

# Pre-Service Teachers' views on the National Education Policy 2020

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## ABSTRACT

*The National Education Policy (NEP) is a policy formulated by the Government of India to promote and regulate education in India. The new policy replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986. The policy is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29 July 2020. It outlines the vision of India's new education system. This study was done on the Pre-Service teachers of the Somaiya Vidyavihar University to understand their views on the new policy and take into account the suggestions provided by them. The participants of the study were 60 students of KJ Somaiya college of Education. The findings of the paper reveal that the pre-service teachers opine that the policy would bring some major educational transformation, but it requires careful implementation of the same considering the varied socio-economic and political diversity of the country. The results show the need to have elaborate discussions on the NEP so as to raise awareness among the teachers of the different changes and reforms the policy is talking about.*

**Keywords:** Education, National Education Policy 2020, changing knowledge landscape, critical and creative thinking, concurrent subject.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most fundamental aspect for achieving full potential of the society, develop an equitable and just society and promote development of the nation. With the rapid changes undergoing in the knowledge landscape of the world with various scientific and technological advances as well as artificial intelligence, many unskilled jobs worldwide have the threat of being taken over by machines. Therefore the need for a skilled workforce including the conjunction of natural as well as social sciences will be increasingly in demand.

With this quickly changing landscape it is now becoming utmost important that children not only learn, but more importantly learn how to learn. The education sector therefore, must move forward from content based knowledge acquisition to critical and creative thinking that will lead to problem solving. The National Education Policy 2020 which was approved by the union cabinet of India on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 visualized to provide quality education by incorporating the present as well as the upcoming future needs of the society and the global world. The policy is a broad guideline and advisory in nature. Education being a concurrent subject, the states has the autonomy to decide on the implementation of the same.

### Rationale of the study

The new National Education Policy (NEP) is the first holistic reform that aims to completely change education of all levels across India – the first of its kind since the Constitution of India was created more than seven decades ago. The NEP can be seen as a continuing of the ideals and principles listed out in the Constitution, as the NEP itself claims to build an equitable, inclusive and plural society as envisaged in the Constitution.

The National Education Policy 2020 replaces the previous policy of Education that was passed in 1986. India has had many policies on Education since Independence. Based On the key themes of Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of Education in India, the Kothari commission was set up in the year 1964-1966 to formulate a comprehensive education policy for India. One of the most important features of the Kothari Commission was to develop languages (Hindi, Sanskrit, regional languages and three-language formula). The three language formula according to the National Curriculum framework states the use of three language in Indian Education. They are:



First Language - Mother Tongue or regional language;

Second Language – Modern Indian languages or English (Hindi speaking states), Hindi or English (Non-Hindi speaking state).

Third language – English or a modern Indian language (Hindi speaking states), English or a modern Indian language.

Based on the suggestions and recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964-66), the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced the first National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1968. The National Policy on Education, aimed to achieve national integration and socio-economic and cultural development.

Followed by this policy, Rajiv Gandhi in the year 1986 introduced a National Policy on Education which lay special emphasis on equal opportunities for all across scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women. This policy was modified in 1992 by P.V Narasimha Rao government.

Recently, in the year 2019 the MHRD (Ministry of Human Resource Development) released a draft after multiple approval from public consultations. On July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the cabinet approved a National Education Policy envisaging progressive changes to the existing system of Education in India. This new policy discusses lesser content in terms of curriculum and increase in essential learning by creative and critical thinking leading to holistic, experiential, analysis and discourse based teaching-learning.

The rationale of the study on the National Education Policy 2020 is:

- To understand the views of the pre-service teachers on the policies of the newly accepted education system
- To predict the effectiveness of the policies once implemented
- To understand the standpoint of one of the most important stakeholders of this policy that is, teachers.

### **Statement of Problem**

Pre-Service Teachers' Views on the National Education Policy 2020

### **Objective of the study**

To study the pre-Service Teachers' Views on the National Education Policy 2020

### **Research Question**

In pursuit of the descriptive analysis of the criterion variables, the following research questions were asked to pre-service teachers.

