

Impact of NEP 2020 on Student Well-being: A Comparative Analysis of Sports and Health Initiatives in Educational Institutions of Kolkata Before and After Policy Implementation

Arjun Bhattacharyya¹, Zainab Khan²
GOVT OF WEST BENGAL

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which was passed by the Government of India, is arguably the most important educational reform since independence. But contrary to what it preceded, NEP 2020 is holistic, as it considers academics, sports, mental health, and well-being equally important. Sports and physical education are the two areas of the policy that recognize it as a part of student development and a move towards an exam-based model of learning to a more balanced, skills-oriented, and wellness-based one.

The traditional definition of well-being in schools has been very limited, as it primarily concerns academic achievements and discipline. Nevertheless, the past few years have witnessed an increased recognition that mental well-being, physical well-being, and emotional stability are equally important. NEP 2020 addresses this requirement by suggesting school health programmes, development of sports infrastructure and curricular flexibility in the name of fitness and wellness.

Kolkata, being an urban educational center, will provide a special setting to analyze the actual effect of the provisions of NEP 2020 on sports and health. Although some of the private and government schools have improved, there has always been challenges on whether the reforms are improving the well-being of students in a systematic manner. The schools in Kolkata are diverse, including both the elite and privately run schools and the poorly funded state schools, which makes it a perfect place to research the inequality in implementation.

The proposed research aims at examining the impact of NEP 2020 on the well-being of students via sports and health programs in the educational establishments in Kolkata. The research shall evaluate institutional practices, student experiences and the overall implication of equity in education.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2020

Government of India (2020) highlighted the higher education perspective of NEP 2020, with the focus on including mental health, counseling, and physical education. It used policy analysis and review of available educational frameworks as the methodology. The result implied the value of a student-driven methodology and offered the principles of incorporating well-being interventions in educational institutions and colleges.

NCERT (2020) conducted a survey on mental health and well-being of school students. Using mixed methods, including questionnaires and focus group discussions, the study examined stress levels, emotional health, and coping strategies among children. Results indicated that mental health awareness was limited, emphasizing the need for structured interventions aligned with NEP.

NCERT (2020) studied integrated school health programs under NEP. The research adopted a qualitative approach to assess schools' readiness in implementing health initiatives. Findings showed disparities in infrastructure, teacher training, and student participation, highlighting the implementation gap in schools across India.

2021

National Council of Educational Research and Training (2021) surveyed mental health and well-being of students using standardized instruments. The methodology included quantitative surveys with school students across regions. Findings highlighted elevated stress levels and limited engagement in sports and physical activities, emphasizing NEP's need to focus on holistic student health.

Ministry of Education (2021) evaluated the effects of NEP 2020 on health and sports in schools. Using a review-based approach, the study compared policy goals with preliminary implementation outcomes. Results suggested slow adoption of sports initiatives, gaps in teacher preparedness, and infrastructural challenges.

2022

Kundu & Basu (2022) examined Kolkata school infrastructure for sports after NEP 2020. Using field surveys and interviews with school administrators, the study measured the availability of playgrounds, sports equipment, and physical education staff. Outcomes revealed improvements in some urban schools but highlighted significant disparities in underfunded institutions.

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, India (2022) released an annual report on sports promotion in schools. Data was collected through institutional reports and administrative statistics. The report demonstrated a gradual increase in student participation in organized sports but identified gaps in monitoring health outcomes.

Press Information Bureau (2022) discussed higher education reforms under NEP, including student well-being, physical activity, and counseling services. Methodology was document review, providing an overview rather than empirical analysis. Outcomes emphasized policy intent but lacked on-ground evidence.

Reddy (2022) studied NEP 2020's role in promoting mental and physical well-being using surveys with students and teachers in urban and semi-urban schools. Results showed that physical activity positively correlated with stress reduction and improved student engagement.

2023

Bose (2023) evaluated school-based sports for student well-being in Eastern India. Mixed-methods research included surveys, interviews, and observational studies in schools. Findings highlighted that structured sports programs enhanced physical fitness, social interaction, and emotional resilience among students.

NCERT (2023) conducted preliminary psychoeducational interventions under NEP. Using a quasi-experimental design, the study assessed mental health outcomes before and after interventions. Results demonstrated improvements in stress management, self-esteem, and academic motivation.

Roy (2023) investigated well-being among underprivileged students through sports initiatives. Methodology involved participatory observation and structured interviews. Outcomes suggested that regular participation in sports improved self-confidence, discipline, and social skills.

