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Volume: 4

Issue: 2

Month: May

Year: 2025

ISSN: 2583-7117

Published: 28.05.2025

Citation:

Dr. Sunil Sharma<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Babita Sharma “NEP 2020 to NEP 2025: A Review of Policy Shifts and Structural Reforms”  
International Journal of Innovations in Science Engineering and Management, vol. 4, no. 2, 2025, pp. 196–201.

DOI:

10.69968/ijsem.2025v4i2196-201



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# NEP 2020 to NEP 2025: A Review of Policy Shifts and Structural Reforms

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## Abstract

The Indian educational system has undergone substantial changes as a result of "the National Education Policy (NEP)", which aims to improve pedagogy, encourage holistic learning, and increase curricular flexibility. In this article, we will examine the diverse literature review on the primary distinctions among "NEP 2020 and NEP 2025". This review highlights the progression from NEP 2020 to NEP 2025, showcasing a transformative shift in India's education system. While NEP 2020 introduced interdisciplinary learning and vocational training, NEP 2025 builds on this by emphasizing inclusivity, accessibility, and quality education through innovative teaching, technology, and support for marginalized groups. The policy prioritizes outcome-based learning, digital empowerment, gender equity, and rural outreach. NEP 2025 aims to bridge systemic gaps and foster emotional, ethical, and academic growth. Its success will rely on collaboration among stakeholders to ensure a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready education system for the 21st century.

**Keywords;** National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, NEP 2025, Indian education system, Education Sector, Holistic Education, Skill-Based Learning.

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout the course of numerous socio-political and cultural transformations, the Indian education system has developed a complex history. One of the first organised educational systems in India was the Gurukul system, which was primarily religious and comprehensive in nature. The primary objective of this system was to prioritise "the oral transmission of knowledge" and the holistic development of the individual [1]. However, the Indian educational system saw a dramatic change with the arrival of British colonial power. The implementation of Western education, which was lead by individuals such as Lord Macaulay, redirected the emphasis to a curriculum that prioritised European knowledge and utilised English as the primary medium of instruction [2], [3]. The contemporary Indian educational system was established as a result of this change, which brought with it both new possibilities and difficulties, such as the marginalisation of traditional knowledge systems. In order to better serve its citizens, the Indian government realised after independence that the education system needed to be reformed and nationalised [4]. This resulted in the formation of a variety of education policies, beginning with "the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1968". The NPE prioritised the development of regional languages and a unified educational framework (Ministry of Education, 1968). The ensuing NPE of 1986 sought to address the persistent issue of unequal access to education and furthered the objective of universal education [5].

## The National Education Policy (NEP)

In order to direct and change India's educational system, the government of India created "the National Education Policy (NEP)". With an emphasis on curriculum creation, pedagogy, teacher preparation, assessment methods, and technological integration, the policy lays forth the overall goals for the nation's educational system [6].

The most recent stage of the changing education policy will be NEP 2025, after NEP 2020 and NEP 1986, which brought about a number of fundamental adjustments. Through its emphasis on more contemporary aspects of digital education, skill development, inclusive growth, and personalised learning, NEP 2025 seeks to push the envelope even farther [7], [8].

### *Historical Context and Evolution of NEP*

- **NEP 1986 and NEP 2020:** Under NEP 1986, India's educational system had its first reform with the goals of promoting national cohesion, quality, and universal education. NEP 2020 was subsequently implemented, which encompassed significant structural reforms. These reforms included the establishment of "a National Curriculum Framework" to standardise teaching and learning, the transition to a 5+3+3+4 school structure, and the promotion of multidisciplinary education [9].
- **Need for Reforms in the Education Sector:** Despite the notable advancements achieved by NEP 2020, a more thorough and progressive strategy was still required. Due to the rapid advancement of technology, globalisation, and the evolving requirements of the workforce, India's educational system necessitated reforms to more effectively equip students for the future [10].
- **The Shift toward NEP 2025:** The goal of NEP 2025 is to further these changes. It will prioritise the modernisation of curricula, the introduction of new learning delivery models, and the personalisation of learning, with online education serving as a critical area of expansion.

