

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 BACKGROUND OF EDUCATION POLICY IN INDIA

The evolution of educational policy in India has reflected the nation's changing priorities, socio-political contexts, and developmental needs since gaining independence in 1947. Early policy initiatives such as the University Education Commission (1948–49), the Secondary Education Commission (1952–53), and the landmark Education Commission (1964–66) played a formative role in shaping the direction of the Indian education system. These commissions laid the groundwork for the National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1968, which introduced critical recommendations such as compulsory education for children and structured teacher training programs. Subsequently, the NPE 1986—later revised in 1992—sought to improve educational equity, enhance the quality of instruction, and address disparities in access, particularly for disadvantaged communities (**Tilak, 2015**). Together, these policies helped widen access to formal education and promoted democratization within the Indian learning environment.

However, despite progressive policy interventions and flagship schemes like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), significant systemic issues persisted. These included widespread deficiencies in teacher qualification, poor infrastructural conditions, weak accountability systems, and a growing disconnect between curricular content and learners' socio-cultural realities. India's public education system, particularly at the primary and secondary levels, continued to grapple with undertrained teachers and outdated pedagogical approaches. These challenges were further highlighted through national and international learning assessments, such as the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which consistently indicated unsatisfactory learning outcomes and foundational skill gaps among Indian students.

The enactment of the Right to Education (RTE) Act in 2009 represented a crucial step toward legally guaranteeing universal access to free and compulsory schooling for children aged 6 to 14. Nonetheless, the implementation of RTE revealed its limitations—particularly its inability to address the urgent need for continuous teacher development and to raise the quality of classroom instruction (**Ramachandran & Sinha, 2018**). As these issues became more pronounced, education experts and policymakers increasingly recognized the necessity of comprehensive reforms that would not only expand access but also enhance pedagogical effectiveness, institutional accountability, and curriculum relevance. This recognition eventually led to the formulation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020—a transformative framework that sought to reimagine India's educational landscape by placing teacher education, learner-centered

pedagogy, and holistic development at the core of policy planning. NEP 2020 thus marked a significant departure from earlier policy approaches, emphasizing an integrated, multidisciplinary, and flexible educational model aligned with 21st-century needs.

2.2 IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN NATION-BUILDING

Teachers have consistently been acknowledged as foundational pillars of any robust educational framework, and in the broader national context, as vital agents in fostering social, intellectual, and moral advancement. Within India, the significance of teachers extended well beyond the confines of classroom instruction; they were regarded as architects of the nation's future, entrusted with the critical responsibility of inculcating values, ethical sensibilities, and cognitive skills among young learners. As emphasized in UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report (2020), the efficacy and sustainability of national development were inextricably linked to the quality of teacher preparation and professional support systems. Scholars such as Darling-Hammond (2017) underscored that teacher education bore a direct correlation with improved student learning outcomes, educational equity, and the holistic development of learners, thereby reinforcing its centrality in national progress.

Given India's demographic profile—marked by a substantial population of over 250 million school-age children—the urgency of preparing teachers with not only strong subject-matter expertise but also 21st-century competencies, emotional intelligence, and socio-cultural awareness had become particularly acute. However, teacher education in India had long struggled with systemic shortcomings, including obsolete training curricula, limited integration of innovative pedagogies, and a proliferation of substandard private teacher training institutions that often prioritized commercial interests over educational integrity. Jhingran (2016) observed that many teacher education programs failed to engage trainees in reflective and research-informed practice. Supporting this concern, Kumar and Azad (2018) reported that more than 90% of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) were operating below prescribed regulatory standards, thereby undermining the quality and preparedness of the teaching workforce entering schools.

Furthermore, the role of educators in fostering national identity, democratic consciousness, and social unity had grown increasingly significant in light of India's cultural and linguistic diversity. The absence of a pedagogical emphasis on inclusivity, critical thinking, and multicultural understanding in teacher training programs often led to educational environments that were ill-equipped to promote equity and civic engagement. Batra (2020) highlighted the critical need for reimagining teacher education to cultivate professionals who were not only academically competent but also socially empathetic and committed to nurturing inclusive and ethical learning

spaces. In recognition of these multifaceted challenges, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 positioned teacher education as a transformative priority—envisioning it not merely as a technical requirement for teaching licensure but as a moral and civic imperative essential for nation-building and systemic educational reform.