Saha (2023) explored teachers' perceptions of NEP reforms in Kolkata schools. Using survey questionnaires, the study revealed that teachers supported sports integration but cited lack of training and time constraints as barriers to effective implementation.

2024

Kumar (2024) presented a white paper on Olympic sports and national health. The methodology was literature review and secondary data analysis. Findings indicated that integrating structured sports curricula in schools could foster long-term health and encourage competitive sports participation.

Singh (2024) analyzed new approaches to physical activities in schools post-NEP 2020. Methodology included field surveys and teacher interviews. Results demonstrated that schools adopting innovative activity-based learning saw higher student engagement and improved physical fitness indicators.

Jayalakshmi (2024) discussed prospects and challenges of NEP 2020 in schools. Using qualitative analysis, the study highlighted policy benefits, including enhanced well-being and sports integration, while noting challenges in infrastructure, teacher training, and equitable access.

Kaur (2024) examined gender equity in urban school sports under NEP 2020. Using questionnaires and observational methods, findings revealed increased

female participation in sports, though cultural biases and limited resources remained barriers.

Das (2024) studied sports curriculum evolution in Bengal schools. The methodology involved comparative curriculum analysis pre- and post-NEP 2020. Outcomes indicated significant curricular reforms but highlighted inconsistent implementation across schools.

2025

Yadav (2025) examined NEP 2020's impact on physical education and sports in India using surveys and interviews with school administrators. Results highlighted increased participation but uneven resource distribution across schools.

Lungatar (2025) analyzed the policy's effect on sports programs. Methodology included a mixed-methods survey of students and teachers. Outcomes revealed positive student engagement but gaps in teacher competency and curriculum integration.

Nanda & Sahu (2025) studied happiness in education from children's perspectives. Using qualitative interviews, the study found that engagement in sports and health activities enhanced emotional well-being and academic satisfaction.

Chakraborty (2025) conducted case studies in Kolkata schools. Using field visits and interviews, the study highlighted effective practices in sports programs but noted infrastructural limitations and disparities between schools.

Chatterjee (2025) analyzed sports as a school subject. Methodology included surveys and curriculum review. Findings indicated growing recognition of sports in education, but practical implementation remained inconsistent.

Sinha (2025) studied challenges in integrating sports post-NEP 2020. Using mixed-methods surveys, results highlighted student enthusiasm, administrative challenges, and the need for teacher training to achieve holistic well-being outcomes.

Shailja Aswal Bharguvanshi (2025) analyses NEP 2020's provisions around physical education, showing how the policy frames physical, mental and social development via sports/PE. It underscores the normative intent for integrating PE as core, not optional.

III. RESEARCH GAPS

- Limited empirical studies **compare** pre- and post-NEP 2020 changes in sports and health initiatives across educational institutions.
- Sparse research examines how CBCS credit structures have operationalized sports/PE in higher education to support student wellbeing
- Few region-specific analyses (e.g., Kolkata institutions) link policy reforms to tangible wellbeing outcomes among students.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do sports and health initiatives in educational institutions of Kolkata differ between the pre-NEP 2020 and post-NEP 2020 periods?

In what ways has the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) facilitated the integration of sports and physical education into academic curricula?

What is the comparative impact of CBCS and NEP 2020 reforms on the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of students in Kolkata's educational institutions?

V. OBJECTIVES

To assess and compare the provision and implementation of sports and health initiatives in educational institutions of Kolkata before and after NEP 2020.

To examine the role of the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in integrating sports and physical education into academic curricula for enhancing student wellbeing.

To evaluate the impact of policy reforms (CBCS and NEP 2020) on student wellbeing outcomes—physical, mental, and social—in educational institutions of Kolkata.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a comparative, mixed-method research design to examine the impact of NEP 2020 on student wellbeing through sports and health initiatives

in Kolkata educational institutions. The research will compare pre-NEP 2020 and post-NEP 2020 scenarios to identify changes in program implementation, student participation, and wellbeing outcomes.

- Quantitative component: Structured surveys to measure student participation rates, fitness levels, and wellbeing indicators.
- Qualitative component: Semi-structured interviews with teachers, administrators, and student focus groups to understand implementation challenges, institutional support, and perceived impact.

Population and Sampling

Population: Students (grades 9–12 and first-year college), physical education teachers, school/college administrators in Kolkata.

