

## New Policy Frameworks and Governance in Education: An Analysis with Reference to India

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### Abstract

Education performs a progressive role in framing overall societal upliftment, establishing holistic growth and enhancing economic prosperity of the nation. The NEP 2020 (National education policy) reflects a systematic changes oriented toward ensuring higher excellence, equal opportunities, policy responsiveness and global level competitiveness in the educational structure of India. Consistent with the targets of NEP 2020, SDG-4 (quality education) focus on student achievement-oriented learning, diverse disciplinary learning approach, digital transformation strategies and equal access to opportunities for all in learning. On the other side even with holistic policy formulation, the learning ecosystem still deal with obstacles for instance, improper execution, scarcity of skilled staff, resource deficit and unbalanced administrative frameworks. These shortcomings restrict the working performance of institutions and constraint advancement towards balanced and well-rounded education.

The study explores regulatory frameworks, educational governance systems and execution strategies that determines the performance of country's education system. It examines how, policymakers, government agencies, transparency and accountability frameworks, governance structure of institutions affect the outcomes of academic quality standards and universal access. The study helps in comprehensive understanding of how country can improve its education environment and step nearer to fulfilling national objectives as well as global learning standards.

**Keywords:** NEP 2020, Education Policy Frameworks, Governance, Quality and Equity in Education, Policy Implementation, SDG-4 (Quality Education).

### Introduction:

Education plays an essential role in moulding the academic atmosphere and a well growth of society. The NEP 2020, rolled out by the government of India have vision on professional growth and broad-based education. In present, Regulatory authorities all over the globe have directed their attention in improving the quality of education through SDG-4 along with other initiatives. Education does far more than setup learners for a brighter future—it shapes their self evolution and helps them understand the globe are closer to them. An effective educational framework promotes the social and economic growth of a country at large, whereas also providing students the professional opportunities they need to get achievements in today's highly dynamic job ecosystem. Through this approach, education turned into a connector of learner's ambitions and the dynamic requirements of the world economic order. (Ministry of Education, 2020).

The education sector and government are two separate groups but both are interrelated and reciprocally dependent. Even so, Government deal with difficulties such as lack of adequate resources and training despite the fact that the policy is good, implementation is quite weak. While various studies review educational programs, interlink government frameworks with realistic implementation. The purpose of study is to analyse the policy frameworks and the operational processes of governance in the education system of the country and investigate how they affect high-standard and fair access in education.

The study highlights sustainability for policy developers and teaching experts and researchers as it presents critical perspectives for boosting policy planning and regulatory frameworks.

### Objective:

The following are the main objectives of this study:

- To evaluate the ongoing policy structures of NEP 2020 and their significance for upgrading the quality of education in India.

- To examine the obstacles encountered by the academic system – mainly lack of resources and ineffective policy enforcement and skill shortcoming -in spite of challenges effective policy blueprint.
- To determine how leaders framework impact fair and inclusive opportunities through academic tiers of the learning systems.
- To present research-backed insights for policy designers and teachers to amplify policy planning, control systems and long term institutional progress.

**Review of literature:**

A literature review provides a critical and comprehensive examination of previous research on a particular topic. It enables the researcher to recognise and formulate the research problem, and to establish the study's objectives and hypotheses. It also supports the broader interpretation of research results and helps in forecasting socio-political trends. The key components of the literature review for the present study are as follows:

- A novel predictive model using data mining for analysing and improving quality in higher education in reference to NEP 2020: As noted by Kansal, Nancy a major development in the Indian context is the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates a shift from an input-based framework to an outcome-driven and competency-focused approach. Existing studies on NEP 2020 underline its emphasis on flexible learning pathways, multidisciplinary education, skill enhancement, and the integration of technology into teaching-learning processes. Research suggests that effective implementation of NEP 2020 requires systematic planning, capability assessment, and the use of advanced analytical tools to assess student readiness, competence levels, and employability prospects.

- Study of the role of leadership governance and management on assessment and accreditation on the development of higher educational institutions: Kadam, Diwakar D shows that higher education institutions play a central role in national development by promoting knowledge, skills, and innovation. Studies highlight that quality assurance, effective governance, and accreditation strengthen institutional performance and societal impact. Overall, higher education is viewed as a key driver of economic growth and social progress.

