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NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The National Education Policy 2020 prioritizes diversity, freedom, and a scientific approach, as well as inclusive and ethical values, in higher education. This policy is not only transformative in the present, but also aims to shape the future higher education landscape. Only through sustained commitment and effective implementation will this policy achieve its objectives and position India among the world's leading and modern education systems. However, certain challenges facing the implementation of the education policy need to be identified in a comprehensive and specific context, and meaningful solutions must be found. Effective implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 requires a well-organized strategy at the institutional level, phased planning, and organized coordination of stakeholders. This research paper will therefore seek to make a useful contribution to policy implementation by rationally identifying the obstacles faced by the National Education Policy 2020, its positive impacts, and proposing viable strategies.

Key words: National Education Policy 2020, Higher Education Institutions, Challenges, Opportunities, Implementation Solutions,

INTRODUCTION:

The National Education Policy 2020 represents a historic paradigm shift in the structure, objectives, and functioning of the Indian higher education system. The policy proposes innovative trends such as multidisciplinary, credit-based flexibility, Academic Bank of Credit (ABC), institutional autonomy, strengthening quality assurance mechanisms, and prioritizing research-oriented approaches (Ministry of Education, 2020). However, the structural, financial,

technological, and human resource changes required for their successful and sustainable implementation appear to be fraught with numerous complex challenges in the actual institutional context. Therefore, a study on this topic is necessary to systematically identify, analyze, and formulate solution-oriented strategies for the direct impact of the National Education Policy 2020 on higher education, the obstacles to its implementation, and the available opportunities.

The National Education Policy 2020 aims to create holistic, interdisciplinary, and flexible teaching-learning systems that integrate knowledge into every aspect of life and prepare students for sustainable development. This policy introduces several significant changes, a bold attempt to revolutionize the landscape of higher education. The importance of institutional autonomy has increased more than ever before. Educational institutions can now make their own academic, management, and financial decisions according to their needs and goals. This gives institutions the freedom to utilize resources optimally, innovate and modify courses, and in the long run, improves quality.

Besides these changes, the National Education Policy 2020 also places high priority on research and innovation. This will provide educational institutions with the opportunity to strengthen their research efforts and foster creativity. This is a time for faculty to participate in new laboratories, research projects, and innovations. This requires high-level research, a broad interdisciplinary approach, and an active role in solving local and global problems. Special efforts are needed to educate disadvantaged sections of society and working students, who are still deprived of educational opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires policy reforms, proper allocation of resources, and widespread awareness and training within the education system. Additionally, the appropriate and sensitive use of technological innovations can improve the accessibility and quality of education, ensuring effective access to education for remote and economically disadvantaged sections.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS USED:

- **National Education Policy 2020:** The National Education Policy 2020 is a comprehensive education policy enacted by the Government of India, implemented in 2020, and is India's latest policy in the field of education.
- **Higher Education Institutions (HEPIs):** It refers to educational and research institutions registered or recognized by a recognized educational regulatory/government authority that offer educational degrees, certificates, and diplomas through undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), doctoral (Ph.D.), and vocational/professional programs.
- **Challenges:** In this study challenges are the barriers and constraints encountered by higher education institutions in translating the provisions and objectives of NEP 2020 into effective educational practices and outcomes.

- **Opportunities:** In this study, "opportunity" refers to the positive changes that will occur in higher education institutions after the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020.
- **Implementation:** Policy implementation is the systematic process by which the principles, rules, and directives set forth by an organization, government, or institution are put into practice to achieve desired goals and results. This includes setting clear, measurable policy objectives, developing a plan of action and procedures, including steps, timelines, and responsibilities for achieving policy objectives, allocating the necessary human, financial, material, and technical resources, and establishing an organizational structure.
- **Solutions:** It refers to measurable, observable, and actionable measures, processes, or interventions that will help address challenges associated with the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020, reduce negative impacts, or ensure the achievement of policy goals.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTIONS

