



## NEP 2020: Transformation of Higher Education

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### ABSTRACT

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 intends to provide a comprehensive perspective and all-encompassing framework for both school and higher education in the country. This strategy proposes the emendation and remoulding of all components of the educational structure, including its regulation and governance, in order to build a new system. The suggested system is based on Indian traditions and value systems, as well as the intended outcomes of 21st-century education, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 4. Only the availability of a quality higher education allows for individual accomplishment and edification, fruitful and conscientious public involvement, and positive contributions to society. Citizens must be able to have meaningful and satisfying lives, work in a productive environment, and achieve economic independence via education. As a result, from pre-school through higher education, it is critical to integrate a defined set of skills and values at each stage of learning. As a result, NEP has implemented a number of corrections and enhancements in order to have a practical and long-term influence on the country's higher education environment. The most important suggestion of NEP, 2020 is to transform higher educational institutions (HEIs) into major interdisciplinary universities and HEI groupings. Higher education will no longer be fragmented as a result of this. This initiative is inspired by the ancient Indian universities of Takshashila, Nalanda, Vallabhi, and Vikramshila, which attracted thousands of students from all over the world to study in a lively interdisciplinary environment. This shift is critical in restoring the rich Indian heritage of producing skillful and inventive human beings. HEIs will also help other HEIs in their improvement, contribution to various fields of practise, community service and engagement, faculty development for the higher education system, and so on, through proper funding, incentives, and procedures. This paper will focus on the NEP 2020 and its role in transforming the higher education sector in India.

KEYWORDS: NEP: 2020, Higher Education

### INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 focuses on higher education changes that will prepare the next generation to prosper and compete in the digital age. The National Education Policy (NEP 2020), which was released on July 29, 2020, defines India's future educational system's aim. To guarantee continuous development, NEP 2020 focuses on five pillars: affordability, accessibility, quality, equity, and accountability. It was designed to meet the demands of citizens, since the need for knowledge in society and the economy necessitated the acquisition of new skills on a regular basis. As a result, the aim of NEP 2020 is to provide excellent education and create lifelong learning opportunities for all, leading to full and productive employment and decent labour, as outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030. The new policy replaces the old National Policy on Education from 1986 and establishes a comprehensive framework for transforming India's primary and secondary education systems by 2040. Multidisciplinarity, digital literacy, written communication, problem-solving, logical thinking, and occupational exposure are all heavily emphasised in the paper (Digital Learning Network, 2021).

The National Education Policy 2020 is divided into four sections with a total of 27 chapters. The Indian government drafted many hurdles and conditions that hinder children's education in the policy. The proposal begins with an introduction section that discusses children's basic needs, how to reach human potential, the growth of equity and justice in society, national development, quality education, scientific advancement, national integration, and cultural preservation. It also outlines Goal 4 of India's 2030 Agenda, which was enacted in 2030. By 2030, Goal 4 will guarantee that all children get a high-quality education that is inclusive and fair, as well as encourage opportunities for lifelong learning. The strategy also addresses the rapidly changing global economy and career prospects, which place a premium on the student's ability to learn. By 2040, India also wants to deliver high-quality education.

Mr. Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan, the head of the National Education Policy Drafting Panel, authored this policy. This proposal also claims to transform the educational system. It also changes teacher recruitment and re-establishes a new system to elevate teachers to the status of the most valued and important members of society. The policy then goes on to explain the key ideas, such as identifying, recognising, and developing each student's individual strengths, obtaining a basic foundation level in literature and arithmetic by third grade, flexible learning, and so on. There are no distinctions between the departments. Multidisciplinary education system emphasising practical understanding, creativity, critical thinking and analysis, conceptual up-gradation, developing ethics and human values through constitutional preaching, the practical skill required to manage one's life properly, and the use of technology, among other things. Then the Policy is classified into four parts as part1- school education, part 2- Higher education, part-3 professional education, and all other key areas, part-4 strengthening and financing various education boards, etc (Vaishale, 2021).

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## WHAT ARE THE NEW CHANGES UNDER NEP 2020?