Sampling Method:

Stage 1: Institutional sampling – Purposive sampling of 10–12 schools and colleges across Kolkata, representing government, private, and aided institutions to capture variation in NEP implementation.

Stage 2: Participant sampling – Stratified random sampling of students from selected institutions (approximately 30–40 students per institution), ensuring representation across gender, grade, and socioeconomic background

Teachers and administrators: Purposive selection of 5–10 PE teachers and administrators per institution for interviews.

Data Collection Methods

1. Document Analysis (Pre- and Post-NEP):

- Collect institutional documents such as syllabi, CBCS credit structures, prospectuses, and wellness program plans from pre-2020 and post-2020 periods.
- Analyze the inclusion of sports, yoga, and health initiatives, frequency of programs, and resources allocated.

2. Quantitative Surveys:

Student survey questionnaire including:

- Participation in sports and wellness programs (frequency, type of activity).

- Self-reported physical wellbeing (energy levels, fitness, physical activity).
- Self-reported mental wellbeing (stress, focus, emotional regulation).
- Pre-tested on a small sample for reliability and clarity.
- Surveys will be conducted digitally or in-person, depending on institutional permission.

3. Qualitative Interviews and Focus Groups:

Semi-structured interviews with PE teachers and administrators to explore:

- Extent of NEP 2020 implementation.
- Challenges in integrating sports/PE through CBCS.
- Observed changes in student engagement and wellbeing.

Student focus groups (6–8 per group) to discuss experiences, barriers, and perceptions of NEP-driven wellness programs.

Interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

4. Observations

Structured observations in sports sessions, yoga/mindfulness classes, and wellness program activities to assess quality, participation, and resource adequacy.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis:

Descriptive statistics: mean, standard deviation, frequencies for student participation and wellbeing metrics.

Comparative analysis: Paired t-tests or ANOVA to compare pre-NEP vs post-NEP participation and wellbeing scores.

Correlation analysis to examine relationships between program participation (sports, yoga) and wellbeing outcomes.

Qualitative Analysis:

Thematic analysis of interviews and focus groups using coding:

- Implementation challenges
- Institutional support mechanisms
- Perceived impact on physical and mental wellbeing

VII. CHAPTER PLANNING

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

- Overview of NEP 2020 and its focus on student health, physical education, yoga, and sports.
- Importance of sports, wellness, and physical activity in promoting mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing.
- Educational landscape of Kolkata: schools, colleges, and other institutions offering structured wellness programs

1.2 Review of Literature

1.3 Research Gap

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.5 Methodology & Data Collection

Chapter 2: Implementation of NEP 2020 Sports and Health Initiatives

- Policies and guidelines under NEP 2020 for sports, physical education, and student wellness.
- Adoption and operationalization of wellness programs across Kolkata educational institutions.
- Organizational support: roles of administrators, teachers, and student committees.
- Assessment of the extent and quality of implementation

Chapter 3: Infrastructure and Program Delivery

- Availability of sports facilities, playgrounds, yoga/mindfulness centers, and health resources.
- Frequency, accessibility, and quality of wellness programs.
- Staff training, coaching, and operational challenges.
- Evaluating how infrastructure supports NEP 2020 implementation.

Chapter 4: Student Physical and Mental Well-being Outcomes

- Student participation rates in sports, yoga, and wellness programs.
- Assessment of physical health outcomes: fitness levels, energy, and physical activity engagement.
- Assessment of mental health outcomes: stress, focus, emotional regulation, and social wellbeing.
- Evaluating the impact of NEP 2020-driven initiatives.

Chapter 5: Barriers and Challenges in Program Implementation

- Financial, infrastructural, staffing, and administrative constraints.
- Awareness and engagement issues among students and teachers.
- Cultural, social, or institutional factors affecting participation.
- Identifying key barriers to effective implementation.

