



Policy Perspective: NEP 2020, SDGs And Global Framework

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ABSTRACT

This article studies India's National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in the context of global educational commitments, specifically the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and pertinent international frameworks. NEP 2020 represents a comprehensive restructuring of India's educational system, emphasizing enhancements in access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability across all levels of education. To meet the learning needs of the 21st century, this plan includes structural changes like the 5+3+3+4 education model, flexible curricula, inclusive education, teacher development and the use of technology in the classroom. SDG 4 aims to ensure that everyone has access to high-quality, inclusive and equal education and to create opportunities for lifelong learning. These changes are very similar to that goal. They also back bigger global projects like the UNESCO-driven Education 2030 Agenda for Action. The study not only points out important areas where policies need to be better aligned but it also looks at how NEP 2020 could help India reach the SDG goals by 2030, both within the country's own framework and in the line with international goals in education.

Keywords: Policy perspective, NEP 2020, Sustainable Development Goals, Global Framework.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Education is at the heart of economic growth, social equality, global collaboration and human development. The United Nations made the 17 Sustainable Development Goals or SDG, into law in 2015 as part of the year 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. SDG-4, in particular, wants to make sure that everyone has access to quality education and opportunities for lifelong learning. National education policy is one of the main ways that countries make these international commitments their own.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 was launched in 2020 as a historic change that will change India's school system. NEP 2020 promises big changes in education, including how teacher are trained, how students are tested, how schools are run, how technology is used and how everyone has access to it.

This study looks at NEP 2020 from a policy standpoint, contrasting it with SDG goals and international frameworks including the Incheon Declaration, UNESCO's education 2030 plan, and worldwide best practices. The researcher examines systemic implications, implementation difficulties, policy processes, and conceptual alignment.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The objectives of the study are mention below;

- i. To study NEP 2020's vision and major reforms.
- ii. To study in order to assess NEP 2020 in light of SDG 4.
- iii. To determine implementation issues and policy gaps.
- iv. To study how NEP 2020 would improve India's position in the world of education.

III. METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate how well the National Education Policy (2020), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and international educational frameworks match, this study

uses a qualitative, descriptive in nature and analytical research approach with a focus on policy analysis. The study uses secondary data sources and is conceptual in character.

IV. DISCUSSION

National Education Policy 2020: Overview

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, implemented by the Government of India, signifies a transformative change in the nation's educational framework. It seeks to reform the current system, facing the issues of accessibility, equity, quality, accountability, affordability, and relevant in education. The NEP 2020 aims to establish an inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education system that promotes holistic development, analytical thinking, and creativity in learners. It establishes lofty objectives, including the universalization of *Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)*, the assurance of fundamental literacy and numeracy, and the promotion of vocational education and lifetime learning possibilities. NEP 2020 advocates for multiple structural reforms, including the reorganization of school education into a 5+3+3+4 curricular framework (Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary phases), emphasizing a flexible approach to curriculum and pedagogy.