Following the 1968 and 1986 education policies, NEP 2020 is a new policy aimed at improving teacher and student quality. The NEP 2020 primarily intends to empower students with global knowledge. The administration had updated the 34-year-old national education policy with the 2020 NEP strategy. In the new system, there are ten major modifications. The Key changes in the NEP 2020 policy are as follows:

1. The schooling starts from age 3 in the form of Anganwadi or kinder garden.
2. The education structure had changed from 10+2 to 5+3+3+4.
3. The differentiation and rigidity between science, arts, and commerce had been removed.
4. The schemes of internship and vocational education had been introduced from class 6th onwards. This empowers the student to gain clarity and experience regarding the work environment as well helps them to improve their social skills as well as practical knowledge.
5. The NEP had brought changes in board exam models. Though the class 10th and 12th board exam continue, the model of the exam has been changed and the exam will not be focused on the syllabus it will be focused on the evaluation of the core subject knowledge.
6. The NEP 2020 had brought back the Four years undergraduate program system.
7. The Major reforms had been targeting to 50% of the gross enrollment ratio by 2035.
8. The Common College Entrance Test will be conducted in all forms of the graduation program.
9. The College fees will be fixed by the government and a separate committee will be organized to supervise the college fees and ensure that no colleges charged any fees above the cap fixed.
10. The MPhil program will be removed from the education structure and the introduction of the mother tongue medium of instruction in the system of education.

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## HOW DOES THE 5+3+3+4 EDUCATION STRUCTURE PERFORM?

This amended policy extends the compulsory schooling period from 6 to 18 years. Under this initiative, the government also hopes to give free education to economically disadvantaged pupils. The new system includes 12 years of formal education, as well as 3 years of Anganwadi and pre-schooling. The following classifications make up the new academic system:

**1. Foundation Stage-** 5 years from age 3 to 8 years in Anganwadi or pre-school education and class 1 & 2 system. This system possesses only multi-level play activity, interactive school activity, and basic learning of literature and numerals.

**2. Preparatory Stage-** 3 years from age 8 to 11. This stage includes class 3- class 5. This system will consist of the basic learning of all subjects and their activities.

**3. Middle Stage-** 3 years from age 11 to 14. This stage includes class 6- class 8. This system consists of the practical learning of arts, social activities, humanities, science, and mathematics with corresponding internships to experience the working environment in the described fields.

**4. Secondary Stage-** 4 years from age 14 to 18. This stage includes class 9- class 12. This system consists of multidisciplinary education, Critical analysis and thinking, student's choice of subjects, and expertise in it.

Further, in addition to this, it is also laid that the 360-degree holistic progress card will be introduced to evaluate the students as well as to keep track of the student's achievement and establishments. It is also proposed that National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2021 will be formed and new degree qualifications for teachers will be introduced (Vaishale, 2021).

Over 1,000 Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) exist in India today, with over 150 of national significance. It has also evolved into a centre for scientific study over time. In the last decade, HEIs have consistently increased the quality and amount of their research. In terms of total research production, India is now ranked third in the world, accounting for 5.31 percent of all research papers. In three areas — education, knowledge creation (research and development), and innovation — Indian HEIs have done exceptionally well in the first two, but not so well in the third. In the following precise ways, the NEP is intended to reshape the landscape of higher education in India by requiring HEIs to concentrate on "solutions to issues" rather than "solutions seeking for a problem" (Rao, 2021):

**One**, Indian academia has always placed a strong priority on research and development (R&D) rather than relevance and delivery. The National Research Foundation (NRF) will be established to connect our universities with ministries and industry, as well as support research that is relevant to local needs. Each government ministry, whether federal or state, is expected to contribute separate money for research under the NRF structure.

**Two**, in order to fully realise HEIs' technological development potential, our institutions must not only broaden their scope and offers, but also interact with one another. The necessity of the hour is to bring "opposite" brains together in terms of fields (multidisciplinary schools and centres), cultures (international programmes), and mindsets (academic-industry cooperation). This is necessary for scholars at our diverse range of HEIs to reach their full creative potential. Multidisciplinary universities, as envisioned in the NEP, place a strong focus on this.

**Three**, in order to achieve the aim of raising the gross enrollment ratio (GER) from 26% to 50% by 2035, India must not only establish new HEIs and universities, but also scale up existing HEIs. Not only will this tremendous growth necessitate greater financial resources, but it will also necessitate a new governance architecture. It's no surprise that the NEP calls for HEIs to achieve graded autonomy. With active engagement from alumni and professionals from academia, research, and industry, autonomous boards will oversee the HEIs over time.

**Four**, NEP is predicted to bring in a sizable sum of money. For the first time, the government has promised a budget allocation for higher education as a set proportion of Gross Domestic Product of 6%. For HEIs, this will be a game changer.

**And finally**, under NEP 2020, Indian HEIs will focus on 3Is – interdisciplinary research, industry connect and internationalisation, the three

pillars needed to elevate our institutions to global standards.

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## NEP AND HIGHER EDUCATION

According to UGC, following are the some of the important salient features regarding the higher education of NEP 2020 (UGC, 2021):

**Increase GER in higher education to reach at least 50% by 2035:** The aim will be to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3 percent (2018) to 50 percent by 2035.