- Indians Trade in Higher Education Services under GATS a special reference to national education policy 2020: Singh Pardeep Kumar highlights on globalisation and higher education shows that internationalisation, GATS commitments, and policy reforms strongly influence India's education services sector. Studies highlight trends in student mobility, online education growth, and the role of NEP-2020 in strengthening higher education quality and global competitiveness. Overall, research indicates that policy initiatives and market dynamics together shape India's potential as an emerging education hub.

**Concept:**

As per the guidance of department of higher education, MHRD, Government of India, "All over the world, India has one of the extensive education systems" and maintain the prospective strength to develop into worldwide hotspot for education.

One of the primary targets of NEP 2020 is to upgrade the efficiency level of academic structure by using progressive frameworks and research based choice-making. The policy strives to formulate a well-functioning, responsibility-oriented and future-oriented learning ecosystem sufficient to address socio-economic growth as well as global learning system.

India had accomplished substantial efforts in the education system prior to independence and post-independence as well, many committees, planning bodies, commissions and reports were constituted to uplift the educational opportunities. Such as:

**Radhakrishnan commission (1948-49):** which is also known as university education commission was chaired by 2<sup>nd</sup> president of India Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. The commission reformulated the core purpose of higher education and highlighted emphasis on blending ethical, moral and value-based principles into education.

The commission suggested the setting up of rural universities for rural development and introduced the establishment of autonomous body, the university grants commission (UGC), to ensure funding provision to higher education institutions.

Apart from this, it drew attention towards the demand to secure fairness, academic excellence and expanded access.

**Kothari commission (1964-66):** The Kothari Commission (1964–1966), also known as the “Standard Commission,” introduced the 10+2+3 model of education. Its title was “Education and National Development.” The theme of the report focus that “the destiny of the nation is shaped in its classrooms.”

The report highlighted four major themes, namely:

1. Productive Improvement,
2. Social and National unity,
3. Education and Modern Infrastructure, and
4. Spiritual and Ethical Development of Students

The Commission emphasises on many significant areas such as women’s education, cleanliness and hygiene in schools, and presented the Three-Language Formula, which included Hindi, English, and the regional (vernacular) language.

**National policy on education (1986):** On the recommendation of Kothari commission, National education policy was established at the time of Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, To upgrade school infrastructure it developed the idea of “operation blackboard” and for the talented rural students it supported Navodaya Vidyalaya scheme and strengthened teacher training and professional growth. NEP also emphasised on inclusion of science, technology and ethical education as well as early childhood care and adult education. Generally, it created a holistic structure for enhancing the education system and guaranteeing that education promotes to country’s growth.

**Right to education act (2009):** Education as a fundamental right under Article 21-A that ensures free and compulsory education for all 6 to 14 years age group. The act emphasis on equal opportunity, academic standards and barrier-free education through mandated guidelines like 25% reservation in private institutions.

**National education policy (2020):** The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 was introduced by the Kasturirangan Committee, which was formulated in 2017. The Committee ready its draft report in 2019, and the submission policy was finalised and implemented in 2020 as NEP 2020. The main objective of NEP 2020 is to modify India into a world Knowledge Superpower. The policy proposes major changes in school and higher education to attain this target.

NEP 2020 recommends fulfilling a 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) across school education by 2030, conforming universal availability from pre-primary to secondary levels.

For the school structure, the policy represents a new 5 + 3 + 3 + 4 structure, replacing the old 10+2 design. This structure is aligned with the child’s cognitive development stages:

- Foundation Stage: 5 years (3 years preschool + Classes 1–2)
- Preparatory Stage: 3 years (Classes 3–5)
- Middle Stage: 3 years (Classes 6–8)
- Secondary Stage: 4 years (Classes 9–12)

Additionally, the NEP emphasises:

- Comprehensive and multi-domain education
- Ability formation
- Child’s foundational /native language use for teaching-learning till Grade 5
- Openness and various choice based entry and withdrawal systems in higher education
- Formation of NHEQF, NRA, NTA expansion, and HECI for regulatory transformation
- Emphasis on analytical reasoning, creativity, experiential learning

- Strengthening teacher training, digital learning, and research & innovation
- Advancing vocational education from early classes
- Target of 50% GER in higher education by 2035.