**RQ1:** Would NEP bring in some major transformation in the education system of India?

**RQ2:** Are the following recommendations in the policy beneficial?

- a) 5+3+3+4 structure
- b) Multidisciplinary Education & Multiple exit points
- c) Use of Mother tongue

**RQ3:** Is the implementation of NEP an utopian idea in a diverse country like India?

### **Operational definition:**

**Pre-service teacher education:** Pre-service teacher education is the education and training undertaken by aspiring teachers also known as student teachers before they start teaching as their profession. The degree given to pre-service teachers is known as Bachelors of Education (B.Ed.)

### **Methodology**

An online survey was conducted over Google Form. Response of each participant was collected using linked survey and responses were automatically generated and recorded. The survey was circulated among the pre-service teachers of the B. Ed Department of KJ Somaiya college of Education, Vidyavihar, Mumbai. A close ended questionnaire consisting of 25 questions were framed concerning the basic changes, recommendations and possible implementations of the new education policy.

### **Sample frame and collection of data**

In the present study, the researcher made use of *convenience sampling*, to select the sample for the study. A total of 60 responses were collected from the pre-service teachers with the help of an online questionnaire made on the New Education Policy, 2020. The purpose of this study was to spread awareness and understand the impact of the implementation of NEP, 2020 on the new-age Indian education system. A survey questionnaire was administered

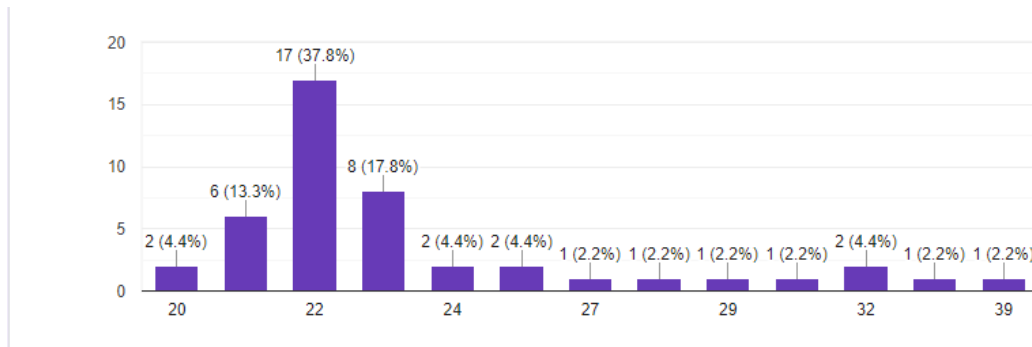
uniformly on a sample of **60 participants** from KJ Somaiya college of Education.

**Tool**

A web-based survey design was adopted. The survey was developed using the free software ‘Google Forms’.

**Participant**

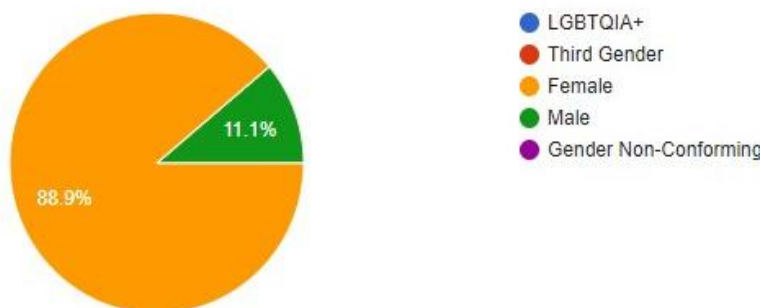
**Age**



The highest percentages of respondents are from the age group of 22 years.

The questionnaire was circulated among the students of the B.Ed department of KJ Somaiya college of Education which has majority students of that age group. Hence, the respondents are majorly from this age group.