**Holistic Multidisciplinary Education:** The policy envisions a broad-based multi-disciplinary holistic education at the undergraduate level, with imaginative and flexible curricular structures, creative study combinations, vocational education integration, and multiple entry/exit points, for integrated, rigorous exposure to science, arts, humanities, mathematics, and professional fields. A holistic and multidisciplinary education will aid in the development of well-rounded individuals with critical 21st century capacities in the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields; a social engagement ethic; soft skills like communication, discussion, and debate; and rigorous specialisation in a chosen field or fields. In the long run, all undergraduate programmes, including those in professional, technical, and vocational disciplines, will take a holistic approach to education.

**The undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration,** includes numerous exit possibilities within this time frame and suitable certifications- a certificate after one year in a subject or field, including vocational and professional sectors, or a diploma after two years, or a Bachelor's degree after a three-year programme. The 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's degree will be the preferred option since it allows students to experience the entire range of holistic and multidisciplinary education while still focusing on their preferred major and minors. An Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) will be formed to digitally record academic credits gained from multiple recognised HEIs, allowing degrees from those institutions to be given based on credits earned.

Model public universities for holistic and multidisciplinary education, **Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs)** will be set up and will aim to attain the highest standards for multidisciplinary education across India.

A number of measures will be implemented to ensure that **optimal learning environments** are developed that are both engaging and supportive of all students. Within a broad framework of higher education qualifications that ensures consistency across institutions and programmes, as well as across the ODL, online, and traditional 'in-class' modes, all institutions and faculty will have the autonomy to innovate on matters of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. HEIs must transition to a criterion-based grading system that evaluates student progress based on each program's learning goals, as well as move away from high-stakes exams and toward more continuous and comprehensive evaluation.

Universities and colleges will set up **high-quality support centres** and will be given adequate funds and academic resources to encourage and support students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. **Professional academic and career counselling** will be available to all students, as well as counsellors to ensure physical, psychological and emotional well-being.

**Rationalised Institutional Architecture:** Large, well-resourced, lively multidisciplinary institutions are part of a new vision and architecture for higher education. Universities, colleges, and HEI clusters/Knowledge Hubs will be transformed into major multidisciplinary universities, colleges, and HEI clusters/Knowledge Hubs, each with 3,000 or more students. A university is a multidisciplinary higher education institution that offers undergraduate and graduate programmes, as well as high-quality teaching, research, and community participation. The term of university will encompass a wide range of institutions, including Research-Intensive Universities, Teaching-Intensive Universities, and Autonomous Degree-Giving Colleges (ACs).

**National Research Foundation (NRF):** A new organisation will be established to accelerate and expand research and innovation across the country. The NRF's overarching goal will be to enable a research culture to pervade our universities, assisting in the development of a research culture in the country through appropriate incentives for and recognition of outstanding research, as well as major initiatives to seed and grow research at State Universities and other public institutions with limited research capability. The NRF will fund research in all disciplines on a competitive basis. Through close collaboration with governmental agencies, business, and private/philanthropic groups, successful research will be recognised and, if appropriate, implemented.

**Financial support for students:** Students from the SC, ST, OBC, and other SEDGs will be rewarded for their achievements. The National Scholarship Portal will be enhanced in order to better support, foster, and track the growth of scholarship recipients. Private higher education institutions will be pushed to provide more free ships and scholarships to their students.

**Open and distance learning** will be enlarged, resulting in a major contribution to raising the Gross Enrolment Ratio to 50%. To ensure that it is on par with the top quality in-class programmes, measures such as online courses and digital repositories, research funding, better student services, credit-based recognition of MOOCs, and so on will be taken.

**Internationalization of education** will be supported by institutional alliances, student and teacher mobility, and the opening of campuses in our country by top-ranked universities from throughout the world.

**Motivated, Energized, and Capable Faculty:** The performance of higher education institutions is determined by the quality and involvement of its professors, according to NEP 2020. Faculty recruitment methods and criteria will be explicitly defined, impartial, and transparent at HEIs. Within the agreed framework, faculty will be permitted to construct their own curricular and pedagogical approaches. Excellence will be rewarded with appropriate bonuses, promotions, and recognitions, as well as advancement into institutional leadership. Faculty who fail to meet basic expectations will be held accountable.

In HEIs, **Effective Governance and Leadership** is essential. All HEIs in India shall strive to become autonomous self-governing institutions pursuing innovation and quality through a proper system of graded accreditation and graded autonomy, which would be phased in over a 15-year period. At all HEIs, steps will be taken to assure high-quality leadership and develop an institutional culture of excellence. With each higher education institution having a Board of Governors, institutional governance based on autonomy - academic, administrative, and financial - is envisioned. Persons with good academic qualifications, demonstrated administrative and leadership talents, and the ability to manage complicated situations will be considered for all leadership roles including Heads of Institutions.

