological achievements and its role in the growth of the nation, NEP 2020 aims to foster the advancement of digital education within the Indian context. The objective of the policy was to provide digital infrastructure and connectivity to every educational institution in India. By instituting the National Educational Technology Forum, i.e., NETF, this policy sights to achieve the integration of technology in the realm of education.

### **Things to Review while Implementing the Policy**

The NEP aims to make significant changes to the way education is delivered in India, with a focus on making the education system more inclusive, equitable, and holistic (Falak, F. 2022). Despite its implementation, NEP 2020 has encountered various challenges on diverse levels and modes. These challenges can be summarized as follows:

1. To date, there has been poor integration of Early Childhood and Care Education with Elementary education. The new policy does not discuss the availability of teachers and workers (sevika) for Every Anganwadi/pre-primary Learning center. This gap in the system continues with the fresh outlook of NEP 2020.

2. New policy talks about literacy and numeracy skills; however, there is no clarity among the basic standards of literacy and numerical skills with different levels of school education or age appropriation. That is to be decided even for special children, and even if we set the standards, it is difficult to follow, as the Indian societal structure is diverse, multicultural, and multilingual.

3. It is challenging to increase the enrollment ratio at different levels of Education, as Human Resources and counselors are needed in the respective areas. What actions can be taken if we need to tackle dropouts, how to bring them back to schools, and so on? These aspects were considered.

4. This policy encourages the employment of the regional three-language formula, which acts as a crucial point of interest for some sections of society. The three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of course the students themselves (LEADSchool, 2023). There is a conflict regarding adding one more language, considering the disparity and viewpoint associated with the region and medium of instruction at the school. Government schools, such as Kendriya Vidyalaya, Army Public schools, Jawahar Navodayalaya Vidyalaya, and many residential schools are now inclusive in nature. In the case of Adivasi schools in tribal areas, it is difficult to get teachers for all languages and to maintain the formula mentioned above. Even adding more languages at early stages would create chaos and confusion as per the development of cognition necessary for basic language skills.

5. Our Indian Education System is upgrading, and we are still struggling to reach the desired student-to-teacher ratio. In such a situation, an expectation from the teachers to incorporate “Indian Knowledge Systems,” inclusive of the all-around development of a student with subjects like yoga, Indian Philosophy and Adivasi/indigenous learning methods embedded in the daily routine curriculum is critical. Many teachers struggle with the basic skills of transacting the curriculum by incorporating a continuous comprehensive evaluation. Upskilling teachers and educators to fit into the new system will take the time and training necessary to digest the concept.

6. The introduction of New Agencies like PARAKH (i.e., Performance Assessment Review Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) and NTA (i.e., National Testing Agency) are good for assessment tasks at the centralized level. These agencies can act as the powerhouses of over-centralization, which could negate the importance of diversity at the regional and local levels. They might act as agencies to cut opportunities for minors and special students to get the chance as per their level or competence. It is difficult for students to maintain Pre-set National standards at the local level because of the availability of resources.

7. With the current state of the GDP of India, an over-ambitious target of public spending at 6% of GDP has been set. Mobilizing and using financial resources is going to be a big challenge (Shivani, 2022). The formula for obtaining funds at the state level is associated with performance and income. If this is the case, then some states will not be able to manage to get good funds due to low income. States that are already facing an issue with poor performance will ultimately get less funds, thereby they will not be getting resources to excel in quality education for their children.

for their children. This is a vicious, unending cycle that will not lead anywhere.

8. Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), which is implemented, has flaws and concerns. To develop an effective system for evaluating holistic development, a report card is prepared and assessed using artificial intelligence software to mark the timely development of students. This practice of following systematic evaluation passes through a range of gaps that are not specified by the policy reforms. Hence, there is a dire need to check loopholes wherever possible to ensure effective assessment practices.

9. There is no firm commitment to enhance Special Education, which provides a strong base for inclusion. The policy mentions a course for present special educators, but it is insufficient without an increase in the number of special educators at a ratio that is suitable for pupils. There are just “verbal acknowledgments” that disparities exist; there is a need for action/target points to embrace this fact and work on the same.

10. The approximate ratio of private schools to public schools in India is 5:7 (IndainEra, 2023) Looking at the enrolment ratio of students in private and government schools, parents are attracted to private schools. This might be because of many reasons: one is the inability to accommodate the huge number of students in government schools and the second is the expectation/standard set by private schools by providing good infrastructure and facilities. This scenario is not welcoming for certain sections of society who struggle with the necessities of life. Certainly, there must be a focus on increasing public/government schools that will offer a kind of competing structure to attract the attention of parents towards them.

For every policy to be framed and implemented, there will be a scope of reconsideration and reformation, the process is continuous, and timely actions are required to address the challenges.

## Conclusion

If we analyze the current situation of the Indian education system, there are key concerns such as post-pandemic effects on schools, such as difficulty in reading, writing, doing mathematical calculations, comprehension, and basic science process skills. There is a dire need to bridge the education gap that must be concerned with the associated subjects. Our general issues include insufficient student-teacher ratio, lack of integration of technology and pedagogy, gap pre-service and in-service teacher training, neglecting an important stage of education (i.e., pre-primary stage under the state government), poor facilitation of infrastructure, and societal influence over issues such as so-called groups and sub-groups. Talking about the targets set in a specific year/time, the highest priority of the education system will be to achieve Universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in primary school by 2025 (Ministry of Education, 2020), the target of the year 2030 for Early Childhood and Care Education, and 100% gross enrolment ratio in preschool to secondary level, the target of the year 2035 for 50% GER in higher education, including vocational education, is challenging. Even the target of high-quality education, irrespective of the socioeconomic background to be achieved by 2040, is quite hard and stretches the limits of human and economic resources of the country. To achieve the aim of the policy, the government must fully commit itself to the policy's implementation with the political will and urgency it deserves (Sahni, U. 2020). Policy needs support, human resources and intellectuals, rigorous training, and strategic action plans; every policy comes with great challenges and expects the outcome within the given framework and timeline. Its achievement is dependent on smooth, comprehensible, and prompt action to be taken by every stakeholder associated. There is a need for continued reform and innovation to bridge the education gap by overcoming the ill effects of the pandemic. If we strive to put our efforts into providing the

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