A policy framework and governance system for education indicates to the holistic structure, institutions, regulations, and processes through which learning targets are set, implemented, monitored, and improved. It guarantees that education systems work efficiently, impartially.

### 1. Structure of Policy Framework in Education

**(a) Constitutional and Legal Framework:** Education is directed under the Constitution of India, mainly:

- Article 21A – Right to Education (free & compulsory education 6–14 years).
- Directive Principles – promote equity, equality, and social justice.
- Concurrent List (42nd Amendment) – both Centre and States can make laws on education.

### (b) Centre-Level Bodies

1. Ministry of Education (MoE)
  - Main apex body responsible for national policy formulation.
  - Divided into:
    - Department of School Education & Literacy (DSEL)
    - Department of Higher Education (DHE)
2. Autonomous Regulatory Bodies
  - UGC – maintains standards in higher education.
  - AICTE – technical and professional education.
  - NCERT – curriculum development, research, textbooks.
  - NCTE – teacher education and qualification norms.
  - NAAC/NBA – accreditation and quality assurance.
3. Commissions & Committees
  - Kothari Commission, Radhakrishnan Commission, NEP committees etc., provide recommendations.

### (c) State-Level Governance Structure

- State Departments of Education
- SCERTs
- State Boards of School Education
- Directorates for School/College Education

They enforce national policies with state-level transformation.

### (d) Local -Level Governance

- School Management Committees (SMCs)
- Governing bodies of colleges/universities
- Academic Councils, Boards of Studies
- Vice-Chancellor, Principal, Head of Institution

They upholds regular administration, curriculum delivery, examinations, and academic standards.

## 2. Functions of Policy Framework and Governance in Education

### (a) Policy Formulation

- Implementing national educational targets, core objectives, and standards.
- Assuring coordination with social and economic progress needs.
- Example: NEP 2020 targets for comprehensive, vocational training, multi-domain learning.

### (b) Regulation and Standard Setting

- Formulating guidelines for:
  - Educational content and teaching strategies
  - Teacher eligibility criteria

- Infrastructure essentials and facility standards
- Institutional evaluation and approval
- Assure consistency and excellence throughout organisations.
- (c) Planning and Budgeting**
  - Allocation of financial resources for:
    - schools & colleges
    - teacher recruitment
    - training, ICT, infrastructure
    - scholarships and schemes
  - Ensures equitable access and reduces disparities.
- (d) Implementation and Administration**
  - State governments and institutions execute policies.
  - Monitoring teaching-learning processes.
  - Managing examinations, teacher deployment, and institutional functioning.
- (e) Quality Assurance and Monitoring**
  - Internal & external evaluations (like NAAC).
  - Learning outcomes monitoring (e.g., NAS surveys).
  - School inspections and academic audits.
- (f) Accountability and Governance Mechanisms**
  - Clear roles for Nation, State, local.
  - Stakeholder participation (SMCs, academic councils).
  - Transparency through data-driven decision-making (UDISE+, AISHE).
- (g) Promoting Equity and Inclusiveness**
  - Policies for:
    - girl child education
    - marginalised groups (SC/ST/OBC/minorities)
    - children with disabilities
    - remote & rural areas
  - Ensures fair access and bridges social gaps.
- (h) Innovation and Reforms**
  - Integration of technology (DIKSHA, SWAYAM).
  - Positive regulation for EdTech.
  - Encouraging research, autonomy, and flexibility in HEIs.

**Research Methodology:**

The study is based on descriptive and analytical research methods and investigate the various policies frameworks in education sector and their implementation by government which was adopted by secondary studies sourced from various reports and journals. The study used verified and reliable information and employs academic integrity guidelines. No primary sources and statistical data interpretation was covered. This investigation provided deeper insights into policy decisions and implementation through government regarding education. Overall, this study is based on qualitative approach.