**Regulation:** The Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will serve as the overarching umbrella body for higher education promotion, with independent bodies for standard setting (the General Education Council), funding (the Higher Education Grants Council), accreditation (the National Accreditation Council), and regulation (the National Higher Education Regulatory Council) (NHERC). To assure financial probity and public-spiritedness, and to avoid conflicts of interest, regulation will be 'light but tight,' with honest self-disclosure as the norm rather than an inspectorial regime. The regulatory body would operate through faceless technology intervention for regulation and will have the authority to penalise HEIs that do not adhere to norms and standards. Regulation, accreditation, and academic standards will all be governed by the same set of rules for public and private higher education institutions.

**Teacher Education:** The way forward would be a four-year integrated stage-specific, subject-specific Bachelor of Education delivered by multidisciplinary universities. The NCTE will collaborate with NCERT to develop a new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021. By 2030, a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree that teaches a variety of knowledge content and pedagogy and incorporates significant practical experience in the form of student-teaching at local schools will be the minimum degree qualification for teaching. Substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions will face severe consequences (TEIs).

**A National Mentoring Mission** will be developed, with a huge pool of exceptional senior/retired academics – including those who can teach in Indian languages – who will provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

**Professional Education:** The higher education system will include all forms of professional education. Technical universities, health science universities, legal and agricultural universities, and other institutions in these and other sectors will strive to become multidisciplinary.

**Technology in Education:** The National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), an autonomous entity, will be established to provide a forum for free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to improve learning, evaluation, planning, and administration. To improve classroom operations, support teacher professional development, increase educational access for disadvantaged groups, and expedite educational planning, administration, and management, appropriate integration of technology will be done at all levels of education. DIKSHA/SWAYAM and other technology-based education platforms will be better integrated across school and higher education. Disruptive technology research will be conducted by HEIs, as well as instructional materials and courses, including online courses in cutting-edge domains.

**Online Education and Digital Education:** A comprehensive set of recommendations for promoting online education as a result of the recent increase in epidemics and pandemics has been covered, in order to ensure preparedness with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible. To address the e-education demands of both school and higher education, the MHRD will establish a dedicated unit to orchestrate the creation of digital infrastructure, digital content, and capacity building.

**Adult Education:** The policy aims to achieve 100% youth and adult literacy by 2030. **Promotion of Indian languages:** Several activities are planned to ensure the survival, expansion, and vitality of all Indian languages. In order to enhance access and GER, and to promote the strength, usage, and vibrancy of all Indian languages, more HEIs and higher education programmes will use the mother tongue/local language as a medium of teaching and/or offer bilingual programmes. There will be an Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI). Sanskrit and all Indian language institutes and departments will be greatly strengthened across the country. Pali, Persian, and Prakrit will each have their own national institute (or institutes). All Indian languages, including classical, tribal, and endangered languages, will be preserved and promoted.

**Financing Education:** Education is a public service that cannot be turned into a business or a source of profit. The commercialization of higher education will be combated and stopped by a variety of systems with checks and balances. As a 'not for profit' company, all educational institutions will be accountable to the same audit and disclosure standards. The Centre and the States will collaborate to boost public investment in education to reach

6% of GDP as soon as possible.

The **Central Advisory Board of Education** will be strengthened in order to ensure coordination and a greater focus on educational quality. In close coordination with the MHRD and the respective apex organisations of States, the revamped and revitalised CABE will be responsible for continuously formulating, expressing, evaluating, and amending the country's educational vision. It will also build and assess institutional frameworks that will aid in the realisation of this objective.

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## CONCLUSION

Until now, Indian higher education institutions lacked international variety and remained largely local, employing only Indian teachers and training only Indian students. One of the reasons for India's low rankings is the lack of international teachers and students in its leading schools. NEP has made it possible for Indian higher education institutions, including as IITs, to branch abroad and open overseas campuses around the world. This will not only expand their foreign reach, but it will also improve their global image. When NEP was first introduced in India, it was warmly received and enthusiastically accepted. Institutions have also taken meaningful moves toward NEP implementation in the last year. The outcomes will be available soon. The highlights outlined in NEP 2020 appear ambitious and flexible for pupils who are not under exam pressure. It is most likely to promote multidisciplinary education and make it easier for students to pursue a career in an increasingly competitive environment. However, in order to realise this goal, there will be a substantial increase in the demand for professors and faculties. In actuality, India's higher education sector is suffering from a 35 percent faculty shortage, which will necessitate more initiatives and supportive regulations to meet demand.

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