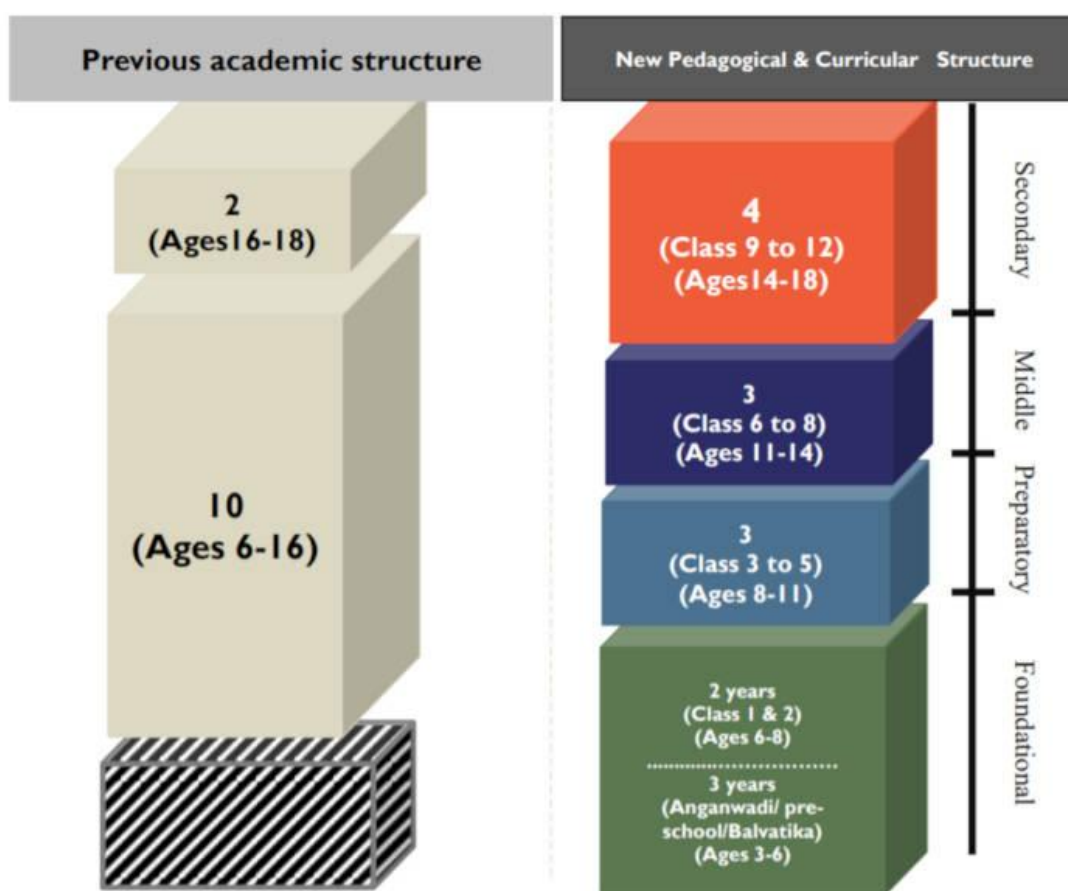


Figure 1. Transition from Previous Academic Structure to New Pedagogical & Curricular Structure¹

¹Panditrao, M. M., & Panditrao, M. M. (2020). National Education Policy 2020: What is in it for a student, a parent, a teacher, or us, as a Higher Education Institution/University?. *Adesh University Journal of Medical Sciences & Research*, 2(2), 70-79.

The policy puts a lot of emphasis on *Fundamental Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)*, which means that every child should be able to read and do arithmetic by the time they reach Grade 3. It puts a lot of emphasis on starting vocational education in secondary school so that students can learn the skills they require work and starting business enterprises of their own. The policy supports a broad, multi-disciplinary and competency-based curriculum that encourages hands-on learning, critical thinking and the ability to solve problems. The NEP 2020 stresses the need for comprehensive training programs, ongoing support, and recognition of outstanding performance to help teachers advanced in their careers. NEP 2020 fairness and inclusion, working to end the

digital divide, eliminate gender, socio-economic and geographic inequalities and make sure that all students have access to high-quality learning.

The strategy encourages higher education institutions to offer a wide range of educational opportunities by having flexible curricula, many ways to get in and out, and a focus on innovation and research. It suggests setting up a *National Research Foundation (NRF)* to help and promote research in all fields while also encouraging a culture of innovation and excellence.

The policy acknowledges the potential for revolution of technology in education as well as promotes its broad adoption to improve educational access, evaluation procedures, and teaching-learning processes. In order to promote the sharing of concepts, innovations, and best practices in educational technology, it suggests establishing a *National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)*. All things considered, NEP 2020 offers a daring and all-encompassing framework for revamping India's educational system, emphasizing innovation, quality, relevance, and inclusivity. If it is implemented well, it might help India's socioeconomic development and unlock whole potential of its youth.

