

Investigating the Attitudes of Teachers and Students of Higher Education towards New Education Policy and its Implementation in Bhavnagar District

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Abstract: *The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, introduced by the Government of India, marks a significant shift in the country's educational landscape, aiming to make the system more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned with the needs of the 21st century, and rooted in Indian values. This study investigates the attitudes of teachers and students in higher education institutions in the Bhavnagar district towards the NEP and its ongoing implementation. The primary objective is to examine their awareness, perceptions, and readiness to adapt to the transformative changes proposed under the NEP framework. A descriptive research design was adopted, using a structured questionnaire distributed among a convenience sample of total 180 higher education teachers (N=90) and students (N=90) across government, grant-in-aid, and self-financed institutions in the district. Findings indicated a generally positive attitude among both students and teachers towards the objectives and vision of the NEP. However, concerns were raised about infrastructural readiness, faculty training, curriculum restructuring, and clarity in implementation strategies. Teachers expressed apprehension about the additional workload and ambiguity in guidelines, while students were optimistic about increased flexibility and skill development opportunities.*

Keywords: New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Higher Education, Teacher & Student Attitudes, Policy Implementation

I. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in the development of individuals and the overall progress of a nation. It is not only a means for acquiring knowledge and skills but also a powerful tool for socio-economic mobility, empowerment, and national growth. Recognizing the evolving global landscape and the changing needs of the 21st century, the Government of India introduced the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a comprehensive framework to reform and revitalize the Indian education system. After more than three decades, NEP 2020 replaces the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 and aims to transform both school and higher education with a strong emphasis on flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, creativity, critical thinking, and foundational literacy and numeracy.

NEP 2020 envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society. At the higher education level, the policy focuses on reducing fragmentation, enhancing institutional autonomy, improving quality and governance, fostering a culture of research, and increasing access, equity, and inclusion. One of the major proposals of NEP 2020 is the restructuring of higher education into a more flexible and interdisciplinary model through a holistic and multidisciplinary approach. This includes the introduction of a four-year undergraduate program with multiple entry and exit options, Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), and National Research Foundation (NRF). The policy also



aims to ensure the integration of vocational education, use of mother tongue or regional languages as a medium of instruction, and the encouragement of online and digital education to increase access and reach.

The successful implementation of the NEP 2020 at the grassroots level largely depends on the understanding, attitudes, and preparedness of two critical stakeholders: teachers and students. Teachers are the key agents of change, responsible for interpreting policy goals into practice through pedagogy, curriculum design, assessment, and mentorship. Students, on the other hand, are the ultimate beneficiaries of the policy and their receptiveness, motivation, and participation are essential for the policy's success. Understanding how these two groups perceive the changes introduced by NEP is vital for policymakers, institutional leaders, and educational planners.

Bhavnagar district, located in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat, is home to a diverse array of higher education institutions including government colleges, grant-in-aid institutions, private universities, and self-financed colleges. The district, while urbanizing rapidly, still retains significant rural and semi-urban pockets where education faces unique challenges such as limited infrastructure, digital divide, faculty shortages, and language barriers. Investigating the attitudes of teachers and students in this region provides critical insights into how NEP 2020 is being received in areas beyond metropolitan centers and highlights region-specific facilitators and obstacles to policy implementation.

This study emerges from the urgent need to assess the level of awareness, attitude, and readiness of higher education stakeholders in Bhavnagar towards the NEP. While there is a general consensus on the visionary aspects of the policy, actual ground-level implementation is contingent upon various factors such as institutional readiness, faculty development programs, curriculum changes, funding, governance structures, and student engagement strategies. Teachers may feel overwhelmed or uncertain about new expectations, particularly regarding multidisciplinary teaching, digital learning platforms, and student-centric pedagogy. Students may have concerns regarding the transition from the current system, employability, examination reforms, and the overall shift in learning dynamics.

Previous research on educational reforms indicates that successful implementation depends not only on top-down policy directives but also on bottom-up acceptance and active participation. Studies conducted in other regions of India have found mixed reactions to NEP 2020, with positive appreciation of the policy's goals but also anxiety about unclear implementation frameworks and limited support structures. Hence, it becomes essential to contextualize these findings within specific local environments such as Bhavnagar to develop tailor-made strategies that address both opportunities and challenges faced by institutions, faculty, and learners.

