

National Education Policy & Indian Knowledge System – Awareness & Its Relevance in Modern Concept

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Abstract—Education has the power to change one's life. It helps in improving one's capabilities and perception. It helps in breaking one's prejudices and expands your horizon. Education helps in creating an identity of your own and earn respect from others around you. Education is necessary to break barriers, grow and fight injustice. A nation is considered to be developed when its citizens are well educated and rational. This is possible only when quality education becomes accessible to all. The policy on education in India initiative to provide access to quality education, which fosters development and economic growth. India adopted the SDG 4 in 2015, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030. The changing global scenario demands a workforce, which has critical thinking skills, capable of solving problems, are innovative, adaptive and benign with creativity. The present educational policy of 2020 is a step towards fostering this change in the educational scenario in India. The educational policy also envisions bringing in Indian Knowledge System into the mainstream education with the objective of injecting ancient culture into the system. This paper is an attempt to identify the benefits arising out of such an effort and study the perception of students towards the adoption of ancient culture in imparting concepts and the awareness level amongst students about the educational policy of 2020.

Index Terms—Educational Policy, Indian Knowledge System

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is essential for achieving a developed nation with fair minded people who are equal in nature. This requires universal access to quality education irrespective of economic or social background. A nation is considered to be developed when its citizens are well educated and rational. India adopted the SDG 4 in 2015, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, promote lifelong learning opportunities for

all by 2030. The changing global scenario demands a workforce, which has critical thinking skills, capable of solving problems, are innovative, adaptive and benign with creativity. The present educational policy of 2020 is a step towards fostering this change in the educational scenario in India.

The Educational Policy of 2020 of India initiated to meet the growing developmental imperatives of the country is one of its kind. The policy is an initiative to introduce a new system of education in lines with 21st century requirements of education, including SDG 4, which will also build upon India's traditions and value systems. The emphasis is on the development of the creativity skills of every individual. The education policy of India relies on the principle of overall development of the individual exhibiting equal importance to societal aspects, ethics and emotional capability of the individual. The framing of the educational policy looked into the rich heritage of India and the knowledge system propagated in the ancient times. Erstwhile India known as Bharat had the highest goal of pursuing knowledge (Jnan), wisdom (Pragyaa) and truth (Satya). The aim of education being to liberate oneself and self-realization.

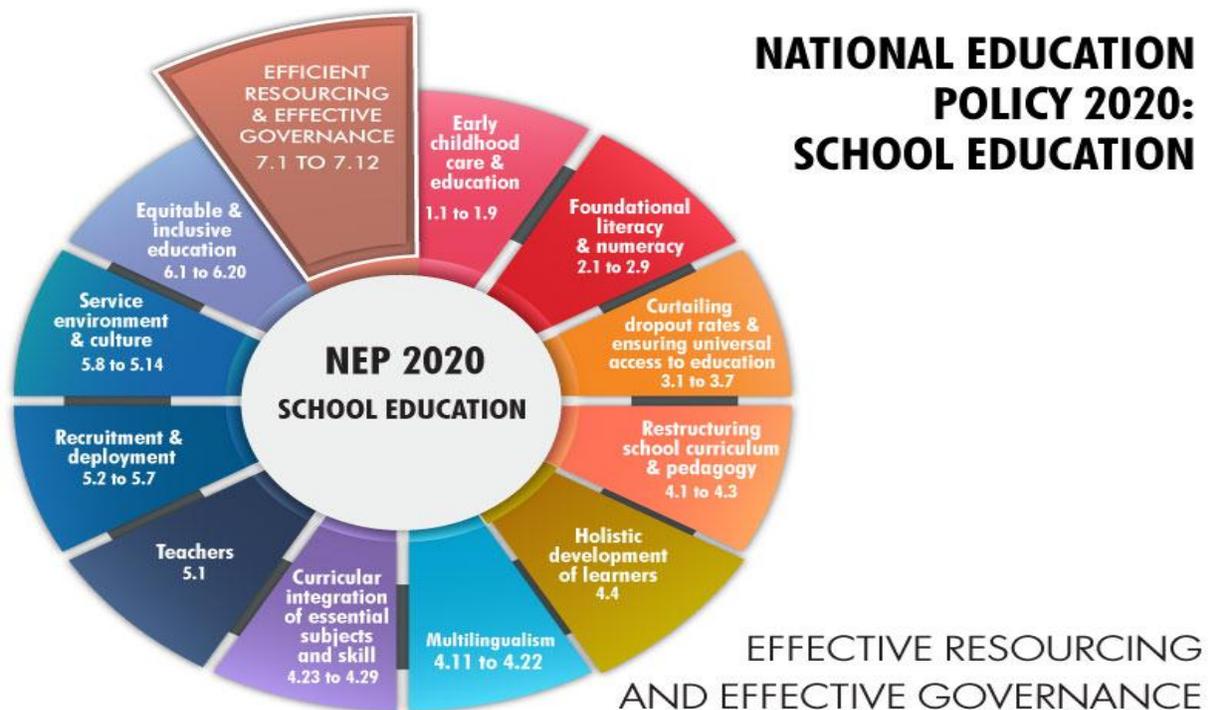
Ancient India has witnessed the existence of world class institutions like Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Vallabhi which set high standards and promoted research between disciplines and teaching. Great scholars like Susrutha, Chanakya, Aryabhata, Varahamihira, Bhaskaracharya, Brahmagupta, Charaka, Chakrapani Datta, Madhava, Panini, Patanjali, Nagarjuna, Gautama, Pingala, Sankardev, Maitreyi, Gargi and Thiruvalluvar were produced by these world class institutions who have made contributions immensely to the world knowledge. The objective of the education policy was to nurture and preserve this knowledge and put it to novel use in the present day context through the education system.