**Gender**



89% of the sample is Female whereas only 11% are Male and none are from the Third gender or LGBTQIA+ community. This reflects the scenario that the teaching profession is still chosen and preferred more by female candidates than male. A further in-depth study can be taken up on the possible causes for the same. The courses are yet to be all-gender inclusive.

**Answer to research questions**

**RQ1:** NEP - major transformation in the education system of India:

More than 50% of the sample is opined that the National Education policy would bring about some major educational transformation in the landscape of Indian education system making a shift from rote learning to experiential and analytical, skill based learning.

**RQ2:** Are the following recommendations in the policy beneficial?

- a) 5+3+3+4 structure: 53.3% respondents have partial knowledge about the 5+3+3+4 structure of education and have to read more on it.
- b) Multidisciplinary Education: 93.3% respondents believe that the students should be given the flexibility to choose from a wide range of subjects across all disciplines and thereby achieve the goal of multidisciplinary education in India. But 7% think that it will result in distraction for the students.

**RQ3: Implementation of the policy:**

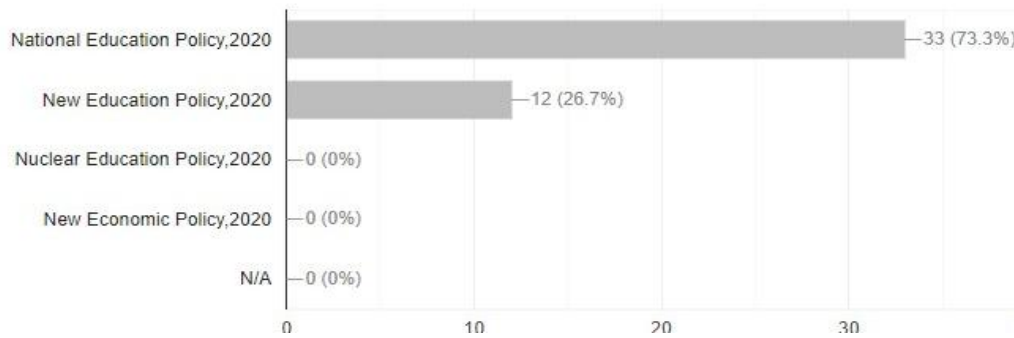
30% of the sample think that the implementation of the National education policy is a far fledged dream to be made a reality in a country like India considering its varied diversity in all aspects – social, economic, political.

60% of the sample are hoping for its implementation for the potential of the major educational changes it can bring in the country.

A mere 2% of the respondents do not want the policy to be implemented.

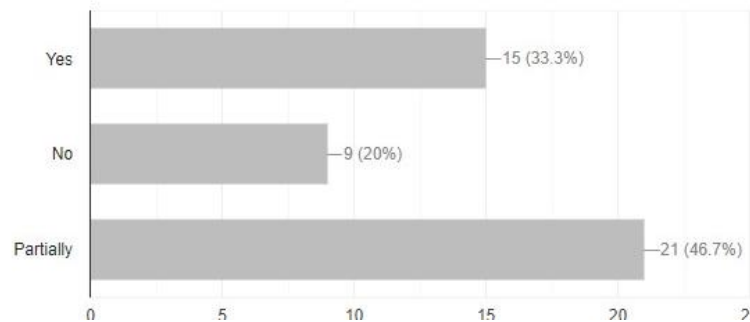
**Findings & Analysis**

**What does NEP, 2020 stand for**



73% of the respondents answered the full form correctly as the *National Education Policy* and 26% thought it's known as the *New Education Policy*.

**First Education Policy was passed in 1968 followed by 1986 and revised in 1992. Were you previously aware of this information?**



33% of the respondents were aware of the previous education policies of India passed in 1968 followed by 1986 whereas 20% are completely unaware and 46% know about it partially.

The data shows that less than half the sample size is aware of the education policies of India which is a matter of concern because the sample frame are the pre-service teachers and the national education policies form the fundamental basis of the education system. Thereby it is vital that teachers and other stakeholders of this policy is well aware of its changes and implementation.

