

Original Article

Comprehensive Analysis of the Education System in India: Before and After New Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

The education system in India has seen a substantial transformation with the introduction of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This policy replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986, and brings a new vision for the Indian educational landscape. This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the education system before NEP 2020 and the systemic reforms introduced by the policy. It examines structural frameworks, curriculum design, pedagogy, assessment strategies, teacher education, higher education reforms, and vocational training initiatives. Additionally, the study integrates a robust list of academic and policy-based references to support its findings.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Indian Education System, Curriculum Reform, Pedagogy, Vocational Training, Higher Education, Policy Analysis

Introduction

India's education system has long been a topic of national and international interest due to its scale and diversity [1,2,3,4]. The education system before NEP 2020 was largely governed by the National Policy on Education 1986 and its subsequent modifications [5,6,7]. While it succeeded in increasing literacy rates and educational outreach, it faced criticism for rigidity, exam-centric methods, and lack of skill development. NEP 2020 aims to address these concerns with a holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary approach aligned with 21st-century needs [9,10,11,12].

Education System Before NEP 2020

The 10+2+3 system, focused on rote learning, lacked early childhood education, vocational training, and holistic development. Teacher training was inconsistent, and assessment methods emphasized marks over skills. Higher education lacked multidisciplinary institutions and academic flexibility [13,14,15]. The regulatory system was fragmented with multiple bodies overseeing education [16].

Education System After NEP 2020

The NEP 2020 introduced a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure, integrating ECCE and ensuring continuity in learning. The curriculum now emphasizes conceptual understanding, multilingualism, and vocational integration. Board exams are being restructured to reduce stress. Higher education reforms include multiple entry-exit options, academic bank of credits, and establishment of HECI [17]. A National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) will guide the use of technology [18].

Comparative Analysis

- Structural Reform: From 10+2+3 to 5+3+3+4 system
- Pedagogical Approach: From rote learning to competency-based learning.
- Curriculum: From rigid streams to multidisciplinary education.
- Assessment: From summative to formative, with reduced stress [19,20].

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- Regulation: From multiple bodies to unified governance through HECI.
- Vocational Training: From marginalization to mainstream integration.

Conclusion

NEP 2020 is a forward-looking policy with the potential to make education in India more inclusive, flexible, and holistic. By focusing on foundational literacy, skill development, and innovation, it aims to transform India into a global knowledge superpower. While the implementation will require coordinated efforts, the policy lays a strong foundation for future growth.

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