TRANSFORMATIVE DIMENSIONS OF NEP 2020: MULTIDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND GLOBAL OUTLOOK

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a historic reform that will transform India's education system to meet the needs of the 21st century. The present work explores three revolutionary aspects of the policy: multidisciplinary and holistic learning, equity and inclusion, and the internationalisation of education. It shows how NEP 2020 aims to develop creativity, critical thinking, and ethical values through alternative learning pathways, choice-based curricula, and experiential learning. The policy's dedication to equity is evident through initiatives like Special Education Zones, the Gender Inclusion Fund, and the use of technology to minimise learning inequalities. In addition, the agenda for internationalising puts India at the center of global education through fostering collaboration between academics, students and faculty exchange, and foreign campus establishment. Based on secondary data and policy reviews, the paper concludes that NEP 2020 provides a vision-oriented roadmap to establish an inclusive, innovative, and globally competitive education system grounded in the cultural ethos of India while adopting global norms. The study reviews relevant literature and uses secondary data through descriptive and analytical methods to interpret policy directions. The findings suggest that effectively implementing NEP 2020 can improve educational quality, inclusion and global competitiveness. It can also align India's learning ecosystem with international standards.

Keywords: *Inclusion, Holistic, Internationalisation, Quality, Educational Reforms, Indian Education System, Equity*

Introduction

India's education system is at a critical juncture with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This important document aims to change the way schools are organized, taught, and managed in the 21st century. It's the first major update in over thirty years. The NEP 2020 proposes a significant change in educational beliefs, emphasising holistic, student-focused, and interdisciplinary methods (Ministry of Education, 2020). In order to stay relevant on a global level, NEP 2020 aims to make classroom instruction more experiential, adaptable, inquiry-driven, and rooted in Indian values. This policy, which aims to address our nation's multiple new development needs, is the first education strategy of the twenty-first century. It implies that we must reconsider and drastically alter every aspect of the educational system, including its administration and regulation. The objective is to develop a new system that adheres to Indian customs and values while also supporting 21st-century educational goals like SDG 4. The National Education Policy places a strong emphasis on fostering each person's unique creative potential. It is predicated on the premise that education needs to encourage not only higher-order skills like critical thinking and problem-solving, but also social, ethical, and emotional abilities and attitudes, in addition to cognitive skills like the fundamentals of literacy and numeracy. Building knowledge, abilities, values, and attitudes that promote a strong commitment to equality, sustainable development, and global well-being is the goal of the policy. This embodies what it means to be a true global citizen. Additionally, it aims to inculcate in students a strong sense of pride in their Indian identity, not only in ideas but also in character, cognitive ability, and way of life. In response to the NEP's first anniversary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "We are approaching the 75th year of Independence." In a sense, NEP implementation has emerged as a crucial component of this event. This would be crucial in building a new India and youth prepared for the future. The boundaries of conventional classrooms have diminished as the world has transitioned to the age of technology. Knowledge is now accessible beyond geographic boundaries. NEP 2020 understands this major change and has started a strong effort to use technology to make education available to everyone. This initiative aims to close this gap and unlock the potential of all learners across the country. NEP 2020 is much more important than just a piece of policy or an initiative of the government. It has the potential to reshape the lives of millions of students in India and affect the

trajectory of the nation. Education is widely regarded as one of the most important factors that spur economic growth, social equity, and individual empowerment. NEP 2020 focuses on a comprehensive and integrated schooling which goes beyond the silos of subjects and centres on the holistic growth of the learner, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. This strategy acknowledges that success in the future requires more than book smarts; graduates should be critical thinkers, problem solvers, team players, and those with robust ethical foundations (R. Sharma,2021). Education plays a vital role in our lives. A well-rounded education provides individuals with the knowledge, values, and skills they need to tackle the increasing problems in the world. With education, both men and women can manage critical situations effectively and make informed decisions. The National Education Policy (NEP 2020) promotes multidisciplinary education to help develop people's personalities in India's higher education system. This idea comes from ancient universities like Takshashila, Nalanda, and Vikramshila. The current educational system encourages too much specialisation, creating unnecessary barriers between the humanities, sciences, social studies, and arts. As a result, students have limited knowledge beyond their fields and often miss out on valuable insights. Multidisciplinary education is being introduced to fix this issue (Wani et al. 2021). The 2020 Education Policy was regarded as a major advancement for India's higher education sector. Calling for an "overhaul" and "revamp" of the country's educational system, it is India's first official education policy for the twenty-first century. The Indian higher education system has seen substantial changes as a result of the NEP's historic action in support of privatisation, internationalisation, and digitisation (Tripathy, 2023).

Objectives

a. To examine how NEP 2020 supports multidisciplinary and holistic education.
b. To study the initiatives for equity, inclusion, and quality education proposed under NEP 2020.
c. To examine the policy's focus on making the indian education system international and Its ability to attract global students to India.

Methodology

The methodology included careful examination of data from textbooks, websites, detailed reports, and publications by diversity organisations and government sources. The researchers systematically gathered findings from each paper and combined the information to create a strong basis for future research agendas.