**First Education Policy was passed in 1968 followed by 1986 and revised in 1992. Were you previously aware of this information?**

The first National policy on Education was passed under the Indira Gandhi government in the 1968 drawing majorly from the Kothari Commission (1964-66). It was then revised and another policy of Education was announced by Rajiv Gandhi in the year 1986 which was revised in 1992. The National Education Policy was approved by and came to be accepted after a long gap of 34 years after 1986. The NEP 2020 replaces the National policy of Education 1986.

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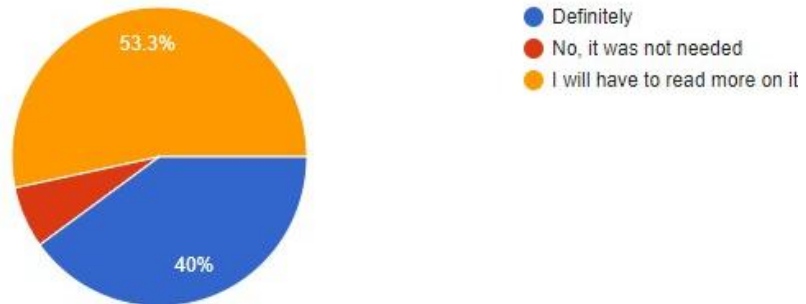
The data shows that less than half the sample size is aware of the major education policies of India which is a matter of concern because the sample frame are the pre-service teachers and therefore more information and discussion should be given on the policies as it is one of the most important basis for the education system in India.

**NEP, 2020 – A major transformation in the Education system of India**

More than half the sample is of the opinion that the policy would bring about some major educational transformation in the Indian education system making a shift from rote learning to experiential learning. This implies that one of the important stakeholders of Education, that is the teachers, is looking forward to the transformations that would be seen in the field of education once the policy is implemented.

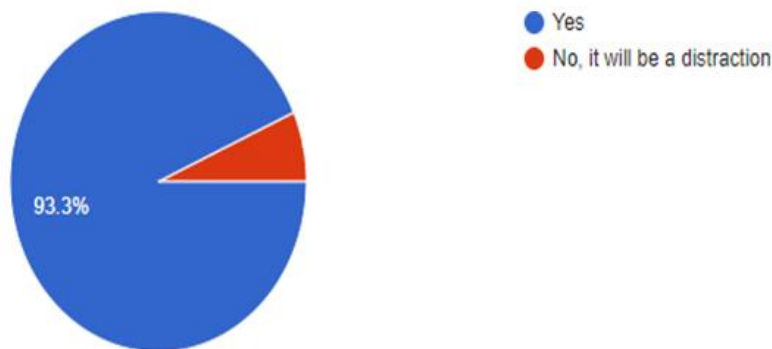
Although challenging but the change in education system is long due and awaited by one and all. More than half the sample is of the opinion that the policy would bring some major educational transformation which means that one of the important stakeholders of Education, that is the teachers, are looking forward to the transformations that would be seen in the field of education once the policy is implemented.

**5+3+3+4 structure includes children of ages 3 to 6 years in formal education - going to be more seamless, inclusive and create a strong foundation?**



53.3% respondents have partial knowledge about the 5+3+3+4 structure of education and have to read more on it. The new 5+3+3+4 School Structure will comprise 12 years of school & 3 years of pre-school (or Anganwadi or Balvatika) and half the respondents agree that it is going to be all-inclusive, seamless and help in building a strong foundation since preschool.