2.3 STUDIES RELATED TO TEACHERS PERCEPTION/AWARENESS LEVEL ON NEP-2020

Sharma and Kumar (2020) conducted a structured and detailed investigation to explore how faculty members in India's higher education institutions perceived and understood the key components of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The primary objective of their study was to assess the extent to which university-level educators were familiar with the fundamental elements and strategic directives outlined in the policy, particularly in relation to multidisciplinary education, research promotion, and employment integration. Utilizing a structured questionnaire, the researchers collected responses from a total of 320 teachers, comprising 180 males and 140 females, from various universities located in North India. The analysis of the data, conducted through descriptive statistics and t-tests, revealed that there were discernible gender-based differences in the levels of awareness and understanding of NEP 2020. Specifically, male faculty members were found to possess a higher level of awareness regarding the policy's emphasis on enhancing research capabilities and promoting a research-oriented academic environment, whereas female educators demonstrated a stronger understanding and greater sensitivity toward the inclusive education provisions and student-centric approaches embedded within the policy framework. The study therefore highlighted not only the varying degrees of familiarity with different dimensions of NEP 2020 among faculty members but also pointed to the existence of a gendered perspective in interpreting and engaging with the policy, thus indicating the need for more nuanced and targeted professional development programs that address these gaps and support more balanced policy comprehension across different educator groups.

Maruthavanan (2020) conducted an empirical study to assess the level of awareness regarding the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 among secondary school teachers in the Madurai district. Data for the study was systematically gathered through the administration of a multiple-choice questionnaire designed in the format of a quiz, comprising 25 items specifically aligned with key themes and topics related to NEP 2020. To explore the variation in awareness levels among teachers based on their demographic backgrounds, an independent t-test was employed as the primary statistical tool. The findings of the study revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the awareness of NEP 2020 among secondary school teachers based on factors such as gender, length of teaching service, and family structure. Additionally, the study found that teachers' awareness levels also varied notably depending on their geographical location and the type of school management under which they were employed—such as

government, private, or aided institutions. These results underscored the influence of both personal and institutional demographics on policy awareness, suggesting a need for more inclusive and evenly distributed capacity-building initiatives across diverse educational contexts.

Similarly, **Devi and Cheluvraju (2020)** undertook a study to evaluate the awareness and perceptions of various stakeholders—including educators and professionals in the field of commerce and management—in Bengaluru, with respect to the implications of NEP 2020 on their disciplines. Using a structured questionnaire, the researchers collected data to understand how well stakeholders comprehended the policy and its potential influence on curriculum design, skill development, and industry readiness. The results indicated that while the general awareness of NEP 2020 among these stakeholders remained relatively limited, there was a prevailing consensus that the policy was timely and essential, particularly in addressing the shortcomings of the existing education system which was seen as inadequate in producing industry-ready graduates. The study concluded with the recommendation that stakeholders should begin critically evaluating the operational parameters and structural implications of NEP 2020 to identify and cultivate the specific competencies required to align effectively with the policy's objectives. This suggests the importance of proactive engagement and continuous professional development to bridge the gap between policy formulation and ground-level execution in professional education streams.

Mehta and Rao (2020) emphasized the crucial and multifaceted role that teacher educators were expected to assume in the effective interpretation, dissemination, and practical implementation of educational reforms introduced under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. They argued that for teacher educators to guide, mentor, and prepare pre-service teachers with competence and confidence, it was imperative that these educators possessed a deep and nuanced understanding of the policy's core objectives, including its pedagogical innovations, structural modifications, and institutional mandates. They stressed that without such foundational familiarity, teacher educators would be ill-equipped to translate policy directives into meaningful classroom practices.