### *Education Policy of 2020 (NEP 2020)*

A major change to India's educational system is represented by "the National Education Policy 2020". This strategy was developed to handle the difficulties of a world that is constantly changing and to meet the demands of the twenty-first century after an almost three-decade lapse. NEP 2020 aims to change the Indian educational system so that students may grow holistically, critically, and creatively [11].

### *National Education Policy (NEP) 2025*

India is on the brink of a significant educational system transformation, a nation renowned for its rich cultural heritage, diversity, and history. India's youth and educational changes will be shaped by "the National

Education Policy (NEP)". A comprehensive strategy to enhance quality, accessibility, and inclusion in education at all levels is promised by NEP 2025, which is scheduled to follow the changes of NEP 2020 [12]. The goal is to create a system of education that prepares students for the problems of the future by promoting multifaceted, adaptable, and holistic learning. The following are NEP 2025's salient features:

- **Emphasis on Holistic Education:** NEP 2025's emphasis on holistic education is one of its main principles. The goal is for kids to achieve academic success while simultaneously developing critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and other life skills. It is anticipated that by developing well-rounded personalities, this will assist pupils in navigating a world that is always changing.
- **Multilingualism and Mother Tongue-Based Learning:** Particularly in early education, the NEP 2025 firmly supports the use of mother language as the medium of teaching. While guaranteeing that students may get an education in their mother tongue, it encourages multilingualism, which contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage.
- **Integrating Technology in Education:** The significance of technology-driven learning is emphasised in the policy. Education will become more accessible, individualised, and interesting with the advent of "digital learning platforms, e-learning, and AI-powered educational technologies".
- **A Shift Toward Skill-Based Learning:** By promoting "vocational education and skill development" at all educational levels, NEP 2025 seeks to guarantee that students get both academic knowledge and skills that are relevant to the market.

**Table 2 Comparison of NEP 2020 and Proposed NEP 2025 Key Features**

Feature	NEP 2020	NEP2025
Holistic Education Framework	Focus on broad-based curricular areas and competency-based education.	Emphasis on interdisciplinary learning and integration of vocational skills.
Assessment Methods	Shift towards formative assessments and periodic board examinations	Introduction of continuous, competency-based assessments with minimal reliance on rote learning.

Teacher Training	Mandatory teacher training programs and professional development.	Enhanced focus on minimum qualifications and ongoing support systems for teachers.
Curriculum Design	Curriculum aimed at enhancing creativity and critical thinking.	Curriculum to be flexible, modular, and continuously updated with technological advancements.
Digital Integration	Increased use of technology in education with a push for digital literacy.	Seamless integration of digital tools and resources in all aspects of education.

**Table 1 Comparative Analysis of NEP 2020 and Proposed NEP 2025**

Aspect	NEP 2020	NEP 2025
Focus Areas	Holistic education, skill development, vocational training, and teacher training reforms.	Increased emphasis on digital learning, mental health, and emotional well-being.
Curriculum Changes	Introduction of multidisciplinary approach and integration of vocational courses.	Expansion of interdisciplinary studies and introduction of global citizenship education
Assessment Methods	Shift from rote learning to holistic assessments, including formative assessments.	Continuous and comprehensive assessment with a focus on critical thinking and problem-solving.
Implementation Timeline	Rollout starting from 2021 with phased implementation.	Proposed revisions and enhancements to be implemented by 2025.
Stakeholder Involvement	Engagement of parents, teachers, and local communities in decision-making.	Greater involvement of educational technology experts and mental health professionals.

*The vision of NEP 2025 revolves around the following core objectives*

- **Ensuring Holistic Development:** The goal of NEP 2025 is to provide a well-rounded education that equips students with the emotional, social, and ethical skills in addition to academic knowledge.
- **Promoting Quality Education:** The goal of NEP 2025 is to provide the best possible education, emphasising learning outcomes above just finishing the curriculum.

- **Equity and Inclusiveness:** With a particular focus on marginalised and vulnerable communities, the policy will endeavour to ensure that students from all circumstances are treated equally.
- **Skill Development and Employability:** NEP 2025 seeks to increase the relevance of education to students' real-world demands by emphasising skills training and vocational education.
- **Transforming Teaching Pedagogy:** Teachers will get training on how to use creative teaching techniques to provide students with an education that is interesting, relevant, and focused on them.

