



ROLE OF NEP 2020 IN PROMOTING HOLISTIC AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

DIKSHA AGARWAL ¹

¹ **PROF. RAJENDRA SINGH (RAJJU BHAIYA) UNIVERSITY, PRAYAGRAJ, 211009.**

ABSTRACT:

The National Education Policy stands as a crucial roadmap for shaping educational reforms and progress in the nation. It introduced a paradigm shift in the Indian education system, emphasizing an integrated approach to learning. This paper aims to explore the role of NEP 2020 in transforming school education by shifting from rote memorisation towards a more experiential, inclusive, and integrated model of learning.

Multidisciplinary education is an approach to learning that integrates multiple subjects to offer a comprehensive and well-rounded educational experience. On the other hand, Holistic education focuses on the development of an individual as a whole body, mind, and spirit. It recognizes that each student is unique and aims to foster an environment where all aspects of a child's growth are nurtured.

The study concludes that NEP 2020 is a significant step toward nurturing multifaceted individuals who possess critical 21st-century skills. It investigates policy implementation at the school level, focusing on key components such as the 5+3+3+4 structure, vocational education, and experiential learning. The results indicate a positive shift towards flexible, integrated learning systems, though challenges in implementation and infrastructure remain. The paper concludes with recommendations for strengthening multidisciplinary frameworks to achieve the policy's vision effectively.

KEYWORDS:

NEP 2020, HOLISTIC AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION, SCHOOL EDUCATION.

PAPER ACCEPTED DATE:

30th June 2025

PAPER PUBLISHED DATE:

2nd July 2025

INTRODUCTION

The education system plays a pivotal role in shaping the character, skills, and future of learners. For decades, Indian school education was largely focused on rote learning and subject-specific barriers. Recognizing the need for reform, the Government of India introduced the National Education Policy 2020 with the vision of transforming the country into a knowledge-based society. The inclusion of holistic and multidisciplinary education is a significant step towards creating a comprehensive education system in India.

A multidisciplinary approach to education will enhance an understanding of how different fields are interconnected by utilizing multiple perspectives from different disciplines in a single curriculum. Rather than studying subjects in isolation, students are encouraged to draw connections between disciplines to understand all-around aspects of a topic.

Holistic education is an approach that aims to develop every aspect of a learner, i.e. intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative, moral, and spiritual, rather than focusing only on academic performance. It seeks to nurture well-rounded, responsible, and empathetic

individuals who can contribute meaningfully to society.

At the school level, this policy aims to develop well-rounded individuals by promoting interdisciplinary learning and experiential learning to prepare students for the complex challenges of the 21st century. The promotion of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, along with the foundational stages of schooling to meet the demands of a dynamic society.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study employs a qualitative and descriptive research design, primarily using:

- Secondary data from government documents, research papers, reports, and the NEP 2020 official document.
- Literature review of scholarly articles, educational reports, and commentaries.
- An interpretive approach to assess how the policy intends to implement holistic and multidisciplinary education at the school level.

RESULTS:

The findings from the analysis reveal the following:

- **New Curricular Structure:** NEP 2020's 5+3+3+4 framework redefines the school education system into four progressive stages—foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary, replacing the previous 10+2 system. This new framework aims for a more holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary approach to learning, aligning with global education trends. Preparing students for a diverse and interconnected, broad-based learning.
- **Curricular Integration:** NEP 2020 promotes curriculum integration by emphasizing holistic learning, experiential education, and the integration of vocational and foundational subjects, aiming to reduce rote learning and foster critical thinking and 21st-century skills. This involves connecting different areas of study, making learning more relevant to real-life situations, and encouraging students to explore various vocational options. Integration of arts, sports, vocational education, and life skills into mainstream curricula, enabling students to explore multiple disciplines.
- **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy:** Early childhood care and education (ECCE) and foundational learning are emphasized to ensure holistic cognitive development, aiming for its achievement by 2025. It encompasses reading, writing, and basic arithmetic, which is essential for students to succeed in higher education and beyond.
- **Flexible Subject Choices:** The policy allows students to choose subjects based on interest rather than rigid streams (science, arts, commerce), promoting a multidisciplinary framework. Students will have the freedom to create their own subject combinations based on their interests and career goals, fostering a multidisciplinary approach. This flexibility aims to encourage holistic development and prepare students for a wider range of future opportunities.
- **Experiential Learning:** Pedagogical changes encourage hands-on learning, project-based assessment, activity-based, inquiry-based learning, and field visits supporting real-world connections. This approach encourages students to actively engage in learning experiences, fostering deeper understanding and the ability to apply concepts in various situations.
- **Emphasis on Local Context and Culture:** Schools incorporating local culture, heritage, and art forms have been observed to foster a more relevant and engaging learning experience for students. Introduction of mother tongue/local language as the medium of instruction till Grade 5 is being

encouraged. Schools are to identify local needs and contexts to be included in the syllabus and textbooks, incorporating local art, music, dance, crafts, and traditional knowledge systems into the curriculum.