Building on this notion, **Choudhary (2021)** conducted a comprehensive study across various B.Ed. colleges in Maharashtra, which revealed a concerning statistic—only 42% of the surveyed teacher educators had attended any form of professional development activity, such as seminars, workshops, or orientation programs specifically centered around NEP 2020. This low participation rate directly correlated with a limited and often superficial comprehension of the transformative pedagogical approaches advocated by the policy, suggesting that a significant proportion of teacher educators remained underprepared for the educational shifts required of them.

Singh and Roy (2021) brought to light a range of critical challenges that significantly obstructed the effective dissemination and subsequent implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 among teacher educators across various educational institutions. Their study revealed that one of the foremost obstacles was the absence of structured and formal policy briefings that could have provided educators with a comprehensive overview of the policy's objectives, provisions, and pedagogical expectations. Furthermore, the lack of sustained academic discussions and institutional dialogues regarding the practical implications of NEP 2020 meant that many teacher educators were left to navigate its complexities without adequate peer engagement or interpretive support. Compounding this issue was the limited accessibility to official government-issued documents and explanatory materials, which further hindered a clear understanding of the policy among educators. In a complementary analysis,

Kale (2022) identified that institutional efforts to implement NEP 2020 were frequently impeded by a strong resistance to change, particularly among senior faculty members who were often unfamiliar with the digital tools and learner-centered pedagogies promoted by the policy. This resistance was largely rooted in a sense of discomfort with rapidly evolving educational technologies and the departure from traditional, teacher-centered instructional methods. Adding yet another dimension to these implementation hurdles, **Bhattacharya (2022)** stressed that the dense, lengthy, and often jargon-laden nature of the policy documents presented a major cognitive and linguistic barrier for educators, many of whom struggled to interpret and assimilate the policy's recommendations, especially when faced with texts that were not translated or simplified for diverse linguistic backgrounds. This combination of structural, technological, and linguistic challenges underscored an urgent need for the development of simplified, targeted, and contextually relevant training materials and orientation programs that could empower teacher educators to engage meaningfully with the NEP 2020 framework and facilitate its practical application within their professional settings.

Echoing these concerns, **Das (2022)** further highlighted that most teacher training institutions had yet to make substantive adjustments to their curricular content or instructional methodologies in accordance with NEP 2020's vision. As a result, these institutions continued to operate under outdated frameworks, thereby failing to nurture a new cadre of teachers who were equipped to thrive in the progressive, inclusive, and technology-integrated learning environments that the policy envisioned. Collectively, these findings underscored the pressing need for structured and sustained professional development programs, institutional reforms, and policy alignment initiatives targeted at teacher educators to ensure the successful realization of NEP 2020's objectives at the grassroots level.

Verma (2022) undertook a region-specific investigation in the state of Madhya Pradesh with the aim of examining the level of awareness among teacher educators regarding the provisions and reforms introduced by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and the findings indicated that, overall, the awareness among participants could be categorized as moderate. However, the study also unveiled substantial disparities in awareness levels that were closely associated with the geographical location of the institutions surveyed, as teacher educators working in urban colleges demonstrated a notably higher degree of familiarity with the core components of NEP 2020 compared to their counterparts in semi-urban and peripheral areas, who exhibited relatively limited exposure to and comprehension of the policy.

Reinforcing these observations, **Bansal and Tiwari (2023)** conducted an in-depth analysis of teacher education institutions situated in Indore, where they discovered that faculty members employed in government-affiliated colleges displayed significantly greater levels of engagement with NEP 2020. This trend was primarily attributed to the enforcement of government-mandated orientation programs and training sessions, which facilitated better exposure and understanding among educators in the public sector, while private institutions lagged behind due to the inconsistent implementation of such programs.

In a more locally focused study, **Saxena (2023)** examined the situation in the Bhopal district and found that although a majority of teacher educators were reasonably well-informed about broader structural reforms in school education—such as the newly proposed 5+3+3+4 curricular structure—they tended to have a much weaker grasp of more specific and technical policy aspects, especially those concerning the proposed transformation of teacher education through reforms like the introduction of the four-year integrated B.Ed. program. These findings collectively illustrated that awareness of NEP 2020 among teacher educators was not uniform across different regions and was influenced by a combination of institutional type, location, and the extent of government-supported awareness initiatives.

