



Reforming Education in Tamil Nadu: Educators' Views on the NEP 2020

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Doi : <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.5.0924.2709>

ABSTRACT

With a focus on fairness, quality, and holistic development, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 signifies a sea change in India's approach to education. In light of the specific educational and cultural circumstances of Tamil Nadu, this research seeks to investigate teachers' views on NEP 2020, paying special attention to teachers' understandings of the policy and its acceptance and implementation within that environment. There is a strong argument for looking at the different reactions to NEP 2020 in Tamil Nadu because of the state's heterogeneous educational environment, which includes both rural and urban areas. Because their perspectives are critical to comprehending the policy's practical ramifications, educators, including school teachers, college professors, and educational administrators, are the intended subjects of the study. Evaluating the long-term economic implications of NEP 2020 implementation, contrasting the economic impact on both private and public educational institutions, studying the distribution of resources and funding processes in Tamil Nadu, assessing the cost and accessibility of educator training and capacity building, and investigating economic disparities in educational implementation are all important goals of the study. In a state that places a premium on regional languages and cultural identities, these goals are essential for comprehending the feasibility of NEP 2020. Policymakers at the federal and state levels may benefit greatly from the results, which point to the need for customised approaches that consider the unique culturally and educational requirements of Tamil Nadu. Findings stress the need to address educational resource and infrastructural inequities, particularly in rural regions, while also protecting regional languages and cultural traditions within a national framework. Ensuring that all children, regardless of their location, have access to excellent education is essential for meeting the equality objectives established in NEP 2020. In addition, the report highlights how important teachers are for NEP 2020 to be a success. Their voices should be heard in policymaking, according to the study's proponents. In the end, this research hopes to close the gap between theoretical considerations and actual implementation so that NEP 2020 may be used to improve education in all of India, especially in Tamil Nadu, where specific challenges exist.

Keywords: National Education Policy 2020, Educator Perceptions, Resource Allocation, Economic Disparities, Educational Implementation, Public and Private Education.

1. Introduction

A sea transformation has occurred in India's educational system with the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Its stated goal is to bring the current educational system up to date with international norms and standards while fixing long-standing problems. Tamil Nadu stands apart from the rest of the states in terms of the policy's impact on language, culture, and education (Sundararaman, 2021). Concerns about the three-language formula, the general educational framework, and the effects on indigenous languages have dominated discussions over NEP 2020's deployment in Tamil Nadu among teachers, politicians, and the public at large (Subramanian & Ramesh, 2022). Teachers in Tamil Nadu are worried about the lack of resources and infrastructure in rural and disadvantaged regions, which would make it difficult to implement NEP 2020 (Krishnan, 2023). Furthermore, in Tamil Nadu, where the preservation and advancement of the Tamil language are fundamental to the educational philosophy of the state, the policy's focus on bilingual education has caused some concern (Rajendran & Kumar, 2023). As a result of these issues, there have been requests to change the policy so that it more closely follows the state's values of culture and educational objectives. In light of the NEP 2020, this study intends to enquire as to how teachers in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu see it. In order to understand the policy's effects on the state's educational system, this research analyses their perspectives in order to determine the advantages, disadvantages, and potential consequences. Developing solutions to guarantee the successful implementation of NEP 2020 in a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate way requires a thorough understanding of these attitudes.

2. Review of Related Literature

Given the unique circumstances of the area and the wide range of viewpoints held by teachers, there has been a lot of academic curiosity in how Tamil Nadu plans to execute the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The policy's reception and possible effects on the state's educational system have