Establish teachers as the most respected members of the system who are instrumental in shaping the next generation citizens. Provide quality education to all irrespective of the social or economic background.

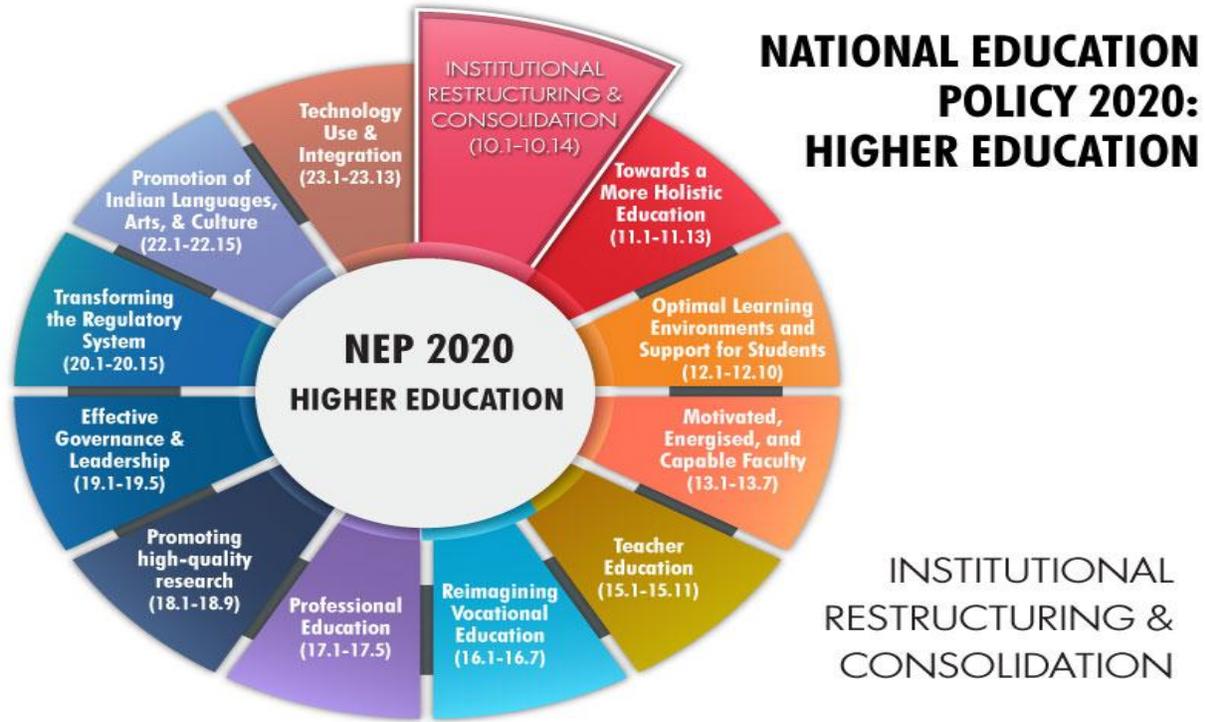
II. PRINCIPLES OF THE EDUCATION POLICY

The basic fundamental principles with which the policy is been framed are:

- To Recognize, identify and foster the unique capabilities of each student
- Providing the highest priority to achieve foundational literacy and numeracy
- To provide for Flexible choice of learning trajectories and courses
- To be having no big differences between different streams of education
- To provide for learning between multiple disciplines and holistic education
- To emphasize on conceptual understanding
- To promote critical thinking and creativity
- To impart the importance of ethics, human and constitutional values
- To Promote usage of multiple languages and bring out the power of language in teaching and learning
- To Concentrate on Life skills
- To focus on regular formative assessment of learning
- To promote the extensive use of technology in learning
- To respect diverse culture present in the country, promote and respect the local culture
- To provide for equitable education and inclusion of every individual in society
- To provide for combination of curriculum across all levels of education
- To make teachers and faculty the doyens of the learning process
- To design regulatory framework which ensures integrity, transparency and resource efficiency and maintain autonomy, good governance and empowerment
- To promote exemplary research
- To provide for continuous reviews of progress
- To be rooted with the Indian culture and take pride in the same
- To maintain education as a public service where every child has access to quality education
- To provide for substantial investment in a strong, vibrant public education system



Source: <https://www.educationworld.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Holistic-development-of-learners-1.jpg>



Source: <https://nirmawebsite.s3-ap-south-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2023/09/NEP2020.jpg>



Source: <https://blog.teachmint.com/content/images/2023/02/image.png>

The new educational policy of India provides a pedagogical and curricular structure, which comprises of 5 years, which concentrates on the early years of the child creating a strong foundation. The next 3 years prepares the child, next 3 years, which will be

considered as the middle level and finally the last 4 years, which will be considered as the secondary stage of learning. This structure covers the ages from 3 to 18. This structure will replace the existing pedagogical structure of 10 years of secondary education and 2

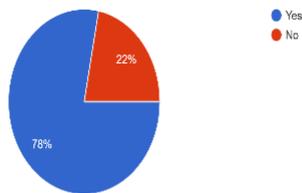
years of higher secondary structure in school education. The emphasis is on strengthening the childhood of the individual with proper care and good education. In the higher educational sector, the education policy aims at creating multidisciplinary research institutes which develop into outstanding public institutes providing high quality education. The objective is to bring in autonomy, increase the gross enrollment ratio, create institutes which provide long term learning opportunities, transparent system for public funding providing equal opportunities to all the institutes to grow and develop. The policy aims to integrate professional and vocational education through the higher education system. The objective is to bring in or create an educational environment, which results in both types of education provided under one roof, ushering in an integrated system of learning.

The education policy, which was established in 2020 came into existence during the year 2023-24. The objective is to create students at the primary school level with strong foundation and adept in mathematical skills by 2025. In this regard, the Ministry set up the National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy. There will be slow transition from the present education structure, which is 10 years of secondary education and 2 years of higher education to the education structure, which will comprise of 5

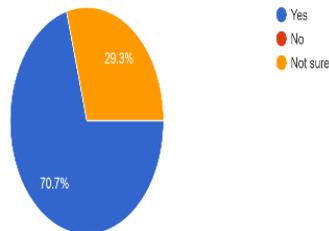
years of foundation, 3 years of preparatory, 3 years of middle level and 4 years of secondary stage learning. In the higher educational sector, the transition to be from a three-year degree program to a four-year degree program with multiple exit points (certificate, diploma, bachelor's). M.Phil was discontinued. Further, in this context the policy emphasizes on incorporating Indian Knowledge System into the curriculum. The same will be initially offered as credit courses wherein it will be mandated that a student will have to get a minimum of five percent of the total required credits by taking up the courses on Indian Knowledge System.

In this context a survey with a small sample size was conducted and primary data was collected from students within the age group of 18 to 24 to understand the awareness about the NEP and their perception about having ancient scriptures to be used as a base to teach concepts in class. For this purpose a simple questionnaire was circulated. One questionnaire which collected information on the awareness about NEP and another questionnaire which provided the kurals from Thirukkural relating to the running of a kingdom. The students were asked whether they would find it interesting to learn about a developed nation through these ancient scriptures. The survey provided the following information.