This investigation also aligns with the broader national goal of achieving a Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 50% in higher education by 2035, a target emphasized in NEP 2020. To achieve this ambitious aim, a coordinated effort involving teachers and students is necessary. Teachers must be equipped with adequate training, orientation, and resources to adapt to NEP's demands, while students must be provided with guidance, flexibility, and clarity regarding the new academic structure and learning pathways.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gupta, M. B. (2022). Post Implementation Impact of NEP-2020 on Teacher's Motivation in Higher Education Institutions in India. Gupta examined how the rollout of NEP 2020 has influenced teacher motivation across Indian HEIs, using a mix of quantitative and qualitative data. The study finds that while policy reforms around autonomy and pedagogical innovation have enhanced motivation for some faculty, others face challenges—mainly uncertainty in guidelines, added workload without support, and inadequate institutional resources. The paper recommends targeted capacity-building, supportive infrastructure, and clearer communication lines from policymakers to sustain motivation.

Sanmathi, M. S., & Shekhar, B. (2024). Perspectives of Teaching Faculty Towards the Implementation of NEP 2020 in Karnataka. This opinion survey of Karnataka college teachers—among the first states to operationalize HE-level NEP—reveals generally positive attitudes toward multidisciplinary curricula and employability enhancements. Yet many educators expressed concerns about preparedness, with limited exposure to interdisciplinary pedagogy or professional development. Faculty members highlighted the need for structured orientation programs and institutional planning to facilitate the transition.

Hariramani, S., & Narang, K. (2022), evaluating Educators' Perspectives on NEP 2020. Surveying 200 educators in Ahmedabad (covering both school and higher education), this study employs sentiment and factor analysis via SPSS.



Educators showed a positive readiness toward NEP 2020, recognizing its potential benefits, including use of technology and holistic education. However, issues emerged around professional development needs, administrative support, and digital infrastructure. The study recommends enhancing awareness campaigns and teacher training to enable meaningful adoption. **Patel, D. R., Shah, K., & Acharya, V. (2024).** Awareness and Perception of NEP 2020: A Study of Students and Educators of Gujarat. This cross-sectional study ($n \approx 100$ teachers and students) in Gujarat assessed awareness via MCQs and perceptions via Likert-scale questions. Results show that awareness levels vary significantly by gender and educational qualification. Senior teachers (with >15 years' experience) and those with postgraduate degrees had higher awareness and more favorable perceptions. Students and teachers with lower qualifications or less experience showed limited understanding of specific NEP provisions like ABC or multiple exit options.

Chandvekar, S. D., Parkhe, S. R., & Bhosale, K. D. (2023). Quantitative Analysis on Awareness About NEP 2020 in First-Year Students.

Focusing on first-year undergraduates across India, this study used Google Forms and statistical tests (percentage, Mann-Whitney U, association analyses). Awareness was found low: many students lacked familiarity with NEP objectives and structural reforms. Engagement levels varied by discipline and educational context. Based on findings, the authors call for systemic awareness-building strategies at the undergraduate level to facilitate policy uptake. **Sudhagar, D. P., & Binu, M. B. T. D. (2022).** Understanding Stakeholders' Perception and Awareness of India's NEP 2020. With over 1,510 respondents, this exploratory study analyzed how demographic factors—gender, occupation, qualification, experience—correlate with awareness and perception of NEP 2020. Chi-square tests show significant associations: men, educators, and higher qualification groups are more aware. Overall perceptions were positive, but awareness remained only moderate. Emphasis is placed on designing demographic-sensitive training and communication strategies to improve policy literacy.

Abraham, M. S., Pai, D. K. V., & Preetha, R. (2022). Perception of Teachers towards NEP 2020. Based on data from college teachers in southern Kerala, this descriptive study investigates agreement or disagreement toward NEP features—research focus, regional language use, workload issues, training, and the introduction of NPST. While teachers endorsed the policy's vision, concerns were frequent around increased administrative responsibilities, lack of clarity on language transition, and uneven infrastructure. Suggestions included regular workshops, policy orientation, and workload rationalization. **Heena, R., Roshan, K., Singh, C., & Vikram, S. (2022).** NEP-2020 Awareness among Teachers: Knowledge, Perceptions and Challenges. Surveying Dehradun-based educators, this paper finds that while $\sim 68\%$ had basic policy knowledge, around 52% were unaware of NEP's implications for higher education. Only 20% felt confident in understanding its frameworks like ABC or MOOCs. Gaps in technology awareness and limited access to NEP-related schemes were prominent. The authors recommend regular seminars and targeted dissemination of NEP components via institutional channels.

Panicker, P. (2020). Exploring Cultural Challenges to Implementing Educational Technology in Higher Education in India. Although not NEP-specific, this study explores how cultural dimensions like power distance and uncertainty avoidance affect ed-tech adoption across Indian HEIs.