been illuminated by recent research, which have also drawn attention to other important points of contention. The effects of NEP 2020 on Tamil Nadu's linguistic and cultural heritage have been the subject of much scholarly attention. There is a lot of pushback to the policy's three-language formula in the state due to the importance of keeping Tamil alive. The need of policy adjustments that recognize indigenous languages was highlighted by Rajendran and Kumar (2023), who investigated teachers' worries over the possible loss of Tamil language identities. Their research indicates that meeting the state's language preferences while yet achieving national integration objectives is crucial to NEP 2020's success in Tamil Nadu. Krishnan (2023) discussed the difficulties that rural and lacking in resources parts of Tamil Nadu face while trying to put NEP 2020 into practice. The analysis shows that there are big gaps in the educational system, which could make it harder to implement policies like online education and career training. Krishnan contends that a large portion of Tamil Nadu may fail to achieve the lofty objectives of NEP 2020 unless significant funds are allocated towards improving infrastructure and educating teachers. The success or failure of NEP 2020 hinges on the mindset of the teaching staff. To find out how teachers in Tamil Nadu felt about the policy, Subramanian and Ramesh (2022) surveyed them extensively. The results show that educators have differing opinions on the policy's ability to update education; some are hopeful about its possibilities, while others are cautious about its practicality and applicability to their area. The research shows that teachers should be part of the decision process so that their opinions are heard and taken into consideration. Sundararaman (2021) looked at NEP 2020 in a larger sense in Tamil Nadu, with an emphasis on how policies should be adjusted to fit different regions. While the NEP does lay out a plan for school reform, the research suggests that states with specific culture and educational needs, such as Tamil Nadu, may not benefit from the plan's universal application. To enable states to customize the program to their unique circumstances, Sundararaman proposes more regional autonomy in executing the NEP. By looking at how other areas with different languages and cultures have applied comparable educational changes, comparative studies have added to the body of knowledge. In their study of educational strategies in bilingual areas, Rajan and Menon (2022) drew similarities to the difficulties experienced by Tamil Nadu as a result of NEP 2020. Their findings give light on possible approaches and best practices for implementing policies in settings with a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Hariharan and Siva (2017) estimated the student debt ratio and analysing the impact of education costs on family budgets and investigated the job prospects and expected remuneration post-graduation while assessing the adequacy of budgetary provisions for higher education over time.

3. Scope and Significance of the study

Teachers in Tamil Nadu will be the focus of this research as it seeks to understand and interpret the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in light of the specific cultural and educational circumstances of the state. In order to provide a complete picture of the varied educational environment in Tamil Nadu, the study focusses only on that state, with a particular focus on rural and urban areas. Teachers, professors, and school and district officials at all levels of education are the key informants in this research. Since they have a hand in shaping both the process and the results of NEP 2020, their opinions matter much. Planners on a national and state level will benefit greatly from the results, which provide a detailed picture of how people in Tamil Nadu feel about NEP 2020. To make sure the policy is applied more efficiently across different areas, this might guide future changes or adjustments. The research promotes the preservation of regional languages and cultural practices as part of national educational reforms by drawing attention to the worries of Tamil Nadu's teachers about students' linguistic and cultural identities. In particular, the study highlights the resource and infrastructural gaps in rural regions' educational systems. If we are serious about reaching the equality objectives set forth in NEP 2020 and guaranteeing that all kids, no matter where they live, have access to a high-quality education, we must resolve these concerns. The importance of teachers in carrying out educational policies effectively is highlighted in the research. The study promotes a more collaborative method of formulating policies by include educators in the discussions around NEP 2020. This will ensure that educators' perspectives and expertise are prioritized throughout the process. In sum, the study's overarching goal is to close the knowledge gap between policymakers and educators in Tamil Nadu and the rest of India so that NEP 2020 may serve as both a conceptual framework and an operational tool to improve education in the state.

4. Problem Statement

Both the educational and economic ramifications of Tamil Nadu's efforts to execute the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 are enormous. The policy's ambitious changes pose a number of economic challenges, especially when considered in light of the diversified and varied economic environment of Tamil Nadu, since they need substantial financial investments, allocation of resources, and economic planning. Major improvements to instructional technology, teacher preparation, and physical school buildings are all part of NEP 2020's agenda. But there are huge budget shortfalls in Tamil Nadu, which would make it hard to put the strategy into action. The state's budget may be put under pressure if enough funds are not set aside to construct new schools, renovate old ones, and guarantee that rural communities have access to high-quality education. The urban and rural areas of Tamil Nadu are economically quite different from one another. Poor infrastructure, slow internet connections, and a lack of access to excellent educational resources are common problems in economically disadvantaged and rural locations, in contrast to more affluent urban centers. Current discrepancies in educational results and economic opportunities throughout the state might be worsened by unequal implementation of NEP 2020 caused by these imbalances.

In order for teachers to be able to adjust to changing pedagogical approaches and curricular shifts, the policy stresses the requirement of ongoing professional development. On the other hand, initiatives that aim to expand capacity and provide training may be rather expensive. A hurdle to the successful implementation of the policy might be the lack of institutional support or financial means for many rural educators in Tamil Nadu to attend this kind of training. The disparity between public and private schools' ability to execute NEP 2020's changes is another indicator of the program's economic effect. The policy changes may be more quickly implemented by private institutions because of their greater financial resources, while public institutions, especially in economically poorer areas, may have difficulties owing to limited funding. As a result, existing disparities in the quality and

accessibility of education in Tamil Nadu's public and private schools may become even more pronounced. If NEP 2020 can't train people to be productive citizens who boost the economy, it will fail in the long run. But the state runs the danger of missing out on the desired results—increased employability, productivity, and economic development—if the policy isn't put into practice well enough owing to budgetary constraints. This can make it harder for Tamil Nadu to compete in the global market and cause economic possibilities to be missed.