Sustainable Development Goals:

As a component of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all member states of the United Nations accepted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a universal framework in 2015. The SDGs offer a common road map for achieving environmental sustainability, prosperity, and peace by 2030. In an effort to create a more prosperous and sustainable world by 2030, the Sustainable Development targets (SDGs), which are made up of 17 interrelated targets, aim to address a wide range of global issues, such as poverty, inequality, degradation of the environment, and social inequalities.



Figure 2. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015).

'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' is a worldwide development agenda that was accepted by 193 nations, including India, in September 2015. This agenda has three main goals: people, environment and prosperity. The idea of SDGs came up for the first time at the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012. The SDGs are meant to build on the successes of the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) and do things that the MDGs couldn't.

SDG 4 (Quality education) - SDG 4 is highly significant because it talks about how important "Quality Education" is. The goal is to make sure that everyone has access to high-quality, fair and inclusive education and to encourage lifelong learning. SDG 4's goals cover a lot of different areas of education, such as adult education, higher learning, professional growth and early childhood learning. Some of the most important goals are:

TARGET 4.1- Make sure that by 2030, all boys and girls have access to free, equal and high-quality primary and secondary education that leads to useful and relevant learning outcomes.

TARGET 4.2- By 2030, make sure that all boys and girls can get excellent early childhood development, proper care and preschool education, so they are ready for primary school.

TARGET 4.3- By 2030, make sure that all of men and women can get affordable, high-quality technological, vocational and higher learning, including college.

TARGET 4.4- By 2030, a large number of adults and youths should have the technical and vocational skills they need to get jobs, do well in school and start their own business.

TARGET 4.5- By 2030, there should be no more gender gaps in education and all disadvantaged groups, such as children living in dangerous situations, those with disabilities and the indigenous people, should have the same access to all educational and job opportunities.

TARGET 4.6- By 2030, all young people and a large number of adults, both men and women, should be able to read and write.

TARGET 4.7- By 2030, ensure that every student has the knowledge and skills needed to support sustainable development. This includes teaching about human rights, women's equality, sustainable practices and eco-friendly habits. It also involves promoting a culture of non-violence and peace, encouraging global citizenship and valuing cultural diversity and its role in sustainable development.

TARGET 4.8- Build and improve schools that are sensitive to gender, disability and children and that provide safe, welcoming and productive places for everyone to learn.

TARGET 4.9- By 2030, the number of scholarships available to developing countries, especially those that are least developed, developing nations with small islands and African countries, for higher education, including technological, engineering and science-related programs, as well as occupational education and technological advances to information and communication, must be greatly increased around the world.

TARGET 4.A- By 2030, there should be more certified teachers available. One way to do this is to encourage teachers in developing countries, especially small island nations and the least developed countries, to work together to prepare teachers.

NEP 2020 AND HOW IT FITS WITH THE SDGs:

1. SDG 4: quality education

SDG 4 aims to guarantee accessible, equitable, and high-quality education and lifelong education for everyone. The goals include universal access to basic and secondary education, better vocational skills, education in global citizenship and lifelong learning. NEP 2020 supports these goals in several ways:

- i) **Universal Access and Equity:** The NEP emphasizes the need for free education for everyone aged 3 to 18. It also supports inclusivity for marginalized communities, following the goals of SDG 4.1 and 4.5.
- ii) **Inclusive Education:** The NEP 2020 recognizes the need for inclusive education for children with special needs and disabilities. This aligns with the goal of SDG 4, which is to provide all students with access to inclusive education.
- iii) **Early Childhood Education:** The incorporation of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) within the formal system aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4.2.
- iv) **Quality Education:** SDG 4's objective of guaranteeing high-quality education is in line with NEP 2020's emphasis on improving educational quality through curriculum changes, teacher preparation, and pedagogical innovations.
- v) **Vocational Education:** The policy's incorporation of practical skills training and vocational education aligns with SDG 4's objective of providing students with employable skills and sustainable lives.
- vi) **Relevance and Lifelong Learning:** Enhancing vocational education from secondary school and advocating for adult education as well as skill development advances SDG targets pertaining to skills for employment and lifelong learning.
- vii) **Holistic Development:** The NEP 2020 prioritizes comprehensive development, encompassing mental, emotional, and physical well-being, which corresponds with the objective of SDG 4 to cultivate well-rounded persons.
- viii) **Global Citizenship and Sustainability:** The NEP underscores value-centric education, global capabilities, and cultural and environmental awareness, aligning with SDG 4.7 on educational opportunities for sustainable development.