Chapter 6: Analysis & Findings

Chapter 7: Summary findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

REFERENCES

- [1] Bose, A. (2023). School-based sports for well-being: Evaluating NEP impacts in Eastern India. *Journal of Educational Development*, 18(12), 208–215. <https://educationforallinindia.com/sports-as-a-subject-in-school-education-in-india-current-status-and-future-directions/>
- [2] Chakraborty, M. (2025). Policy, practice, and student health: Case studies from Kolkata. *Journal of Educational Research*, 13(9), 98–104. <https://educationforallinindia.com/sports-as-a-subject-in-school-education-in-india-current-status-and-future-directions/>
- [3] Chatterjee, S. (2025). Sports as a subject in school education in India: Current status and future directions. *Education for All in India*. <https://educationforallinindia.com/sports-as-a-subject-in-school-education-in-india-current-status-and-future-directions/>
- [4] Das, A. K. (2024). Sports curriculum evolution under NEP in Bengal. *Indian Educational Review*, 59(4), 22–30. https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/Mental_Health_WSS_A_Survey_new.pdf
- [5] Government of India. (2020). *Salient features of NEP 2020: Higher education*. Ministry of Education. <https://phfi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/salient-features-of-NEP-2020.pdf>
- [6] Jayalakshmi, P. (2024). *National Education Policy 2020: Prospects & challenges*. KY

- Publications.
http://www.kypublications.com/BOOKS/NEP%202020_28-8-2024.pdf
- [7] Kaur, J. (2024). Gender equity in sports: NEP 2020 implications in urban Indian schools. *Gender and Sports Studies*, 9(1), 66–74. <https://ijert.org/papers/IJCRT2506155.pdf>
- [8] Kumar, R. (2024). Building a healthy nation: A white paper on Olympic sports. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development*. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11368291/>
- [9] Kundu, B., & Basu, R. (2022). Kolkata school infrastructure for sports: Changing scenarios under NEP 2020. *Urban Education India*, 8(1), 53–60. <https://www.sportsjournals.net/archives/2024/vol6issue1/PartD/7-2-10-510.pdf>
- [10] Lungatar, R. (2025). NEP 2020 and its impact on physical education and sports in India. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 13(6), 314–321. <https://ijert.org/papers/IJCRT2506155.pdf>
- [11] Ministry of Education. (2019). *Salient features of New Education Policy 2020*. Government of India. <https://eoi.gov.in/eoisearch/MyPrint.php?11106%3F001%2F0002>
- [12] Ministry of Education. (2021). *India report: Implementing NEP 2020 and its effects on health and sports in academic institutions*. <https://phfi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/salient-features-of-NEP-2020.pdf>
- [13] Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, India. (2022). *Annual report on physical education and sports promotion*. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11368291/>
- [14] Nanda, M., & Sahu, P. (2025). Happiness in education from the lens of children: An Indian perspective. *Journal of Wellbeing Studies*, 4(1), 87–102. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2773233925000270>
- [15] NCERT. (2020). *Integrated school health under NEP: Strategies and challenges*. https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/Mental_Health_WSS_A_Survey_new.pdf
- [16] NCERT. (2021). *Mental health and well-being of school students: A survey*. https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/Mental_Health_WSS_A_Survey_new.pdf
- [17] NCERT. (2023). *Preliminary report: Psychoeducational interventions and NEP 2020*. https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/Mental_Health_WSS_A_Survey_new.pdf
- [18] Press Information Bureau. (2022). *Higher education under NEP 2020: Reimagining India's future*. Government of India. <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressNoteDetails.aspx?id=154950&NoteId=154950&ModuleId=3>
- [19] Reddy, P. V. (2022). The role of NEP 2020 in fostering mental and physical well-being in schools. *Indian Journal of Counseling & Psychology*, 17(1), 119–132. <https://ijarsct.co.in/Paper15113.pdf>
- [20] Roy, B. (2023). Well-being among underprivileged students: Sports initiatives after NEP. *Studies in Social Work and Education*, 10(3), 132–140. <https://ijarsct.co.in/Paper15101.pdf>
- [21] Saha, A. (2023). Teachers' perceptions of NEP 2020 reforms in local Kolkata schools. *International Journal of Indian Education Strategy*, 11(2), 110–129. <https://www.ijfmr.com/research-paper.php?id=25336>
- [22] Singh, V. (2024). New approaches in physical activities and sports in schools: A NEP 2020 perspective. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology*. <https://ijarsct.co.in/Paper15113.pdf>
- [23] Sinha, R. (2025). Integrating sports in urban Indian curricula: Challenges and progress post-NEP 2020. *Contemporary Education Dialogues*, 22(3), 190–200. <https://journals.stmjournals.com/rts/article=2025/view=195090/>
- [24] Wikipedia. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Education_Policy_2020
- [25] Yadav, S. (2025). Impact of National Education Policy 2020 on Physical Education and Sports in India. *Research Trends in Sport Sciences*. <https://journals.stmjournals.com/rts/article=2025/view=195090/>