#### *Inclusive Education and Equity in NEP 2025*

- **Education for Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups:** The goal of NEP 2025 is to guarantee that all students, irrespective of their background, have access to high-quality education by emphasising inclusive education. There will be special programs for underprivileged populations, including pupils with disabilities, religious minorities, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes.
- **Gender Sensitivity and Empowerment through Education:** In an effort to narrow the gender gap in enrolment and learning results, the policy also encourages gender sensitivity in education. NEP 2025's emphasis on female empowerment guarantees that women and girls are inspired to engage in education at all stages, from elementary school to university.
- **Special Focus on Rural and Remote Areas:** In rural and isolated places, where access to resources, infrastructure, and qualified instructors is still few, NEP 2025 seeks to increase educational access and quality. Remote teaching approaches, community-driven learning programs, and mobile classrooms will all be advantageous in these areas.
- **Bridging the Digital Divide:** Bridging the digital gap is a key component of NEP 2025. The objective of universal education cannot be achieved until digital learning resources are made available to children in underprivileged and rural areas.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

(Ashokkumar et al., 2025) [13] With the goal of changing the educational landscape of the nation, "the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020)" represents a critical turning point in India's educational system. NEP 2020 is thoroughly examined in this evaluation, which also looks at how it aligns with international educational trends,

emphasises competency-based progression, and may have an effect on teacher preparation, student learning outcomes, and educational infrastructure. The potential of the strategy to "advance fairness, quality, and innovation in Indian education"—thereby resolving long-standing issues and equipping students for the needs of the twenty-first century—makes it scientifically significant.

(Angadi, 2025) [14] NEP 2020 includes programs that prioritise early childhood education, integrate vocational education into normal schools, promote multilingualism, use technology for learning, and create "a National Research Foundation to support and promote educational research". The plan aims to create a more adaptable and student-centered educational system, enhance teacher preparation, and expand the use of online and blended learning. Among the challenges that the NEP 2020 implementation will encounter are the need for large investments in education, a lack of "infrastructure and resources, a teacher shortage", the challenge of providing high-quality education in rural and remote areas, and the necessity of effective stakeholder collaboration.

(Bhriguvanshi, 2025) [15] The education system in India is to be transformed by "the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020", a comprehensive document. This study examines the value of sports and physical education in light of NEP 2020. It talks about how integrating sports and physical development into the classroom helps kids' social, mental, and physical growth.

(Crasto et al., 2025) [16] The study uses a mixed-approaches strategy, integrating quantitative information from surveys of educators at various educational levels with qualitative examination of policy papers. This study's primary goal is to determine the degree to which "curriculum development and pedagogy in educational institutions" have been impacted by NEP 2020. The researchers employed non-probability convenience sampling and a descriptive research approach to carry out this study. NEP has laid the groundwork for an education system that is more skill-oriented and inclusive. To close gaps in policy implementation, however, legislators, educators, and institutions must work together if it is to succeed in the long run. This research offers recommendations for optimising "curriculum development and pedagogical strategies under the NEP", as well as insights into the changing educational landscape.

(Vasumathi & Kumar, 2025) [17] As education moves away from old techniques and towards more complete, holistic, and futuristic approaches, the article looks at how NEP has

affected this change. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the extent to which NEP's advocacy for a multidisciplinary curriculum can foster emotional intelligence and analytical proficiency, thereby equipping individuals to address the challenges of the twenty-first century. Results: In order for India to become a worldwide knowledge giant, it is stressed that implementing NEP would need teamwork. NEP serves as the beacon of light in this era of shifting educational trends, pointing us in the direction of a time when education will enable both individual and social development. The existing educational system is being transformed into one that is innovation-driven and promotes lifelong learning, as this study also illustrates how NEP helps "integrate technology into teaching and learning processes".

(Yadala, 2025) [18] In place of the previous 1986 policy, "the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020" signifies a significant transformation in India's educational environment. In order to create a more inclusive, adaptable, and holistic system, it proposes extensive changes in both higher education and schools. The main NEP 2020 changes are critically examined in this essay, along with their ramifications for different stakeholders, future prospects, and implementation issues. The analysis emphasises the policy's forward-thinking goals as well as the real-world obstacles that might affect its effectiveness.