2. Beyond SDG 4: synergies with global education frameworks

By laying out plans for financing, policy implementation, and monitoring at the national and international levels, the education 2030 structure for action—adopted by UNESCO and its partners—operationalizes SDG 4. NEP 2020's emphasis on digital infrastructure, support for teacher platforms, and adaptable, competency-based learning reflects calls for global education system reforms that address relevance, quality, and inclusivity.

NEP- 2020's IMPLICATIONS FOR SDG's: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 profoundly impacts the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 4: Quality Education, along with other associated objectives.

1. SDG-4 (Quality Education):

The goals of SDG 4, which seeks to guarantee inclusive and high-quality education for everyone, are in line with NEP 2020's focus on fundamental reading and numerical skills, a holistic education, and competency-based education. NEP 2020 helps meet SDG 4 targets, which include raising educational equal access and increasing learning outcomes, by emphasizing basic skills and encouraging creative pedagogies.

2. SDG-5 (Gender Equality):

NEP 2020 acknowledges the significance of equality between genders in education and suggests actions to address gender-based inequities. NEP 2020 helps meet SDG 5 targets, which include guaranteeing equal opportunity in education and eradicating gender-based discrimination, by advancing equal access to education, closing gender gaps in enrolment and retention, and empower girls via education.

3. SDG-10 (Reduce Inequality):

In order to eradicate inequalities based on socioeconomic position, geography, or other variables, NEP 2020 places a high priority on equity and inclusion. NEP 2020 helps meet SDG 10 targets, like lowering inequality within and across nations, by ensuring that all students, particularly those from disadvantaged and marginalized groups, have fair access to high-quality education.

Critical Analysis: Strengths and Limitations

• **Strengths:**

i. Comprehensive and integrated vision

NEP 2020 is comprehensive, integrating ethics, values, and skills across traditional academic lines to support SDG goals.

ii. Emphasis on early childhood education

India has not historically placed a high priority on Early Childhood Care and Education; NEP's focus is in line with SDG-4 aims on preprimary education.

iii. Teacher professionalism and capacity building

NEP addresses SDG goal 4.c on skilled educators by advocating for improvements in teacher training and ongoing professional development.

• **Limitations:**

i. Resource constraints and implementation capacity

It's possible that there aren't enough financial and logistical resources to implement complete changes throughout India's many regions.

ii. Equity gaps in practice

Disparities continue because of socioeconomic differences, language marginalization, and unequal infrastructure, especially in the face of official discourse on inclusion.

iii. Measurement and accountability

At the local and district levels, NEP 2020 does not explicitly provide robust procedures for tracking SDG alignment.

iv. The goal of putting 6% of GDP into education wasn't met.

Discussion and Future Directions: The new NEP 2020 strategy makes India's strategic goals for education clear and gives a strong foundation for reaching the SDG goals. To make sure that policy goals match up with real-life situations, however, more work needs to be done on funding, governance, capacity building and accountability. India's educational changes will work if they are put into action in a flexible, open and way. India's work supports the world reach SDG-4 from an international point of view. The success of India has a huge effect on the progress of the world because of its scope and the effects it has on development.

V. CONCLUSION

The National Education Policy 2020 gives India a plan for how to improve its schools. It is in with SDG 4 and other frameworks, like the Framework for Educational 2030 for Action. By putting a lot of emphasis on early childhood education, superior learning outcomes, inclusiveness and lifelong learning paths, the strategy helps global education goals. But to make this promise come true, there needs to be ongoing political will, enough money and coordinated efforts from the government, the commercial sector and international partners.

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