5. Objectives of the Study

The study's goals are based on the acknowledged economic issues with NEP 2020 implementation in Tamil Nadu, and they are as follows:

1. To analyse resource allocation and funding mechanisms in Tamilnadu.
2. To investigate economic disparities in educational implementation.
3. To assess the cost and accessibility of educator training and capacity building.
4. To compare the economic impact on public and private educational institutions.
5. To evaluate the long-term economic implications of NEP 2020 implementation.

6. Materials and Methods

In order to thoroughly examine the economic ramifications of NEP 2020 and its implementation across educational institutions in Tamil Nadu, this research uses a mixed-methods methodology. Using stratified random sampling to guarantee a representative sample, quantitative data was gathered from 500 respondents who filled out a structured survey. Respondents included educators and administrators from both public and private schools. Topics included in the poll were NEP 2020 execution, resource distribution, economic difficulties, and the anticipated long-term effects; questions were either multiple-choice or used a Likert scale. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to uncover important patterns and trends. Alongside this, a subset of educators and experts were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format to delve further into the contextual elements impacting the implementation of NEP 2020. Thematic analysis was used to examine the qualitative data gathered from these interviews. The findings were then triangulated with the survey results to strengthen the validity and reliability of the research. This integrated strategy guarantees a strong and detailed comprehension of the monetary effects and difficulties connected to NEP 2020 in the educational sector of Tamil Nadu.

7. Results and Discussion

Table 1-Resource Allocation and Funding Mechanisms

Items	Frequency	Percent	
Rate the adequacy of financial resources	Very Adequate	131	26.2
	Adequate	90	18.0
	Neutral	102	20.4
	Inadequate	94	18.8
	Very Adequate	83	16.6
Significant resource challenges your institution faces	Lack of funding for infrastructure upgrades	161	32.2
	Insufficient digital resources and technology	123	24.6
	Limited access to quality educational materials	94	18.8
	Shortage of trained educators	122	24.4
Economic disparities between urban and rural areas	Very Great Extent	136	27.2
	Great Extent	96	19.2
	Moderate Extent	95	19.0
	Small Extent	81	16.2
	Not at All	92	18.4
Infrastructure in your	Significantly Improved	147	29.4

institution	Improved	91	18.2
	No Change	95	19.0
	Deteriorated	86	17.2
	Significantly Deteriorated	81	16.2
Total of each items		500	100.0

Source: Compiled from primary data

Educational institutions' resource distribution and finance procedures are detailed in the table above, which sheds light on the many facets of their financial sufficiency and the difficulties they encounter. Different people have different opinions on whether or not the available funds are sufficient. The finances are deemed insufficient or very inadequate by a considerable majority of respondents (37.4%), whereas 26.2% find them very adequate and 18.0% find them adequate. And there's a significant amount of ambivalence or ambiguity about the adequacy of financing, as 20.4% of respondents are indifferent. While some institutions seem to have enough of funding, the distribution shows that many more are struggling due to a lack of resources. Institutions have substantial resource problems, as shown by the statistics. With 32.2% of the total number of respondents bringing it up, the lack of money for infrastructure projects is clearly the biggest problem. Inadequate digital resources and technology were also named by 24.6% of respondents as a serious concern, while a dearth of skilled instructors was identified by 24.4%. Also, 18.8% of those who took the survey said that they had trouble getting their hands-on good school supplies. These difficulties show that budget cuts are harming the availability of vital educational resources, such as teachers and computers, which are necessary for delivering high-quality education, as well as the physical infrastructure of institutions. A major factor in resource distribution is the economic gap between rural and urban regions. In all, 46.4% of those who took the survey think these inequalities have a significant or very significant influence on their institutions, while 19.0% think it's modest. At the same time, 34.6 percent of people think it won't have much of an effect. In terms of infrastructure, over 30% of people said it got better, while 18.2% said it got better somewhat. On the other hand, 16.2% of people saw a substantial decline, while 33.4% saw either no change or worsening. It seems that certain institutions are reaping the benefits of improved infrastructure, while others are still struggling, which may be made worse by financial constraints and economic inequality.