The findings highlight that faculty apprehensions, hierarchical institutional cultures, and resistance to uncertainty may hinder NEP's tech-based initiatives (e.g., MOOCs, ICT use). Understanding these cultural dynamics is critical for NEP-aligned digital integration. **Indian Times of India (2024),** Students in Gujarat Lack Basic Awareness of NEP. Based on a 456-student survey across multiple Gujarat universities, this report reveals that $\sim 43\%$ of students could not expand "NEP," $\sim 77\%$ had not attended any NEP-related events or programmes, and awareness of key policy aspects (e.g., flexible curriculum, vocational integration, ABC) ranged between $\sim 35\text{--}47\%$. The study highlights a systemic awareness gap among Gujarat's student community, underscoring the need for institutional outreach and student engagement initiatives.

III. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to investigate the attitudes of teachers and students in higher education institutions in the Bhavnagar district towards the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020



and its implementation. The research is primarily based on quantitative data collection, supplemented by qualitative insights to offer a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder perspectives. The target population for the study includes faculty members and students from various higher education institutions in Bhavnagar, including government colleges, grant-in-aid institutions, and self-financed colleges affiliated with recognized universities. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across institutional types, gender, age groups, academic streams (arts, science, commerce, professional), and urban-rural backgrounds. The sample size consists of total 180 and 90 teachers and 90 students selected various colleges across the district.

To collect data, a structured questionnaire was designed separately for teachers and students. Both questionnaires included closed-ended statements measured on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”), covering themes such as awareness of NEP 2020, perception of proposed reforms (e.g., multiple entry-exit, academic bank of credits, vocational integration), readiness for change, perceived challenges, and institutional support. Additionally, a few open-ended questions were included to capture qualitative feedback on perceived opportunities and barriers to NEP implementation.

IV. EMPIRICAL STUDY

Frequency Distribution:

Gender				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	52	28.9	28.9	28.9
Female	128	71.1	71.1	100.0
Total	180	100.0	100.0	
Age				
18 to 25 Years	141	78.3	78.3	78.3
26 to 40 Years	28	15.6	15.6	93.9
40 Years and Above	11	6.1	6.1	100.0
Total	180	100.0	100.0	
Occupation				
Student	90	50.0	50.0	50.0
Teachers	90	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	180	100.0	100.0	
Type of Institution				
Government	69	38.3	38.3	38.3
Grant-in-Aid	21	11.7	11.7	50.0
Self - Financed	90	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	180	100.0	100.0	
Stream				
Arts	138	76.7	76.7	76.7
Commerce	34	18.9	18.9	95.6
Professional / Technical	6	3.3	3.3	98.9
Science	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total	180	100.0	100.0	



Gender: The sample is female-dominated, with more than two-thirds (71.1%) of the respondents being female. Males constitute 28.9% of the respondents. This may indicate that the topic of study (possibly related to education or digital learning) has attracted more participation from females, which could reflect their higher engagement or representation in the chosen sample groups (e.g., certain institutions or educational streams).

Age: The majority of respondents (78.3%) are in the 18–25 age group, indicating a predominantly young population, likely comprising college students or early-career individuals. A smaller proportion (15.6%) is aged 26–40, possibly representing young professionals or early-career teachers. Only 6.1% are above 40 years, suggesting minimal representation of senior educators or mature learners.

Occupation: The sample has been evenly split between students and teachers, allowing for a balanced comparison of perspectives between learners and educators. This parity supports comparative analysis and ensures both stakeholder views are equally represented in the study.

Type of Institution: Half of the respondents are from Self-Financed institutions (50%), indicating significant representation from privately managed educational setups. Government institutions account for 38.3%, while Grant-in-Aid institutions are the least represented (11.7%). This suggests that the private/self-financed education sector plays a major role in the region covered by the study.

Stream: The majority of respondents belong to the Arts stream (76.7%), suggesting that the findings may be most relevant to humanities and social science fields. Commerce students account for 18.9%, while Professional/Technical (3.3%) and Science (1.1%) streams are underrepresented. This concentration in Arts may influence the overall preferences, attitudes, and needs observed in the study especially if the study focuses on language learning or policy perceptions.