**The flexibility to choose subjects from Science & Humanities with the ability to also learn fine arts & sports will facilitate holistic learning. Do you agree?**

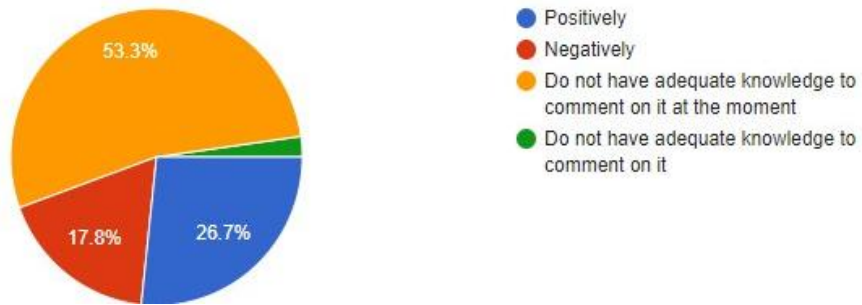


93.3% respondents believe that the students should be given the flexibility to choose from a wide range of subjects across all disciplines and thereby achieve the goal of multidisciplinary education in India. But 7% think that it will result in distraction for the students. Respondents are also of the opinion that even technical institutes like NITs and IITs must have papers on Social Science and Humanities students should have the liberty to study commerce and paper on natural science.

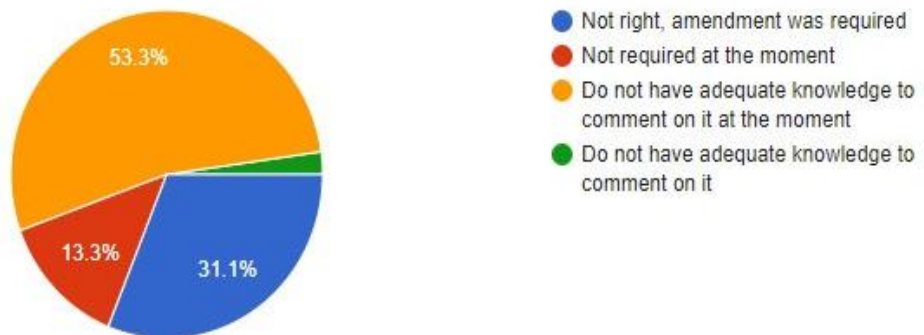
**National Education Policy on M Phil and PhD**







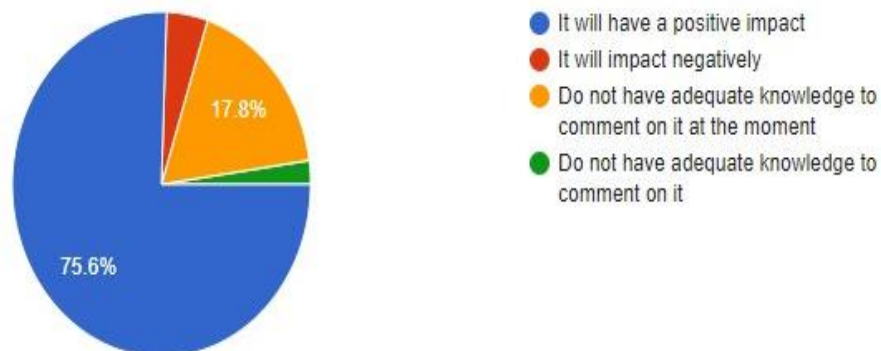
### M Phil & Ph D



53.3% respondents think that the scrapping of M Phil in higher education will positively impact a candidate wishing to pursue research. This could be because of the reduction in two years for completing one's research degree and thereby saving time as well as finances for the candidate because after the implementation students can pursue PhD after Master's or directly after a 4 years Undergraduate programme.

30% of the respondents feel that certain amendments were required even at the apex level of education and research as this area is mostly untouched by the new national education policy wherein they do not mention a lot of recommendations for the on-going PhD curriculum in India.