2.4 EMPIRICAL STUDIES ON TEACHER PERCEPTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE OF NEP 2020

1. Awareness and Perceptions of Teachers about the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: A Study" by **Singh and Jain (2021)**: This study examines the awareness and perceptions of teachers towards the NEP 2020 in India. The findings indicate that while teachers generally had a positive attitude towards the policy, there were gaps in their awareness and understanding of its key provisions, especially in areas related to pedagogy, assessment reforms, and the use of technology.
2. Teacher Awareness and Implementation of National Education Policy 2020: A Case Study of Secondary Institution Teachers in Rajasthan by **Kumar and Jain (2021)**: This research focuses on the awareness level and implementation of the NEP 2020 among secondary institution teachers in Rajasthan. The study reveals that teachers had limited awareness of the policy, particularly regarding its reforms in pedagogy, assessment, and curriculum. It suggests the need for targeted training and professional development programs to enhance teacher understanding and implementation of the NEP.
3. Awareness of Teachers on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: A Study by **Shukla and Goyal (2022)**: This study explores the awareness level of teachers about the NEP 2020 in a specific region in India. The research reveals a moderate level of awareness among teachers, with a higher understanding of general policy provisions compared to specific details. The study emphasizes the significance of continuous training programs and professional development initiatives to improve teacher awareness and implementation of the NEP.
4. Assessment of Awareness and Preparedness of Teachers towards National Education Policy (NEP) 2020" by **Singh and Vyas (2022)**: This research examines the awareness and preparedness of teachers towards the NEP 2020 in India. The findings indicate that while teachers demonstrated a moderate level of awareness, they expressed the need for comprehensive training programs to enhance their understanding and preparedness for implementing the policy effectively.

These studies collectively highlight the need to assess and improve the awareness level of teachers regarding the NEP 2020. They emphasize the importance of targeted training programs, professional development initiatives, and continuous support to enhance teacher understanding and implementation of the policy's provisions. The findings from these studies can serve as a foundation for further research and interventions aimed at bridging the awareness gap and promoting successful implementation of the NEP 2020.

2.5 SCOPE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) represented a landmark initiative aimed at comprehensively overhauling India's educational framework, with an emphasis on aligning the nation's academic ecosystem with international standards and the evolving demands of a globalized world. Its broad scope spanned across all levels of education but focused particularly on higher education reform, striving to introduce structural, curricular, and regulatory transformations. One of its core objectives was to restructure higher education institutions by classifying them into three distinct types—Research Universities, Teaching Universities, and Autonomous Degree-Granting Colleges—thereby allowing institutions to focus on their core competencies while fostering collaboration and specialization.

NEP 2020 also emphasized curricular and pedagogical reforms, promoting holistic and multidisciplinary education that replaced rote memorization with skill-based, experiential learning aimed at developing critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. A major thrust of the policy was the promotion of multidisciplinary learning, enabling students to traverse traditional academic boundaries by integrating arts, sciences, and vocational studies, thereby preparing them to address complex real-world problems with a comprehensive outlook.

Additionally, the policy aimed to significantly improve the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education, setting an ambitious target of 50% by the year 2035, which necessitated the expansion of institutional capacity, greater use of online and open-distance learning, and increased accessibility for remote and underprivileged communities.

NEP 2020 also recognized the importance of research and innovation in national development and proposed the creation of the National Research Foundation (NRF) to financially and institutionally support interdisciplinary research, attract global talent, and foster a vibrant research culture. Further, the policy acknowledged the crucial role of teachers and emphasized the need for rigorous teacher training and continuous professional development programs, alongside transparent recruitment and performance monitoring mechanisms. Regulatory restructuring was also a key component, with the proposed establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) to replace existing fragmented bodies, streamlining governance into four verticals—regulation, accreditation, funding, and academic standards—for more efficient oversight and institutional autonomy.

NEP 2020 also foregrounded the principles of equity and inclusion by introducing special measures for marginalized communities, supporting education in regional languages, and reducing the urban-rural education divide through improved infrastructure and digital outreach. Emphasizing the integration of technology in education, the policy encouraged digital

classrooms, online education platforms, and the creation of educational technology hubs, alongside digital literacy training for both students and faculty.