**Challenges:**

**Gap between policy formulation and real-time implementation:** In India, constructive improvements were made in the policy formulation like skill development, quality education, ICT knowledge, holistic learning through NEP 2020.

But, several factors that affect during lower-level implementation like Lack of resources, weak monitoring system, unavailability of trained personnel etc.

**Digital gap- NEP 2020:** Digital governance and ICT – enabled teaching and learning is limited in India.

- Lack of internet/network in rural areas

- Lack of academic quality framework in virtual learning
- Teachers are not sufficiently trained in computer.

**Weak coordination between centre and state:** Education in India is a concurrent subject which means policies are being formulated by centre and implementation is done by state government. This dual structure also have some barriers.

- State-wise variations in priorities
- Lack of transparency in data reporting
- Lack of consistency in policy implementation
- Difference in financial capacities.

**Deficiency of financial resources:** In NEP 2020, the target of 6% expenditure in GDP is still incomplete.

- Inadequate funding for teacher training
- Shortage of ICT and digital tools
- Absence of infrastructure in government schools.

#### Suggestions:

1. **Enhancing Policy Execution Systems:** It exists a considerable gap among policy makers and field level implementation. To minimise the gap, effective oversight and review processes needs to be designed at local administrative and institutional tiers. Systematic review, results-based evaluation, and governance frameworks need to be put in place to promote effective execution of NEP 2020.
2. **Boosting Budgetary Allocation in Education:** The Indian government needs to focus on securing the specified goal of 6% of GDP investment in education, as prescribed by NEP 2020. Boosted budget provisions is needed for development of basic amenities, staff appointments, skill enhancement programmes, digital infrastructure, and scholarly activities.
3. **Reducing the Gap in Digital Access:** To tackle the digital inequality, mainly in villages and remote areas, the government is required to increase availability of internet services and facilitate budget friendly devices to learner's and educators. Technology awareness professional development programs must be compulsory for mentors to foster proper adoption of ICT-empowered teaching-learning platforms.
4. **Improving Union-State Cooperation:** As education is a concurrent list, integrated efforts between the intergovernmental structure is significant. Usual centre-state engagement, disclosure based information-sharing system, and adjustable policy adaptations on the basis of local development needs. Monetary help from the union should be necessity-based to minimise inequality across various states with low financial strength.
5. **Encouraging equity and holistic learning:** Targeted attention should be distributed to deprived communities, covering backwards, vulnerable, women, learner with disabilities and from rural areas. Financial assistance, digital connectivity and grassroots learning programs should be empower to promote learning opportunities and maintain from primary to tertiary education.

**Conclusion:** Education act as foundational factor of societal change, financial growth, and country's progress. The proposed paper highlights the country's academic framework has been exposed to systematic shift with the contextual framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which integrates with the collective international pledge of SDG-4 to promote integrative, balanced and effective learning for all. NEP 2020 sets out a holistic and future-oriented strategy that focus on comprehensive learning, integrated learning environment, technological reforms, equality and international integration throughout the education system. On the other hand, the investigation exposes that even after a well-planned guiding principle, the productivity of NEP 2020 is controlled by determined issues for instance inequality between policy formulation and local- level implementation, scarcity of funds, digital gaps,

scarcity of educated and trained workforce, and unbalanced teamwork between centre and state. These foundational and bureaucratic hurdles restrict administrative efficiency and implementation lag in the direction of reaching fair and comprehensive learning performance. The analysis points out that durable rule based mechanisms, open and accountable authority and implementation systems are vital drivers of learning effectiveness and inclusive access. Consolidating governance mechanisms, empowering fund allocations, minimising the digital inequality, and promoting teamwork between centre and state are fundamental to operationalise policy aims into practical results.

In conclusion, securing the progressive goals of SDG-4 and NEP2020 entails not only holistic policy approach but also maintained government support, responsive governance and people centric implementation approaches. By enhancing governance effectiveness, strategically employing ethical use of technology, and facilitating access for all, India can work towards establishing a durable, participatory, and international standard of education that fosters productively to overall country's progress and learning opportunities across the lifespan.

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