

# Skill Development under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

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**Abstract**—The National Education Policy (NEP) that India enacted in 2020 aims to modernize the country's education system by emphasizing holistic development and skill building. The potential for skill development under NEP 2020 are presented in this report. This paper looks into the policy provisions in the areas of vocational education, multidisciplinary learning, Vocational Education and Training Centers, entrepreneurship development. It also investigates the potential challenges related with the NEP's implementation.

**Index Terms**—National Education Policy, Skill Development, Challenges.

## I. INTRODUCTION

India, as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, recognizes the crucial role of skill development in driving economic growth, reducing unemployment, and fostering innovation. Historically, the Indian education system has primarily focused on rote learning and theoretical knowledge, often neglecting practical skills that are vital for employability. This gap between education and the needs of the job market has resulted in high levels of unemployment and underemployment among educated youth.

To address these challenges and transform the education landscape, the Indian government introduced the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020. The NEP represents a significant reform in the education sector, aiming to provide a comprehensive framework for improving the quality and relevance of education in India. The rationale behind the NEP's emphasis on skill development stems from the recognition that education should not only focus on academic knowledge but also equip students with practical skills and competencies that are in demand in the modern workforce. By promoting skill development, the NEP aims to bridge the gap

between education and employment, ensuring that students are adequately prepared for the challenges of the professional world.

Moreover, skill development aligns with the evolving needs of the Indian economy, which is increasingly driven by technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. The NEP acknowledges the importance of multidisciplinary learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity—skills that are essential for success in the knowledge-based economy. By exploring the background and rationale behind the NEP's focus on skill development, this research paper aims to shed light on the pressing need for reforms in the Indian education system. It seeks to analyze how the NEP addresses these challenges and provides a roadmap for transforming education in India to meet the demands of the 21st-century workforce. Understanding the background and rationale of the NEP is crucial for comprehending the context in which skill development initiatives are being implemented and evaluating their potential impact on India's socio-economic development.

## II. NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP): AN OVERVIEW

In 2020, India unveiled the National Education Policy (NEP), a substantial reform program. With an emphasis on skill development, global competitiveness, and holistic development, it seeks to completely overhaul the nation's educational system. The NEP places a strong emphasis on technology integration, flexible curriculum design, multidisciplinary learning, and vocational education. It aims to close the skills gap between education and the workforce, encourage creativity and critical thinking, and support a lifelong learning philosophy. The significance of innovation and research in education is also emphasized by the NEP. All things

considered, it's a big step toward modernizing and bringing India's educational system into line with what the world needs in the twenty-first century.

### III. SKILL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES UNDER THE NEP, 2020.

A multitude of skill development projects aimed at enhancing practical skills and promoting an all-encompassing approach to education are included in the National Education Policy (NEP). The integration of vocational education, promotion of multi-disciplinary learning, and development of 21st-century skills are the main objectives of the NEP initiatives. Some of the NEP's noteworthy skill-development efforts include the following:

#### 1. *Integration of Vocational Education*

The inclusion of vocational education in the regular curriculum is emphasized by the NEP. It attempts to give students the opportunity to select career-focused courses in addition to academic ones. Students can gain information and practical skills related to particular trades and industries through this integration. The National Education Policy highlights the integration of vocational education with general education as a means of providing students with both practical and academic ability. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY 2023), schools, colleges, universities, higher education institutions, nationally recognized institutions, and others are being on boarded as skill hubs. These institutions will use their current infrastructure and domain expertise to deliver first-rate training under PMKVY. Currently, there are more than 1000 Skill Hubs and more than one lakh enrolled candidates.

Targets have been assigned to more than 2000 institutions, including central universities of national renown, IITs, IIITs, and NITs. At ISM Dhanbad and IIT Guwahati, training has already started for the roles of Assistant Mine Surveyor, Green House Operator, Self Employed Tailor, and Social Media Associate. Additionally, Skill India has collaborated with several universities. At least 50% of students enrolled in the K–12 and postsecondary education systems must experience vocational education by 2025. A high-quality vocational education will be seamlessly incorporated into higher education, starting with early exposure to the workforce in

middle and secondary school. Over the course of the next ten years, vocational education will be gradually incorporated into the curricula offered by all secondary schools. Secondary schools will work in tandem with ITIs, polytechnics, local industry, etc. to achieve this. Every child should be exposed to multiple careers and learn at least one. Ten days without bags will be observed at some point in Grades 6–8, allowing students to intern with local vocational experts like painters, carpenters, gardeners, and potters. Students in Grades 6 through 12 to be given similar internship opportunities to learn vocational subjects, including during breaks. Online vocational courses will also be made accessible<sup>1</sup>.