(Pandey & Pathak, 2024) [19] The NEP-2020 has been remade as the foundation for this transformation, which has the potential to contribute to the improvement of economic and social indices and the development of "a new educational system in the country". 300 faculty members from various higher education institutions willingly engaged in this study, which attempts to identify the variables that may be deemed crucial in the effective and quick implementation of NEP 2020. Through the use of PCA, it was discovered that, of the 25 sub-factors that could influence how well NEP 2020 is implemented in higher education, sub-factors like good instruction, outdoor seating within the building, equitable hiring and promotion, and a safe compensation plan in the event of a loss all significantly affect how NEP 2020 is implemented. Since they are prepared for changes and problems in regulatory frameworks, educational institutions play a crucial role in the implementation of NEP-2020.

(Verma & Kumar, 2021) [20] In this situation of unforeseen circumstances, education plays a crucial and pivotal role. As a result, "the National Education Policy 2020" has been redesigned as the foundation for this reform, which might



boost those social and economic indicators while also assisting in the development of a new educational system in the nation. That still needs improvement. Through independent colleges and multifunctional universities, NEP 2020 offers high-quality higher education. To increase the policy's significance, we have analysed it critically in this study and suggested modifications to guarantee a smooth transition with both its predecessor and its successor. The present paper analyses the university level needs for "NEP 2020 provisions and management practices". National and HEI (Higher Education Institution) NEP design and implementation recommendations are provided.

### RESEARCH GAP

Though several studies on the National Education program (NEP) 2020 have been conducted, few thorough analyses of the program's development towards NEP 2025—especially in terms of pragmatic implementation, policy changes, and structural reforms—have been found. Most of the current research concentrates on the first vision of NEP 2020 without assessing the quantifiable results or the developing difficulties throughout its implementation. Moreover, knowledge on how these changes have affected many educational players, including institutions, teachers, and students, is lacking. This assessment critically examines policy efficacy, structural changes, and consistency with the original aims, therefore addressing the need for a comprehensive analysis covering the trajectory from NEP 2020 to NEP 2025.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- In this article study the comparison between NEP 2020 and Proposed NEP 2025 in terms of key features, and various aspects.
- In this article review the objectives and vision of National Education Policy 2025 (NEP 2025).
- Study the inclusive education and equity in NEP 2025.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A review was conducted as part of the present research to thoroughly examine the both NEP 2020 and NEP 2025 key feature, vision, policy, and structure. Also review the various literature on NEP 2020 and NEP 2025. In this review paper secondary data collected from various web site like Edulnnate, Mukhya Mantri Mahila Samman and various journal such as "Research Gate, Heliyon, Education Sciences, Empirical Economics Letters, International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, and International Journal of Innovations in Science, Engineering, and

Management (IJISEM)". In this article study covered a period of 2020 to 2025.

### CONCLUSION

There are significant ramifications for India's educational system when "the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020" and its expected successor, NEP 2025, are thoroughly examined. According to key findings, NEP 2025 intends to greatly expand these reforms by expanding access to high-quality education and improving student engagement through creative teaching methodologies. NEP 2020 established the foundation for holistic learning by "prioritising interdisciplinary education and vocational training". In conclusion, this review of policy shifts and structural reforms from NEP 2020 to NEP 2025 highlights the transformative vision guiding India's education system. NEP 2020 laid a strong foundation by introducing interdisciplinary learning, vocational training, and a learner-centric approach. Building on this, NEP 2025 seeks to enhance inclusivity, accessibility, and quality through innovative methodologies, technology integration, and targeted support for marginalized groups. It emphasizes outcome-based learning, skill development, gender equity, and digital empowerment—especially in rural and underserved areas. The transition reflects a strategic progression from policy vision to actionable reform, addressing long-standing gaps while promoting a future-ready education model. However, the successful implementation of NEP 2025 will depend on the coordinated efforts of government bodies, educators, institutions, and communities. By bridging the digital divide, fostering emotional and ethical development, and ensuring equitable access, NEP 2025 aspires to create a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive education system for the 21st century.

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