- **Viennet and Pot (2017)** the study focuses on the process of education policy implementation. Its purpose is to clarify the aspects involved in implementing policies in complex education systems and to support policymaking. This study draws on literature and experiences from various countries. The authors analyzed factors that hinder or facilitate four dimensions that support effective implementation: smart policy design, inclusive stakeholder participation, a favourable context, and a coherent implementation strategy. Based on these dimensions, the authors propose a general framework and complementary questions and principles of action to guide policymakers in designing, analyzing, and implementing their education policy implementation processes.
- **Mehta (2022)** the research paper discusses the challenges associated with the implementation of India's New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.The researcher concludes that policy aims to make the Indian education system modern, progressive, and equitable. The findings indicate that several challenges must be addressed for the successful implementation of the NEP 2020. These include curriculum revision, teacher training, and changes in approaches to education. The research also emphasizes that the government, universities, and schools must work together to make the NEP 2020 successful. The research used qualitative research methods, including analysis of policy documents and interviews with education experts. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges associated with the implementation of the NEP 2020. However, the lack of quantitative data is a limitation of this study.
- **Nagpal (2023)** examined the challenges and potential solutions in implementing the National Education Policy 2020. The Policy NEP 2020 aims to reform the Indian education system and introduce an inclusive, multidisciplinary, and holistic approach to learning.The researcher found in the study that the implementation of the NEP 2020 faces several

challenges, including a lack of trained teachers, inadequate infrastructure, lack of funding, and resistance to change. The paper concludes that the successful implementation of the NEP 2020 in school education in India will require sustained efforts and collaboration from all stakeholders, including the government, teachers, and the community. This research used qualitative methodology, specifically document analysis, which included the analysis of government reports, policy papers, and other relevant materials.

- **Biswas (2023)** analyzed the opportunities and challenges of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The Policy NEP 2020 can transform the education system in India. It also examines that policy could help to make the education system more holistic, flexible, and inclusive. This research used a qualitative research methodology, including an analysis of NEP 2020 documents and other relevant sources. The researcher used thematic analysis to identify the objectives, key features, and potential impacts of the policy. The policy focuses on areas such as early childhood education, vocational education, the use of technology, and the promotion of research. The study also found that there are several challenges in implementing NEP 2020, including the need for adequate investment.The researchers used internet surveys, government documents, and reports to collect data. Responses were received from 200 teachers and students from rural and urban institutions in Kaithal, Haryana. The survey included questions on topics such as awareness of the NEP 2020, its potential to bring about positive change, reducing rote learning, and satisfaction with the proposed changes to the curriculum. The study findings indicate that most respondents are aware of the NEP 2020 and believe it can bring about positive changes in the education system. However, there are several challenges in implementation, including inadequate teacher training and a lack of infrastructure. The researchers also provided recommendations for policymakers, administrators, and teachers to address these issues.
- **Yadav (2023)** provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges facing the implementation of the New Education Policy (NEP). The primary objective of this research is to examine various aspects hindering the successful implementation of the NEP. The study evaluates the practical challenges faced by educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders. According to the study's findings, there are several challenges to implementing the NEP, including lack of infrastructure, inadequate teacher training, financial constraints, and social resistance. Furthermore, the study found a significant gap between policy formulation and its practical implementation. This research adopted a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative data. Surveys, questionnaires, and in-depth interviews were used for data collection. Additionally, international and domestic case studies were analyzed.
- **Devaki and Kingston (2024)** studied the challenges and opportunities of implementing the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in teacher education. The NEP 2020 aims to reform the Indian education system and make teacher education more relevant, effective, and equitable. The major objective of the research is to analyze the implications of the NEP 2020

on teacher education, identify barriers to policy implementation, and explore potential solutions to improve the quality and accessibility of teacher education. The researcher found that the NEP 2020 offers several opportunities for teacher education, including the integration of innovation and technology into teacher education programs, increased professional development opportunities for teachers, and increased autonomy and accountability in teacher education institutions. The research concludes that successful implementation of the NEP 2020 in teacher education will require a collaborative effort between the government, teacher education institutions, and teachers. This research used the qualitative method of document analysis.

- **Kaur (2024)** highlights challenges in implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The aim of this study is to analyze the obstacles to implementing this policy, which has the potential to transform the education system. The study identifies both quantitative and qualitative challenges that need to be addressed to achieve the NEP's goals. The study found that the biggest challenge in implementing the NEP is changing people's mindsets, as the current education system dates back to the British era. The researchers emphasized that fundamental changes are needed in the education system to achieve the NEP's objectives.
- **Kumari (2024)** explores the challenges and possibilities of implementing the National Education Policy 2020 in higher education. The researcher analyzes the potential impacts of NEP 2020 from a teacher educator's perspective. NEP 2020 seeks to bring about transformative changes in India's education system, focusing on holistic and multidisciplinary education, experiential learning, technology integration, and skill development.The researcher found that the NEP 2020 offers several opportunities for higher education, including curriculum flexibility, an emphasis on research and innovation, and the use of technology. However, the study also found that the implementation of the NEP 2020 faces several challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, and a lack of financial resources. The researchers argue that to overcome these challenges, a collaborative effort is needed between the government, higher education institutions, and teachers. They also offer practical suggestions for the successful implementation of the policy, including strengthening teacher training, improving infrastructure, and integrating technology.
- **Banodha et al. (2024)** discusses in the research related to Equitable Access to Quality Higher Education under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Challenges and Mitigation Strategies and points out the challenges faced in implementing the NEP 2020 vision and propose strategies to mitigate them. The key challenges identified in the study include limited access in rural areas, economic barriers, inadequate awareness of opportunities, and discrimination during admissions, and inadequate infrastructure. To address these issues, the NEP 2020 proposes to increase the Gross Enrollment Ratio to 100 percent by 2035, promote vocational education and skill development, establish a National Educational Commission for quality assurance, encourage international collaboration, and