- **Vocational Education:** By 2025, the aim is to integrate vocational training within regular school curricula, ensuring that at least half of all students gain exposure. Mandates the inclusion of at least one vocational subject from Grade 6 onwards, such as carpentry, coding, gardening, etc., and a 10-day internship with local vocational experts. Vocational training will be made available in digital mode as well.
- **Assessment Reforms:** Comprehensive student assessment in colleges will address cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions. Self-evaluation, peer assessment, assessment for learning, and 360° multidimensional assessment are focused. PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) its primary functions that include setting norms, standards, and guidelines for student assessment, conducting large-scale assessments, and promoting equivalence among different school boards.

DISCUSSION:

NEP 2020 offers a visionary roadmap to redefine school education by making it more student-centric, flexible, integrated, and inclusive. The policy's holistic and multidisciplinary orientation prepares learners for academic success, personal growth, and active citizenship. However, the realization of this vision requires systemic reforms, adequate funding, diversity in the Indian Education system, digital literacy, infrastructural adequacy, Public-private partnerships, rigorous teacher training, and strong monitoring mechanisms. Only then can the aspirations of NEP 2020 translate into tangible, long-lasting educational transformation. Despite these challenges, the policy sets a strong foundation for a student-centric learning model. Success depends on collaborative efforts between central and state governments, educators, and the community. Pilot implementation and feedback loops should be done before full-scale roll-out. With committed implementation and inclusive participation from stakeholders, its goals of holistic and multidisciplinary education can be fully realized.

CONCLUSION:

The National Education Policy 2020 has laid a visionary framework for reshaping school education in India by emphasizing the need for holistic and multidisciplinary learning. Its efforts to integrate cognitive and non-cognitive domains of development aim to create individuals who are not only academically competent but also ethically grounded and socially aware.

The shift toward multidisciplinary education is gradually transforming the learning environment, allowing students to think beyond narrow academic streams. Flexible subject choices and skill-based education are preparing learners for real-world challenges. Holistic education is further enhanced through the inclusion of physical, emotional, and cultural learning components, which are vital for developing well-rounded personalities.

To achieve its intended impact, NEP 2020 should be put into practice right from the early years of schooling. Addressing infrastructural gaps, enhancing teacher capacities, and reforming assessment methods are essential steps for realizing the policy's goals. The participation of all stakeholders—government bodies, school leaders, teachers, parents, and students—is crucial in this transition.

Overall, NEP 2020 holds great promise in transforming school education into a more inclusive, balanced, and future-ready system. If implemented with dedication and accountability, it can significantly contribute to the development of responsible, skilled, and lifelong learners. Future research may focus on longitudinal studies evaluating learning outcomes in NEP-aligned schools.

REFERENCES

1. Ministry of Education. (2020). National Education Policy 2020. Government of India. Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in>
2. Yadav, S. (2020, August 11). *NEP 2020: Towards a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education*. Academics4Nation. Retrieved from <https://www.academics4nation.org/post/nep-2020-towards-a-holistic-and-multidisciplinary-approach-to-education>
3. Bashir, L. & Wani, G. (2024). Multidisciplinary and Holistic Education: Achieving Academic Excellence and Bolstering All-Round Development in the 21st Century with NEP- 2020. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(1), 172-177. DIP:18.01.017.20241201, DOI:10.25215/1201.017
4. NCERT. (2021). *Understanding the New Education Policy 2020: A Handbook*. New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training.
5. Kumar, R., & Gupta, S. (2021). NEP 2020 and School Education Reforms in India. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 12(3), 45–52.
6. NCERT. (2021). *Foundational literacy and numeracy: Mission and framework*. National Council of Educational Research and Training. https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/FLN/Mission_FLP.pdf
7. Nandeshwar, P. D. (2023, March 25). Inclusion of holistic and multidisciplinary education in National Education Policy. [View](#)