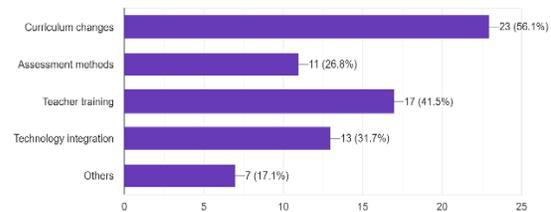
Are you aware of the National Education Policy (NEP)?
41 responses



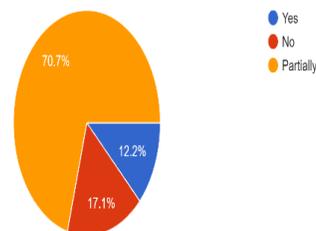
Do you think the NEP will bring positive changes to the education system?
41 responses



If you are aware of the NEP, which specific aspects do you know about? (Select all that apply)
41 responses

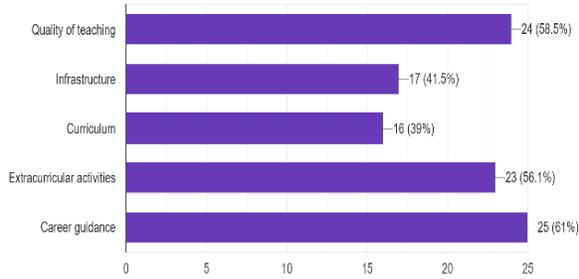


Are you satisfied with the current state of education in your country?
41 responses



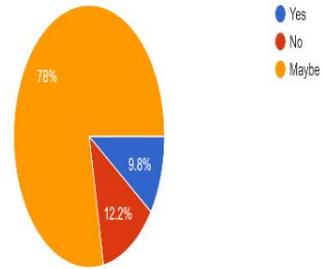
If you are not satisfied with the current state of education, what specific areas do you think need improvement? (Select all that apply)

41 responses



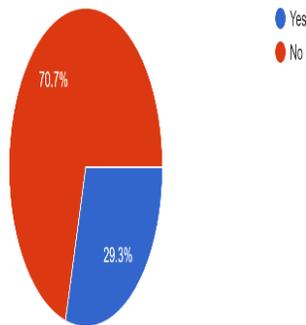
Do you think the NEP addresses the issues you identified?

41 responses



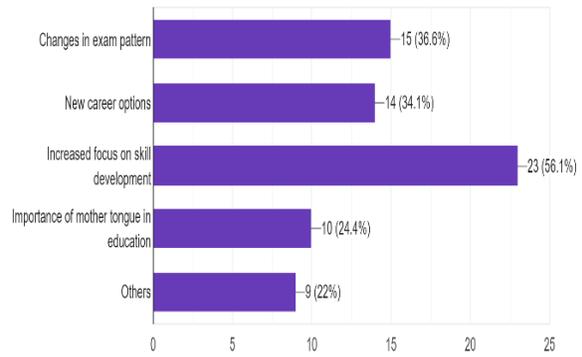
Have you discussed the NEP with your classmates or peers?

41 responses



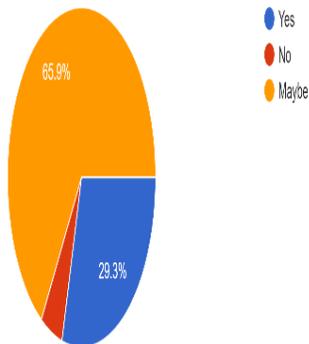
If you have discussed the NEP, what were the main points of discussion? (Select all that apply)

41 responses



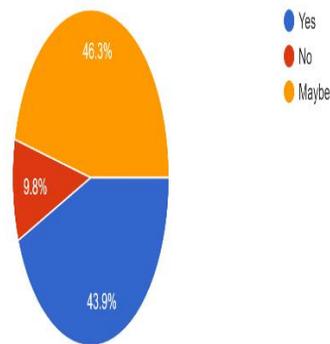
Do you think the NEP encourages holistic development of students?

41 responses

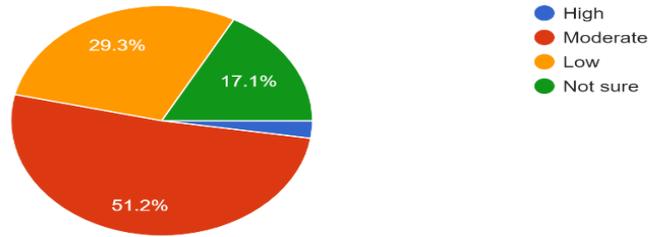


Do you believe the NEP will bridge the gap between urban and rural education?