provide free education for marginalized groups.The authors point out that while the NEP 2020 presents a comprehensive reform roadmap, bridging the gap between policy goals and ground realities remains a significant challenge. Addressing these obstacles is essential to creating a more inclusive, innovative, and globally competitive higher education system that can accelerate India's socioeconomic development.

- **Neha and Rohtash (2024)** analyze the challenges facing the implementation of India's New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in higher education. The primary objective of this research is to identify obstacles and opportunities in implementing the NEP 2020. The study highlights problems such as stakeholder resistance, lack of resources, inadequate teacher training, and lack of infrastructure. It also emphasizes the opportunities envisioned in the policy, such as promoting multidisciplinary education, research and innovation, and improving the quality of education.
- **Fernandez (2024)** analyzes the challenges facing the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in higher education institutions. The major objective of this study is to identify key barriers to implementing the NEP 2020, particularly in the context of rural, non-professional, and autonomous colleges. The study used secondary data, including academic research articles, government reports, and scholarly articles. The researcher obtained information from various databases and analyzed the impact and challenges of the NEP 2020, particularly in the context of rural and non-professional colleges. As a primary observer and active participant in the policy implementation process, the researcher also contributed her own input to the study. The study identified several challenges in implementing the NEP 2020, including lack of resources, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate teacher training, and difficulties in curriculum redesign. The researcher found that rural and non-professional colleges are finding these challenges particularly difficult to address. The study also emphasizes the role of institutional leadership, which is crucial for the successful implementation of the NEP 2020.
- **Praveen et al. (2024)** focuses on the impacts and challenges of India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 on higher education. The researcher found that the policy aims to make the Indian education system modern, inclusive, and aligned with global standards. The primary objective of the research is to analyze the challenges in achieving the goals of the NEP 2020 and assess its potential impact on higher education. The findings of the study indicate that the NEP 2020 has the potential to improve higher education, but its successful implementation requires addressing several challenges, including faculty training, curriculum adaptation, infrastructure deficiencies, and the digital divide. The policy also emphasizes multidisciplinary education, student-centred teaching, and the promotion of research and innovation. The research utilized a thorough literature review and real-life case studies. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges associated with the implementation of the NEP 2020. The researcher has used quantitative and qualitative data for increasing the credibility of the findings.

- **Patel (2024)** analyzes India's new education policy and its potential impact on higher education. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the changes and benefits in higher education in the context of the New Education Policy 2020. The researcher highlights the shortcomings of education policies prior to the NEP 2020 and points out that the new policy focuses on five pillars: access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability so education should be prioritized. The research also highlights how the new education policy differs from previous policies regarding higher education and the proposed changes. Furthermore, it analyzes how this policy will benefit higher education and its future roadmap. The research aims to dispel doubts and confusion regarding the new education policy in higher education and made more awareness about the challenges and solutions arising from its implementation.
- **Aithal and Kakade (2024)** analyzed the current and future impacts of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 on higher education in India. The primary objective of the study is to identify challenges and opportunities related to the implementation of NEP 2020 and to evaluate its potential long-term impacts on the education system. The study found that NEP 2020 has significant potential to improve Indian higher education. The policy aims to create a more inclusive, multidisciplinary, and flexible educational environment. It also focuses on addressing issues of access, equity, and quality. However, the study also noted that there are several challenges to the effective implementation of the NEP 2020, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of funding, and resistance to change. The research findings suggest that the NEP 2020 could have significant long-term benefits for students and the workforce, with its emphasis on skill development and employability. The study also suggests that the policy has the potential to promote innovation, research, and entrepreneurship, which could make India more competitive globally. The study used various research methods, including a literature review and analysis of policy documents. The researchers also conducted interviews with stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, and policy makers.
- **Dixon (2025)** analyzes policy challenges faced by global education systems. The primary objective of this research is to examine the complexities and challenges of global education systems, focusing on the role of education policy in shaping the national and international educational landscape. The article emphasizes the role of education policy in addressing these challenges, focusing on topics such as globalization, inequality, and social equity. According to the study's findings, global education systems face numerous challenges, including technological advancement, economic globalization, and demographic change. To effectively address these challenges, education policies need to align with national goals and promote social equity. The research highlights successful policies that integrate global trends and local needs. Education policies are highlighted. This research includes case studies, particularly in developing countries like Nepal, highlighting the link between policy design

and socio-economic development. The study shows that coherent policy frameworks are crucial for promoting inclusive education systems.