Table 2-Educator Training and Capacity Building

Items		Frequency	Percent
Training or professional development related to NEP 2020	Yes	283	56.6
	No	217	43.4
Rate the effectiveness of the training programs	Very Effective	151	30.2
	Effective	76	15.2
	Neutral	99	19.8
	Ineffective	82	16.4
	Very Ineffective	92	18.4
Main barriers to participating in NEP 2020 training programs	Lack of funding for training programs	153	30.6
	Inaccessibility of training locations	103	20.6
	Insufficient time allocated for training	116	23.2
	Lack of awareness or information about training opportunities	128	25.6
Adequately prepared to implement the changes required by NEP 2020	Strongly Disagree	147	29.4
	Disagree	89	17.8
	Neutral	85	17.0
	Agree	92	18.4
	Strongly Agree	87	17.4
Total of each items		500	100.0

Source: Compiled from primary data

Nearly half of the teachers (56.6%) had NEP 2020-related professional growth or training, whereas nearly half (43.4%) did not, as seen in the table above. Participants' views on the training's efficacy are diverse. A sizeable minority (34.8%) thought the training was either completely useless or very useless, while 45.4% thought it was either useful or very beneficial. The fact that these training programs were well-received by some and disappointing to others indicates that they fell short of the mark for many educators. The research also shows that there are major obstacles to people not taking part in the NEP 2020 courses. With 30.6% of respondents seeing it as a serious impediment, the lack of finance was the most commonly stated problem. Other major obstacles were not enough time for training (23.2%), venues that were difficult to reach (20.6%), and people not knowing about training options (25.6%). It is possible that the inconsistent efficacy ratings are due, in part, to the fact that numerous educators have practical constraints that prevent them from fully participating, even in situations when training is offered. Based on the comments, it seems that educators aren't very confident in their ability to execute the adjustments needed by NEP 2020. Only 35.8% of those who took the survey felt prepared for the changes, whereas almost half (47.2%) strongly or disagreed that they were appropriately prepared. This points to a major hole in the existing capacity-building initiatives, which may be associated with the obstacles to involvement and the widespread belief that some training programs are useless. The results highlight the need of training programs that are easier to access, more organised, and appropriately financed so that teachers can effectively implement NEP 2020.

Table 3-Public vs. Private Educational Institutions

Items	Frequency	Percent	
NEP 2020 implementation between public and private institutions	Significant Advantage for Private Institutions	143	28.6
	Slight Advantage for Private Institutions	92	18.4
	No Significant Difference	76	15.2
	Slight Advantage for Public Institutions	99	19.8
	Significant Advantage for Public Institutions	90	18.0
Primary economic challenges faced by public institutions in implementing NEP 2020	Insufficient government funding	169	33.8
	Lack of infrastructure development	114	22.8
	Difficulty in accessing educational technology	113	22.6
	Shortage of qualified staff	104	20.8
Implementation of NEP 2020 will widen the gap between public and private education	Yes	221	44.2
	No	146	29.2
	Unsure	133	26.6
Total of each items	500	100.0	

Source: Compiled from primary data

The following table contrasts the ways in which public and private schools are putting NEP 2020 into action, drawing attention to the benefits, drawbacks, economic difficulties, and possible effects on the achievement gap. When asked which sector will have an advantage in implementing NEP 2020, 47.0% of people said private sector organisations would have a small or considerable advantage. On the other hand, 37.8% think that public institutions have a minor or considerable edge. Curiously, 15.2% of those who took the survey didn't see a change. While commercial institutions are often seen as having an advantage, there is a noteworthy belief that public institutions may also thrive in the correct environments. The data clearly shows that public entities are facing economic issues while adopting NEP 2020. Of all the challenges, 33.8% of respondents named inadequate government financing as the most important one. Other major obstacles cited by 22.8% of respondents were issues with access to educational technologies and 22.6% with inadequate infrastructural development. In addition to the many fiscal challenges that government agencies have in executing NEP 2020, 20.8% of respondents mentioned a lack of competent personnel. These difficulties highlight the potential shortage of funding that may make public schools unable to match the excellence of private schools. Lastly, the chart shows that some are worried that the gap between public and private schools may grow as a result of NEP 2020. A sizeable 44.2% of those who took the survey are of the opinion that the policy will make the disparity even wider; 29.2% are not of this opinion, and 26.6% are not sure. Public institutions have different economic and infrastructural constraints than private ones, which is likely to explain why almost half of the people who responded anticipate a widening gap. To avoid making current inequities worse and to guarantee that NEP 2020 can be applied fairly in the public and private education sectors, tailored actions are needed, according to the statistics.