41 responses



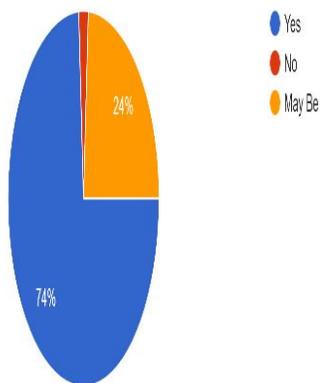
How would you rate the level of awareness about the NEP among your peers?
41 responses



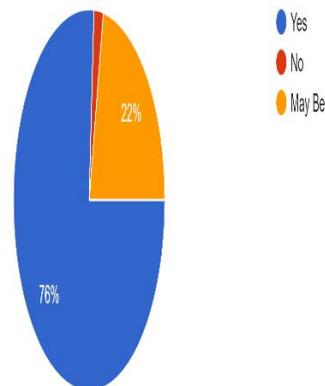
Through the survey it could be identified that students are aware about NEP and the aspects covered under NEP. But still there seems to be some ambiguity amongst the students about the benefits arising out of such an education policy. Most of the students are of the opinion that the education policy would bridge the gap between rural and urban education sector. They are also of the opinion that the quality of teaching should be improved. They are aware that a lot of focus is on skill development in the new education policy. But when asked about how they would rate the awareness level about NEP among their peer many felt that the

knowledge about NEP and its principles are only moderate. To further understand the opinion of the students it was decided to ask whether they would be interested in learning modern concepts through ancient scriptures. For this purpose verses 731 to 740 which is naattu naduppu was given. These verses define what can be called as a kingdom and how a kingdom should be. The students were asked whether they would understand better the notion of a developed nation if these scripts were used to teach. The following replies were obtained

The verses help you understand what can be called as a kingdom
50 responses

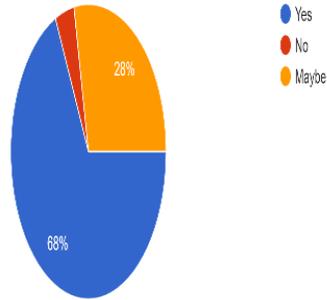


The verses explain how a kingdom should be
50 responses

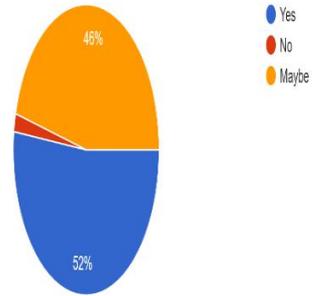


Further their opinion on whether their understanding would be better if they are taught with such references yielded the following results which are given below

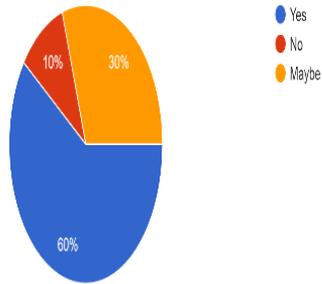
Will you find it interesting
50 responses



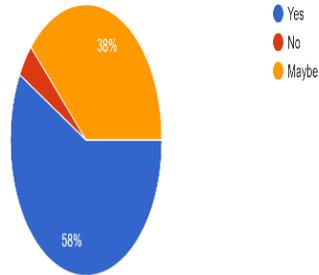
Will you understand the context better
50 responses



Will this increase the curiosity and inquisitiveness in you to understand the context more
50 responses



Do you think it is an interesting way to be taught in class
50 responses



The above responses clearly show that most of the students will find it interesting if ancient scriptures are used to define concepts in class. Though some of the students are slightly unsure about the same, with the right mode of pedagogy the concept can be explained to make it interesting. Very few students are of the opinion that they might not prefer this mode of teaching concepts in class.

From the above responses with respect to the awareness about the new education policy and use of ancient scriptures to teach concepts in class it can be assumed that stakeholders need to be sensitized more about the education policy, its principles and benefits.

III. CONCLUSION

The Education Policy of 2020, of India envisions the establishment of an education system, which will

foster holistic and equitable education amongst the students. Though there are a lot of benefits like concentration on skill development, introduction of vocational training, multidisciplinary approach etc with a lot of flexible exit points at the higher educational level, more needs to be done with respect to infrastructure, quality of teaching, funding, multilingual approach, resistance to change. The introduction of Indian Knowledge System into the curriculum is an innovative and welcome step which will surely help in aligning with the culture and ethics of the nation. Students do find it interesting but a lot needs to be done in the form of teacher training and orientation to take up the same. Moreover few states unwillingness to adopt the policy is a challenge.

The first step has been taken. It took seventy years to relook at the education policy. It is too early to say whether the system will be successful or not. The

policy aims at achieving a minimum of 50% Gross Enrollment Ratio by 2040 and improve the foundational literacy and numeracy level amongst the students. Expert committees have been set up to look into the implementation of the policy and IKS into the curriculum. The fragmentation of society on the basis of religion and caste is something that needs to be looked into and wiped out for the successful implementation of the policy. A dedicated and concerted effort will surely transcend into the development of an education system which will cater to holistic development of the students, quality teachers and an ethical and moral society.

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