#### 2. *Multidisciplinary Approach*

The NEP promotes a multidisciplinary approach to education, allowing students to explore and pursue subjects that are not traditionally classified as disciplines. By offering a diverse range of subjects such as vocational courses, arts, sports, and humanities, the NEP aims to develop well-rounded individuals with a diverse skill set.

A holistic and multidisciplinary education will help to develop 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 specialization in a chosen field or fields. The Secondary Stage will be four years of multidisciplinary study, building on the subject-oriented curriculum and teaching methods of the Middle Stage while offering students with more depth, flexibility, and subject choice. Students could leave after Grade 10 and return in the next phase to pursue any other courses offered in Grades 11-12, including vocational training or other courses, if they so desired. (Section 4.2 of the NEP)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Salient Features of NEP 2020: Higher Education.*  
[https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/5294663\\_Salient-Featuresofnep-Eng-merged.pdf](https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/5294663_Salient-Featuresofnep-Eng-merged.pdf). (n.d.).

<sup>2</sup> Pathak, R. K. (n.d.). *Reimagining Vocational Education and Skill-building.*  
[https://www.education.gov.in/shikshakparv/docs/background\\_note\\_Reimagining\\_Vocational\\_Education\\_Skill\\_building\\_revised.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/shikshakparv/docs/background_note_Reimagining_Vocational_Education_Skill_building_revised.pdf)

The 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's programme shall be the preferred option as it provides the opportunity to experience the full range of holistic and multidisciplinary education in addition to a focus on the student's chosen major and minors. An Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) will be established to digitally store academic credits earned from various recognized HEIs so that degrees from a HEI can be awarded taking credits earned into account. Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) will be established as model public universities for holistic and multidisciplinary education, with the goal of attaining the highest standards for multidisciplinary education across India.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. *Vocational Education and Training Centers*

The NEP suggests establishing vocational education and training centers to provide specialized training in a variety of trades and skills. These centers work with industries to provide courses that meet industry standards and demands. They offer hands-on training, certifications, and apprenticeship opportunities to help people get jobs. During Grades 6 to 8, every student will participate in a fun course that provides a survey and hands-on experience with vocational crafts. Skill labs will also be established and built in the schools in a Hub and Spoke model, allowing other schools to use the facility. For providing training to dropouts, the vocational education system in schools will be reintegrated under the National Skills Qualifications Framework. Higher education institutions' Bachelor in Vocation (B.Voc.) programs will be expanded, and a credit-based framework will facilitate mobility across general and vocational education.<sup>4</sup>

### 4. *Entrepreneurship Development:*

<sup>3</sup> *Salient Features Of Nep 2020: Higher Education.*  
[https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/5294663\\_Salient-Featuresofnep-Eng-merged.pdf](https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/5294663_Salient-Featuresofnep-Eng-merged.pdf). (n.d.)

<sup>4</sup> Ahmad, M. (2022, July). *Vocational Education in the light of NEP 2020*. KASHMIR READER.  
<https://kashmirreader.com/2022/07/30/vocational-education-in-the-light-of-nep-2020/>

The NEP focuses on entrepreneurship education and aims to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset in students. It encourages the incorporation of entrepreneurship courses, experiential learning, and mentorship programs in order to foster innovation, creativity, and self-employment.

In accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the Policy aims to promote industry-academia linkage (academic-industry linkage) and entrepreneurship through exposure to vocational education.

The implementation will be led by the Ministry of Education, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), the Union and State Governments, Education Ministers, Departments of Education, Boards, the National Testing Agency (NTA), school and higher education regulatory bodies, The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), State Councils for Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), schools, and Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs).<sup>5</sup> As part of the Skill India Mission, the MSDE drives the entrepreneurship development agenda to ensure that there are more job providers than job seekers.

- 21 *National Skill Training Institutes* (NSTIs) have been designated as National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD) centers for entrepreneurship courses, and 33 NSTIs (plus two extension centers) have been designated as National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and IGNOU centers for higher education and degree certification courses.