Awareness towards NEP:

I am aware of the key objectives of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.			I have increased my awareness by attending seminars/workshops/conferences/orientations related to NEP 2020.		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	61	33.9	Strongly Agree	63	35
Agree	93	51.7	Agree	80	44.4
Neutral	19	10.6	Neutral	22	12.2
Disagree	7	3.9	Disagree	13	7.2
Total	180	100	Strongly Disagree	2	1.1
I understand the concept of multiple entry and exit options in higher education.			Total	180	100
	Frequency	Percent	I understand how NEP aims to integrate vocational education into higher education.		
Strongly Agree	61	33.9		Frequency	Percent
Agree	86	47.8	Strongly Agree	61	33.9
Neutral	23	12.8	Agree	79	43.9
Disagree	7	3.9	Neutral	29	16.1
Strongly Disagree	3	1.7	Disagree	9	5
Total	180	100	Strongly Disagree	2	1.1
I am familiar with the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) system.			Total	180	100
	Frequency	Percent			
Strongly Agree	57	31.7			
Agree	83	46.1			



Neutral	25	13.9
Disagree	10	5.6
Strongly Disagree	5	2.8
Total	180	100

Awareness of NEP 2020 Objectives: A majority of respondents (85.6%) either agree or strongly agree that they are aware of the key objectives of NEP 2020. This reflects high general awareness about the policy among participants. Very few (3.9%) disagree, indicating that lack of awareness is not a significant issue in this group.

Awareness Increased Through Participation (Seminars/Workshops): 79.4% of the respondents credit their awareness of NEP 2020 to seminars, workshops, orientations, or conferences. This indicates that institutional and academic initiatives have been successful in spreading awareness. However, a small portion (8.3%) did not benefit from such activities, suggesting a gap in outreach or accessibility.

Understanding of Multiple Entry and Exit Options: A combined 81.7% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they understand the multiple entry and exit options, a key reform under NEP 2020. This indicates a strong grasp of policy flexibility, particularly among students and faculty involved in academic progression. Neutral and negative responses (18.3%) indicate that some respondents still require clarity or better explanation of this concept.

Understanding of Vocational Education Integration: 77.8% of respondents understand that vocational education is being integrated into higher education under NEP 2020. This reflects growing acceptance of skill-based education reforms. Yet, about 22.2% are either unsure or unaware, highlighting the need for better dissemination or curriculum-level integration.

Familiarity with the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC): About 77.8% (Agree + Strongly Agree) of respondents are familiar with the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) system. This shows that a significant portion of the sample understands the modular and credit-based structure NEP proposes. However, around 22.3% remain unfamiliar or uncertain, suggesting that this technical concept may require deeper institutional explanation or training.

Perception towards NEP:

NEP 2020 will improve the quality of higher education in India.			The policy promotes holistic and multidisciplinary learning.		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	53	29.4	Strongly Agree	51	28.3
Agree	86	47.8	Agree	92	51.1
Neutral	35	19.4	Neutral	31	17.2
Disagree	4	2.2	Disagree	6	3.3
Strongly Disagree	2	1.1	Total	180	100
Total	180	100	Using regional languages as a medium of instruction is a progressive step.		
NEP's emphasis on skill development is beneficial for students' employability.				Frequency	Percent
	Frequency	Percent	Strongly Agree	47	26.1
Strongly Agree	61	33.9	Agree	87	48.3
Agree	89	49.4	Neutral	33	18.3
Neutral	25	13.9	Disagree	10	5.6
Disagree	3	1.7	Strongly Disagree	3	1.7
Strongly Disagree	2	1.1	Total	180	100
Total	180	100			



The focus on digital learning and technology integration is appropriate and timely.		
	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	75	41.7
Agree	83	46.1
Neutral	15	8.3
Disagree	6	3.3
Strongly Disagree	1	0.6
Total	180	100

NEP 2020 will improve the quality of higher education in India: A large majority (77.2%) of the respondents believe that NEP 2020 will lead to better quality in higher education. Only 3.3% disagree, while 19.4% remain neutral, possibly due to limited exposure to its practical outcomes so far. This indicates a generally positive perception of NEP's potential in reforming education standards.

The policy promotes holistic and multidisciplinary learning: Around 79.4% (Agree + Strongly Agree) of respondents believe that NEP promotes holistic and multidisciplinary education. This reflects support for NEP's intention to break down academic silos and encourage a broad-based education system. A minority (3.3%) disagrees, and 17.2% remain neutral—possibly due to unfamiliarity with the detailed curriculum integration across disciplines.

NEP's emphasis on skill development is beneficial for students' employability: An overwhelming 83.3% of respondents agree that NEP's focus on skill-based education will improve student employability. This signals widespread acceptance of NEP's industry-relevant and practical education orientation. Neutral and disagreeing responses (16.7%) may reflect uncertainty about how effectively this emphasis is being implemented on the ground.