- **Bhutia and Chhetri (2025)** analyze efforts to transform higher education in India through the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The primary objective of this research is to examine the steps taken to reform India's higher education system in the context of the New Education Policy 2020. The authors highlight key recommendations of the NEP 2020, including multidisciplinary and holistic education, flexible entry and exit options, revitalization of vocational education, revitalization of higher education institutions, a shift from a teacher-centered to a student-centered mode, providing institutional and faculty autonomy, research-based higher education, and a common entrance examination. The research also notes that the implementation of the NEP 2020 faces challenges such as teacher preparation, obstacles to research orientation, political interference, and developmental barriers. Political interference can lead to a decline in the quality of education. The authors believe that it is essential to reduce political interference in higher education institutions.
- **Arinna et al.'s (2025)** focuses on the impacts and challenges of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 on higher education in Arunachal Pradesh. This policy aims to transform the Indian education system. The primary objective of the study is to analyze the challenges faced in achieving the goals of the NEP 2020 and assess its potential impact on higher education. The study's findings reveal that the implementation of the NEP 2020 in Arunachal Pradesh is uneven. Several challenges to policy implementation include a lack of infrastructure, a shortage of trained teachers, and a lack of institutional preparedness. Furthermore, a communication gap exists between teachers and other stakeholders regarding the policy's objectives. However, teachers have a positive attitude toward the policy and are willing to embrace the changes. The research used a descriptive survey methodology. Data was collected from 30 teachers from nine colleges affiliated with Rajiv Gandhi University. The researcher used quantitative and qualitative data to get the findings.

CONCLUSION:

A policy to foster a research culture at the heart of higher education will be meaningful only if adequate institutional funding, laboratory and library resources, research training, and incentive mechanisms are ensured (Banerjee, 2020; Patel, 2021). The study will present a viable model by assessing institutional funding allocation, research management capacity, and compliance with ethical and data management guidelines. Harmony between institutional autonomy and quality assurance systems proposed by the policy is also essential (Raina, 2020). Autonomy will be meaningful only when balanced with institutional capacity and accountability. Therefore, it is essential to explore a practical framework for empowering entities like IQAC, ensuring transparency, and coordinating external evaluation mechanisms, which this study will highlight (UGC, 2021).

In the area of human resource management, teacher training, inspiring career paths, research-based career options, and fair promotion systems are crucial aspects of the National Education Policy 2020's success (Singh, 2020; Kumar & Rao, 2021); this study examines human resource policies, training models, and institutional capacity-building strategies will be proposed by analyzing the feasibility of economic and educational incentives.

According to the researchers, the NEP 2020 marks a turning point in the evolution of Indian school education, replacing the National Policy on Education of 1986 and introducing several changes in the education sector. The researchers highlight key aspects of the NEP 2020, including a shift in curriculum and teaching methods to a 5+3+3+4 structure, which allows for the integration of early childhood care and education (ECCE). The authors highlight potential benefits associated with the implementation of the NEP 2020, such as holistic development, promotion of multilingualism, a flexible curriculum, and the use of technology. However, they also acknowledge challenges that must be addressed to ensure successful implementation. These challenges include the need for investment in infrastructure, teacher preparation and training, linguistic diversity, and the development of a robust assessment system.

Effective implementation of policy trends toward credit flexibility, interdisciplinary courses, and alternative assessment in curricular structures requires a comprehensive overhaul of faculty development, teacher training, and evaluation systems (Kapoor, 2020; Rao & Menon, 2021). Technically, the smooth operation of ABC and credit flexibility depends on digital archival systems, data security, organized databases, and standardized validation mechanisms. However, the lack of digital infrastructure and cyber security concerns in rural and resource-limited institutions could undermine policy objectives (Ministry of Education, 2020; Bhatnagar & Gupta, 2022). Therefore, the study will evaluate the feasibility of bridging the digital divide, cost-benefit analysis, scalable e-learning models, and ABC-enabled IT systems to ensure that technology-based interventions are equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

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