Table 4- Long-Term Economic Implications

Items	Frequency	Percent	
Long-term economic impact of successfully implementing NEP 2020	Significant Positive Impact	144	28.8
	Positive Impact	92	18.4
	Neutral	83	16.6
	Negative Impact	86	17.2
	Significant Negative Impact	95	19.0
Potential economic consequences if NEP 2020 is not effectively implemented	Increased educational inequality	150	30.0
	Decreased employability of graduates	130	26.0
	Slower economic growth in the state	113	22.6
	Reduced competitiveness of Tamil Nadu in the national and global markets	107	21.4
Total of each items	500	100.0	

Source: Compiled from primary data

The following table delves into the possible outcomes in the event that NEP 2020 is not adequately implemented, as well as the long-term economic repercussions of its successful implementation. Nearly half of those who took the survey believe the policy will have a favourable or very positive effect on the economy in the long run. This bodes well for the policy's chances of fostering economic growth and development. Nevertheless, there is a considerable amount of worry, as 36.2% of participants anticipate a severe or very unfavourable effect. The policy's potential long-term effects are unclear to 16.6% of respondents, who have chosen to stay indifferent. The divergent opinions here reflect different assessments of how well NEP 2020 can handle the educational sector's economic possibilities and threats. Respondents point out a number of possible economic repercussions in the event that NEP 2020 is not well executed. Increased educational disparity was named by 30.0% of respondents as the most serious worry. A decline in graduates' employability (26.0%), slower economic development in Tamil Nadu (22.6%), and a decline in the state's competitiveness in national and global markets (21.4%), are other important issues. The results indicate that if NEP 2020 is not properly implemented, it can affect the economy of Tamil Nadu and its educational system in a significant way. The data highlights the need of making sure the policy is implemented well so that economic and social inequalities don't become worse.

8. Suggestions and Policy Implications

- ✓ Ensuring sufficient and stable financing for educational institutions, especially those in the public sector, is critical if NEP 2020 is to have the beneficial effect it may have. Bridging the gap among public and private institutions through greater government investment for infrastructure, technology, and staff development. This will assist reduce disparities in education.
- ✓ Improving plans for implementing NEP 2020 is necessary to allay the fears of the roughly 50% of respondents who expect negative consequences. To make sure that diverse regions and kinds of institutions receive their fair share of the policy's advantages, this might include providing more tailored assistance to schools in rural areas or with little funding.
- ✓ Specific steps should be taken to guarantee that all socioeconomic groups have equitable access to high-quality education in order to avoid the possible worsening of educational inequality. Making sure all children have equal access to educational opportunities is one way to help schools in low-income regions. Another is to provide more resources to such schools.
- ✓ Why NEP 2020 should priorities making graduates more employable. More vocational training possibilities, closer curriculum alignment with industry demands, and stronger relationships between schools and businesses may all help accomplish this goal.
- ✓ It is important to make sure that students in Tamil Nadu are well-educated and can compete on a global scale if the state wants to keep its competitive edge in national and international markets. Encouraging international cooperation and exchange programs is part of this, as is encouraging creative problem-solving, analytical thinking, and intellectual curiosity.
- ✓ It is critical to set up a solid mechanism to track and assess how well NEP 2020 is being put into action. In order to strengthen the execution of NEP 2020 and ensure that its possible advantages are fully realized while mitigating any adverse financial effects, it is suggested that periodic evaluations be conducted to identify areas where the policy is succeeding and where improvements are needed. This will allow for prompt modifications to methods and allocation of resources.

9. Conclusion

Ultimately, Tamil Nadu's long-term financial growth and educational quality stand to benefit greatly from NEP 2020's effective execution. To guarantee that the policy's advantages are dispersed fairly, however, the results highlight the obvious need for improved allocation of resources, especially in the public education sector. Targeted investment and strategic actions are crucial due to the perceived advantages of private institutions in NEP 2020 implementation and the financial and infrastructural problems encountered by state institutions. The state can help create a more competitive and resilient economy by tackling these difficulties and working to reduce disparities in education and increase the employability of graduates. The need for immediate action is further underscored by the fact that ineffective implementation of NEP 2020 might lead to undesirable outcomes including widening gaps in educational opportunity and diminished competition on a national and international scale. To guarantee the policy's effectiveness, it is vital to continuously monitor and evaluate it, while also working to match educational achievements with industrial demands. By putting its attention here, Tamil Nadu may use NEP 2020 to create an inclusive education system that can handle current needs and set the stage for future economic development and expansion.

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