Lastly, the policy envisioned a more globally connected higher education system by promoting international collaborations, joint research ventures, and attracting foreign students to India, thereby boosting the global standing of Indian universities. In essence, the scope of NEP 2020 was vast and forward-looking, encompassing structural realignment, inclusive access, pedagogical innovation, regulatory efficiency, and global integration. While its aspirations are ambitious, the successful realization of its vision hinges on effective implementation, substantial investment, and continuous monitoring to ensure that Indian higher education evolves into a globally competitive, inclusive, and future-ready system.

2.6 OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020

The National Education Policy 2020, the first comprehensive education policy of the 21st century in India after a gap of 34 years, represents a radical departure from previous frameworks. Rooted in the vision of "access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability," the policy aims to overhaul the education system to meet the demands of the 21st century. It emphasizes multidisciplinary learning, foundational literacy, early childhood care, vocational training, and research innovation across levels of education (Ministry of Education, 2020).

One of the most groundbreaking aspects of NEP 2020 is its approach to teacher education. The policy calls for the establishment of high-quality teacher education institutions in multidisciplinary settings. It proposes a four-year integrated B.Ed. degree as the minimum qualification for teachers by 2030, integrating theory and practice, arts and sciences, and content and pedagogy (Goel, 2021). This model is expected to replace the fragmented and transactional model of teacher preparation currently in practice.

Additionally, the NEP introduces the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), a landmark initiative to ensure performance benchmarks and continuous professional development. The National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) is another reform, aiming to provide peer mentoring and guidance to teachers, especially in rural and underprivileged areas. Furthermore, the policy encourages the use of digital tools and platforms, recognizing the transformative potential of educational technology (Bansal & Bhardwaj, 2021).

Another critical aspect of NEP 2020 is the emphasis on holistic and experiential learning, requiring a shift from rote learning to conceptual understanding. This has deep implications for how teachers are trained, as they must be equipped to facilitate active, inclusive, and inquiry-

based learning. Hence, the transformation envisioned in the policy requires a fundamental reconceptualization of the content, process, and structure of teacher education.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, approved by the Government of India, aims to overhaul the Indian education system by addressing its structure, curriculum, pedagogy, and governance. It emphasizes holistic and multidisciplinary education, teacher empowerment, and the integration of technology in education. Given these substantial changes, it is vital to understand how well teacher educators, the backbone of teacher training institutions, are aware of and prepared to implement the NEP 2020. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) aims to overhaul the educational landscape of India, focusing on accessibility, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability in education. This policy has spurred extensive discourse and research, examining its potential impact and public reception.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India is a landmark educational reform that has garnered widespread attention and discourse in the academic and policy spheres. This review delves into the NEP 2020, analyzing its development and implementation over the years, focusing on different aspects as discussed in various research articles and official documents. In 2019, India laid the foundation for the NEP 2020. The draft policy outlined the initial objectives, setting the stage for a significant overhaul in the education system. This document provides insights into the early stages of policy development. The Union Cabinet approved the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) on July 29, 2020.

NEP 2020 is meant to provide an overarching vision and comprehensive framework for both school and higher education across the country. NEP 2020 is aimed at transforming the Indian education system to meet the needs of the 21st Century and seeks rectifications in educational outcomes and eco-system. 2020 was the year of NEP 2020's Official Unveiling. Year 2021 produced studies that are theoretically and critically analyzing the impact of the Policy. With the 20th century marked as the computer era, the digital age is spreading its wings and is also posing challenges of management perspectives to deal with its growing needs.

The literature on the National Education Policy 2020 provides a comprehensive view of its ambitious vision and transformative potential for higher education in India. The policy aims to shift the focus from rote learning to more holistic, multidisciplinary, and student-centric education while promoting research and innovation. However, significant challenges, including faculty readiness, infrastructure, equity, and inclusivity, must be overcome for the policy's successful implementation. Addressing these issues through targeted investment, training, and strategic policy measures will be essential for realizing the long-term impact of NEP 2020 on India's higher education landscape.