A. Focus on Multidisciplinary and Holistic Education

The National Education Policy 2020 is a detailed document that aims to provide a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education. This should make the education sector more effective and inclusive (Kumar et al., 2022). The NEP 2020 emphasises the need for the Indian educational system to become more multidisciplinary and inclusive. The policy offers a number of strategies for putting this kind of education into practice, such as incorporating vocational education, launching multidisciplinary programs, and encouraging research and innovation. According to NEP, education should emphasise analytical and problem-solving abilities more than content. It needs to instill creativity and a multidisciplinary mindset. It should also demonstrate how to adapt, innovate, and take in new knowledge in fields that are changing. The development of all human abilities, including intellectual, artistic, social, physical, mental, and moral capacities, is the aim of a comprehensive and multidisciplinary education. There are multiple ways to exit the program during the three or four years that the bachelor's degree program lasts. It will cover the required qualifications, such as a bachelor's degree after three years of study, a diploma after two years, or a certificate after one year in a particular field, including professional and vocational areas. However, the ideal choice would be a four-year bachelor's degree with various specializations (Mandal, 2024). A well-rounded education opens doors to the student's preferred professional, vocational, and technical fields. The choice-based subjects in the school curriculum provide for in-depth learning for the students and also develop a well-rounded personality (Suther, 2025). By 2030, India plans to have at least one HEI (multidisciplinary higher education institution) in or close to each district. This demands a critical evaluation of India's higher education sectors to determine the obstacles the system experiences in achieving the goal of autonomous and independent institutions (Taylor 63).

B. Initiatives for Equity, Inclusion and Quality Education

Quality education should have the core values of inclusion and equity principles aspects of education policy (UNESCO, 2017). Yet, inclusion and equity continue to be elusive concepts Ainscow, 2020. Enabling mechanisms will provide children with CWSN (Children with Special Needs) or Divyang, equal opportunity for equitable and quality education as other children. The declaration of Special Education Zones (SEZ) in various regions of India aims to support the large population of educationally disadvantaged groups like SEDG. This initiative seeks to spread and improve high-quality educational opportunities in remote and suburban areas of India. More Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas will be established in India, offering free boarding facilities for easier access to schools. The Government of India (GOI) plans to create a "Gender Inclusion Fund" to enhance the country's ability to deliver equal and fair education to all boys, girls, and transgender individuals. Similarly, Inclusion Fund programs will be created to address similar access problems for other SEDGs (Wahengbam et al., 2021). Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas will be expanded, and the infrastructure of these schools will be updated. We should prioritize enrolling and involving disabled learners in ECCEs and school education. NCERT will work with groups like DEPwD to develop the National Curriculum Framework and ensure it serves the needs of differently-abled children. A new school culture will be established. All education stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and administrators, will be educated about equity,

respect, dignity, and privacy for everyone (Baidya et al., 2024). In order to guarantee accessibility, it also improves digital learning, bilingual education, and early childhood education. The impact of inclusive pedagogies is further enhanced by teacher training. By dropout rates, raising learning standards, and establishing a more fair educational system, these policies could promote social mobility and the advancement of the country. However, attaining actual inclusion still depends on efficient execution and resource allocation (Pinaki Das, 2025). Addressing the digital divide, a large part of the population still has limited access to digital resources. As a result, broadcasts will primarily use traditional media, such as television, terrestrial radio, and community radio. To accommodate the needs of various students, educational programs will be accessible at all times in a number of languages. Content in all Indian languages will receive particular attention. Digital content should reach teachers and students in their preferred language whenever possible (Dhani Ram, 2021).

C. Internationalization of Education under NEP 2020

Internationalization has significantly changed the world of higher education. It has challenged old beliefs about national borders, student movement, program delivery methods, governance, funding, responsibilities, and students (Joshi et al., 2023). India will be marketed as a top study abroad country with reasonably priced, top-notch education. Restoring its position as a Vishwa Guru is the goal of this endeavor. Each higher education institution (HEI) hosting foreign students will establish an International Students Office to manage all aspects of welcoming and supporting these students. Research and teaching collaborations, along with faculty and student exchanges, will be encouraged with top foreign institutions. Relevant memorandums of understanding (MOUs) will be signed with other countries to ensure mutual benefits. The establishment of campuses overseas will be encouraged for top-performing Indian universities. Similarly, certain universities – such as those in the top 100 worldwide – will get support to operate in India. A legislative framework will be created to facilitate this process. These universities will enjoy special provisions regarding regulations, governance, and course content, similar to other autonomous institutions in India. Furthermore, steps will be taken to encourage student exchanges and research cooperation between Indian and international institutions. Credits earned at foreign universities will be accepted as long as they meet each HEI's requirements to count toward degree completion (GOI, 2020).

Conclusion

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 offers a new vision for India's education system. It seeks to build a fair and inclusive framework that can compete globally. By promoting a well-rounded and multidisciplinary approach, it emphasizes the need for critical thinking, creativity, and ethical values in students. The policy focuses on equity and inclusion to close educational gaps and ensure access to quality learning for everyone, especially marginalized groups. It includes initiatives like Special Education Zones, Gender Inclusion Funds, and the improvement of school infrastructure. Additionally, NEP 2020 aims to internationalize higher education and position India as a global learning hub. It encourages collaboration, student exchange, and the establishment of international campuses. Together, these efforts show a strong commitment to building a knowledge-driven, innovative, and inclusive society that reflects global standards while being rooted in Indian culture. If implemented effectively, NEP 2020 could reshape the future of education in India and empower future generations to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

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