Using regional languages as a medium of instruction is a progressive step: 74.4% of respondents support the use of regional languages in education, acknowledging it as a progressive and inclusive approach. However, 18.3% are neutral, possibly due to concerns about global competitiveness, technical vocabulary, or transition challenges. A small proportion (7.3%) opposes the move, potentially reflecting fears about dilution of English proficiency or employability in global markets.

The focus on digital learning and technology integration is appropriate and timely: A combined 87.8% of the respondents feel that NEP's emphasis on digital learning and ed-tech integration is timely and necessary. This reflects widespread recognition of technology's role post-COVID-19, and increasing reliance on digital platforms for education delivery. Only 3.9% express disagreement, indicating minimal resistance to digital transformation in education.

Readiness and Implementations of NEP:

My institution is ready to implement the proposed changes under NEP 2020.			Teachers are being adequately trained to handle NEP-related reforms.		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	46	25.6	Strongly Agree	43	23.9
Agree	84	46.7	Agree	87	48.3
Neutral	33	18.3	Neutral	30	16.7
Disagree	14	7.8	Disagree	14	7.8
Strongly Disagree	3	1.7	Strongly Disagree	6	3.3
Total	180	100	Total	180	100
Students are receiving proper guidance about changes under NEP 2020.			There is sufficient infrastructure (labs, digital platforms, staff) to implement NEP.		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent



Strongly Agree	45	25	Strongly Agree	41	22.8
Agree	79	43.9	Agree	64	35.6
Neutral	32	17.8	Neutral	33	18.3
Disagree	18	10	Disagree	23	12.8
Strongly Disagree	6	3.3	Strongly Disagree	19	10.6
Total	180	100	Total	180	100
I feel confident in adapting to the changes proposed by NEP 2020.					
	Frequency	Percent			
Strongly Agree	55	30.6			
Agree	87	48.3			
Neutral	24	13.3			
Disagree	9	5			
Strongly Disagree	5	2.8			
Total	180	100			

Institutional Readiness to Implement NEP 2020: A significant 72.3% of respondents believe their institution is ready to implement NEP 2020. This reflects institutional awareness and willingness to adopt policy changes. However, the 18.3% neutral and 9.5% negative responses suggest that some gaps in communication, clarity, or preparation may exist at certain institutions.

Teachers are being adequately trained to handle NEP-related reforms: 72.2% of respondents agree that teachers are being adequately trained for NEP implementation. This is a positive sign, indicating that faculty development efforts are being recognized. The 10.1% disagreeing may represent uneven training opportunities or perceived insufficiencies in ongoing professional development programs.

Students are receiving proper guidance about changes under NEP 2020: A majority (68.9%) agree that students are being guided properly regarding NEP changes. This suggests that institutions are attempting to ensure student awareness and preparedness. However, 13.3% negative responses and 17.8% neutral indicate a need for more consistent and clear communication, especially regarding practical implementation and expectations.

Infrastructure is sufficient (labs, digital platforms, staff) to implement NEP: Only 58.4% agree that infrastructure is sufficient, which is significantly lower than agreement on training and readiness. A notable 23.4% of respondents express disagreement, indicating shortcomings in digital infrastructure, labs, or staff. This is a critical area of concern that could affect the actual implementation of NEP reforms and digital learning goals.

Confidence in Adapting to NEP 2020: A strong 78.9% of respondents feel confident in adapting to the changes introduced by NEP 2020. This demonstrates positive mindset and readiness for transformation among stakeholders (students and faculty). The relatively low 7.8% disagreement reflects individual challenges or institutional barriers that may affect some respondents' ability to adapt.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicated a generally positive perception and a moderate to high level of readiness among stakeholders such as students and teachers regarding the implementation of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in higher education institutions. A significant majority of respondents expressed awareness of the key objectives and reforms introduced under NEP, particularly in areas such as holistic learning, skill development, digital integration, and the flexibility offered through multiple entry-exit options and the Academic Bank of Credits. Institutional readiness and teacher training efforts are viewed favorably, suggesting that many colleges are taking proactive steps to align with NEP mandates. However, challenges remain in areas such as infrastructure development and consistent student



guidance, where a portion of respondents expressed uncertainty or dissatisfaction. While the confidence in adapting to NEP is high among individuals, the uneven distribution of resources and training across institutions may hinder uniform implementation. Therefore, to ensure the successful execution of NEP 2020, policymakers and educational institutions must address infrastructure gaps, expand awareness campaigns, and ensure equitable access to training and digital tools for all stakeholders.

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