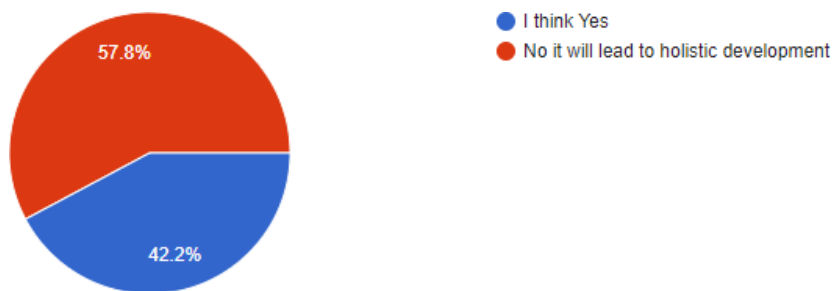
### 4 year Integrated B Ed programme



Around 75% students think that having an integrated B.Ed will have a positive impact in teacher's education as it will be integrated with the graduate programmes so instead of 3+2 = 5 years, candidates will be able to complete their graduation as well as acquire the teachers' training degree in 4 years which saves time as well as equip them for sooner job prospects.

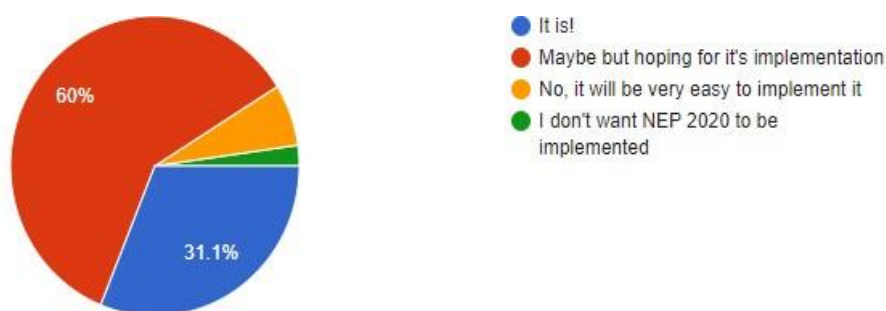
Around 20% of pre-service teachers' said they do not have adequate knowledge on this topic.

### NEP = "Jack of all trades, Master of None"?



40 out of 60 participants feel that the NEP 2020 once implemented will lead to the holistic development of the students of all standards across rural and urban India. 20 participants think that it might make the pupil the jack of all trade and master of none.

#### Is the implementation of NEP an utopian idea in a diverse country like India?



India is a country that is highly stratified on caste and class divisions wherein a major stratum of the society resides in the rural areas. Like the data in the above question shows that 30% of the sample think that the NEP's implementation is an utopian idea, that is a far fledged dream to be made a reality in a country like India considering it's varied diversity in all aspects – social, economic, political.

60% of the sample is hoping for its implementation for the potential of the major educational changes in can bring in the country.

A mere 2% of the respondents do not want the policy to be implemented.

#### SUGGESTION

The National Education Policy 2020 focuses on the importance of teacher educators as they are the facilitators who truly shape the future of the nation. The successful implementation of the policy requires the participation of teacher educators at all its stages. Therefore, it is vital to take into consideration the views and recommendations of teachers. The views and suggestions of the teachers play an integral role of the implementation of the policy. This hereby underlines the crucial role of teachers in providing the skills and holistic development to children.

- Comprehensiveness is key in implementing in NEP as the policies are inter-connected and holistic. Only a full-fledged implementation will ensure desired results.
- It is vital to implement and execute the policies in a phased manner as each policy has several steps, each of which requires the previous step to be implemented successfully.
- Prioritization is important in ensuring optimal sequencing of the policies so that the most critical and urgent actions are taken up first, thereby enabling a strong base.
- Implementation of the intent and spirit of the Policy will be the most critical matter of concern.
- Like mentioned above, since education is a concurrent subject, it will need careful planning, joint monitoring, and collaborative implementation between the Centre and States.

#### CONCLUSION

The National Education Policy 2020 proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st



century education, while building upon India's traditions and value systems. It is thereby, important to implement the policy initiatives in a phased manner, as each policy point has several steps, each of which requires the previous step to be implemented successfully.

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