- NIESBUD Summer Camps on Entrepreneurial Stimulation for School Students

- NIESBUD's will work with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to develop an Entrepreneurship textbook for students in Classes IX, X, XII, and XII..<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> [researchgate.net\(2022, April\), VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NEP 2020](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359685830_VOCATIONAL_EDUCATION_AND_ENTREPRENEURSHIP_IN_NEP_2020)  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359685830\\_VOCATIONAL\\_EDUCATION\\_AND\\_ENTREPRENEURSHIP\\_IN\\_NEP\\_2020](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359685830_VOCATIONAL_EDUCATION_AND_ENTREPRENEURSHIP_IN_NEP_2020)

<sup>6</sup> Major achievements – Implementation of NEP,2020(n.d).<https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteRea>

5. *Continuous Teacher Education and Professional Development:* The NEP emphasizes the importance of teachers in facilitating skill development. It emphasizes the importance of comprehensive teacher education programs that provide educators with the knowledge and pedagogical skills needed to effectively help students develop their skills. MSDE provides teacher education programs to help them improve their skills and adapt their teaching methods to changing labor market demands.

- From 2022-23, 59 new Government Institutes of Training of Trainers (IToTs) were connected for admissions, increasing Crafts Instructor Training Scheme (CITS) seating capacity by 2320.
- Model Career Progression Guidelines for ITI Trainers were created in collaboration with stakeholders including ITI trainers, ITI Employee Associations, Industry bodies, State Directorates, the World Bank, and others.
- Over 25000 officials, including principals and instructors, have been trained in National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) compliance in 36 states/UTs to date.

#### IV. NEP 2020 AND ITS CHALLENGES

In spite of the elaborate nature of NEP 2020, the effective implementation of the policy will not be free from the following challenges:

##### ➤ *Lack of Adequate Funding*

Despite the goal of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) of making India a global center for education, inadequate funding remains a problem in the country's education system. India currently spends 3.1% of its GDP on education, which is less than the 6% target set by the NEP. Although education spending has increased slightly in recent years, it still accounts for approximately 10.5% of total government spending. In addition to more funding, addressing regional disparities, improving educational quality, and allocating resources efficiently are all required to meet these challenges. Realistic improvements in India's education system

will require the NEP's successful implementation as well as ongoing monitoring.

##### ➤ *Inadequate infrastructure*

Establishing infrastructure for skill development programs, including laboratories, workshops, and technology, requires substantial investment. Ensuring that schools and educational institutions have access to these resources is a challenge, particularly in rural and economically disadvantaged areas.

##### ➤ *Need for trained Teachers*

The success of skill development programs relies heavily on the competence of educators. Providing adequate training to teachers and trainers to deliver skill-oriented education effectively is crucial and can be logistically challenging.

##### ➤ *Industry - Academia Collaboration*

Bridging the gap between educational institutions and industries is vital for successful skill development. Establishing and maintaining effective partnerships with industries to align curricula with real-world requirements can be a complex process as academic needs and industrial need may differ in many respects. Also especially in the rural and sub-urban areas, such type of collaborations are a far cry as these areas lack in industries.

##### ➤ *Curriculum Design and Adaptation*

Developing a curriculum that integrates academic knowledge with practical skills and is adaptable to evolving industry needs is challenging. Regularly updating and revising curricula to keep them relevant is an ongoing process.

##### ➤ *Assessment and Certification*

Designing a robust system for assessing and certifying skills is crucial for the credibility of skill development programs. Developing standardized and recognized certification processes that are valued by employers is a challenge.

##### ➤ *Access to Vocational Education*

Ensuring that vocational education and skill development programs are accessible to a diverse range of students, including those in rural areas and from disadvantaged backgrounds, is a significant

challenge. This includes addressing issues related to affordability and awareness.

➤ *Technological Integration*

Many skill development programs involve the use of technology. Ensuring that educational institutions have access to the necessary technology and that students are comfortable using it is a challenge, especially in areas with limited digital infrastructure.

➤ *Entrepreneurship Education*

The NEP 2020 emphasizes entrepreneurship education. Implementing programs that foster an entrepreneurial mindset and providing support for aspiring entrepreneurs pose challenges, including mentorship and access to funding.

Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated effort from educational institutions, government bodies, industry stakeholders, and the community. Regular assessment, adaptation, and a commitment to the long-term vision of skill development outlined in the NEP are essential for overcoming these challenges.

## V. CONCLUSION

In spite of the manifold challenges, NEP 2020 is faced with, if the policy is implemented effectively, the outcome will be undoubtedly a radical paradigm shift in the Indian Educational System. It will bring about a new era of proactive human resources equipped with industrial-oriented skills. Nevertheless, the success of NEP 2020 is yet to be seen in its entirety as it is more in theory currently. Hence, there is a need for a thorough study on the NEP strategy for its effective implementation, keeping in mind the present needs of the educational system without having to compromise with the future prospects of the policy towards improving Indian Educational System.

## VI. DECLARATION

The authors conducted this study independently and received no financial support from any funding agency or institution.

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