



GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IN NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020: A CRITICAL EVALUATION AND SUGGESTIONS

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Abstract: National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) is a holistic framework focuses on transforming the education system in India. One of its main objectives is to promote gender quality and women empowerment in educational field. This research paper critically examines the conditions and execution of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) in relation to gender equality and inclusion. The study examines the shortcomings and obstacles in putting the National Education Policy 2020 into practices regarding gender equality and women empowerment. These include capacity building, educators' growth and development, monitoring process for evaluation and the issue of translation of policies into practices. Findings of the study provides suggestions for enhancing the credibility of National Education Policy 2020 for promoting women empowerment and gender equality in education. These suggestions include area such as policies into practices, programs for teacher preparations, and curriculum design. This study is based on previous researches and secondary sources were used for obtaining data, including websites, articles, journals and other research papers. By critically examining National education policy 2020, this research paper contributes to the gender equality and women empowerment in education system and provides useful suggestions for policymakers and educators seeking to achieve these objectives in education system.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Gender Equality, Inclusion, Women Empowerment

I. INTRODUCTION

The Government of India launched the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) as a comprehensive reform initiative to upgrade the education system and address the nations' evolving needs. By enhancing a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach, focusing a strong emphasise on skill development, empowering women and promoting innovation, this strategy seeks to transform the field of education.

Gender equality and women empowerment are the essential components of any society that strives for advancement and inclusivity. The National Education Policy 2020 in India has become an innovative framework that has the ability to bring out a complete transformation in the field of education, acknowledging the significance of education as instrument for social reform (Ministry of Education, India, 2020). The National Education Policy 2020 seeks to address the prevalent gender inequalities and encourage all the individuals, regardless of gender identity, to fully participate in and benefit from the educational system by implementing a complete agenda (Ministry of Education, India, 2020). This research paper examines the goals and provisions of the National Education Policy 2020, which also evaluates how effectively they could contribute to gender equality and women empowerment. The policies and important elements, including inclusive curricula, teacher preparations, enrolment in education and encouraging environment, are examined. The purpose of this research is to put light on the advantages and disadvantages of implementing gender responsive practices into the education system (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2020).

Additionally, this study makes suggestions based on critical analysis of NEP 2020 with the goal of achieving its possible impact on gender equality and empowerment. This study adds to the continuing discussion on gender equality in education, by identifying areas where the policy may be reinforced, such as, curriculum, safe space provision, gender development and capacity building for educators and management (United Nations Women, 2020).

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this research paper is to critically evaluate the provisions and objectives framed in National Education Policy 2020 and impose their ability in promoting gender equality and women empowerment. By analysing main components such as inclusion in curriculum, teachers' training, impose to education, and good supportive environment. Present study highlights the challenges in implementing gender-based barriers in education system. Furthermore, this paper aims to offer suggestions for improvement of policy impact on gender equality and women empowerment.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The National Education Policy was first appeared in India in 2020 with the objective of changing the education system and making it more equitable, affordable and inclusive. But ever since it was first introduced, the NEP 2020 has been the focus of a critical examination, with experts and research scholars pointing out both its advantages and disadvantages. I go through the some of literature on critical examination and its implementation in order to provide my response.

Ministry of Education (2020) in order to encourage students' well-being and prepare them for a success in life, this file stated that the National Education Policy 2020 acknowledges the importance of comprehensive education. **P. S, Aithal and Shubhrajyotana Aithal (2020)** the present study examined various policies that were proclaimed in the higher education system and compared them with the present framework that has been implemented. **B. Venkateshwarlu (2021)** According to the study's findings, higher education has a significant impact on how effectively a nation's economy, society, technology and ethical actions are progressing. **Anu Vaishale B and SOEL (2021)** this paper examined the modifications and new framework under National Education Policy 2020. Its main objective is to empower students with global knowledge. By 2035, the most significant modification was intended to increase the total number of students enrolment ratio to 50%.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on previous researches and secondary sources were used for obtaining data, including websites, articles, journals and other research papers.

3.1 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The National Education Policy 2020: A Critical Evaluation

1- *An outline of the main goals and provisions of the NEP 2020 that pertain to empowerment and gender equality*

The Government of India introduces National Education Policy 2020 (NEP), encompasses some provisions and objectives to promote women empowerment and gender equality in education system. The policy acknowledges the significance of addressing gender inequality and ensuring equal chances for all persons, despite of gender. Here is an outline of NEP 2020's goals and policies related to women empowerment and gender equality:

- a) Inclusive Education: The NEP 2020 features the requirement of education for all, i.e. inclusive education, assuring that boys and girls from all the socioeconomical background have equal rights for quality education. It encourages for the invention of an inclusive and supportive learning environment that promotes gender equality and eliminates gender discrimination.
- b) Gender Sensitivity Courses: The policy features the development of gender sensitivity courses that objections gender status quo, promotes gender equality and acknowledges the particular needs and interests of boys and girls. It seeks to integrate men and women varied perspectives, experiences and contributions in academic field.
- c) Abolishment of Gender Related Violence: The NEP 2020 comprehend the occurrence of gender related violence within the educational campus and focused to create a secure and safe atmosphere for all the students. It advocates for strict adherence of zero tolerance policies and the establishment of a framework to find out and preclude gender related violence in educational intuitions.
- d) Women Empowerment in Education Department: The policy features the empowerment of women in educational leader role, including at the administrative level. In order to enhance women representation and participation in educational programmes, it supports capacity building initiatives and promotes the recruitment of government representatives to discussion making roles.
- e) Eliminate Gender Inequalities: The NEP 2020 features the existing gender inequalities in academic achievement and tries to eliminate these gaps. It highlights the provision of essential support system, scholarship programs to motivate girls' admission and retainment in schools and colleges.

2- *Evaluation of National Education Policy 2020 Align with Global Framework and Best Practices for Advancing in Gender Equality in Education:*

National Education Policy 2020 Align with Global Framework and Best Practices for Advancing in Gender Equality in Education is an important feature to assess its effective impact. Here is an analysis of the National Education policy 2020 align with global framework and best practices for advancing gender equality:

- a) Sustainable Development Goal: The NEP 2020 line up with sustainable development, which focuses the attainment of inclusive and equal education for all. The policy emphasizes on gender sensitive courses, inclusive education and abolishment of gender related violence in educational acquisitions echoes with the sustainable development objectives, mainly Goal 4.5, which aims to remove gender inequalities in education.
- b) Elimination of Discrimination Against Women: The NEP 2020's provisions line up with Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)'s ethics of removing racism against women. By promoting abolishment of gender related violence, gender equality and women empowerment in educational leadership roles the policy line up with CEDAW's aims and suggestions.

- c) Educational framework in Gender Equality of UNESCO: The NEP 2020 reveals align with UNESCO's Educational Framework in Gender Equality, which shows the importance of gender sensitive approach, teachers' training, curriculum framework and addressing gender inequalities in education. The policy focuses on inclusive education, gender sensitive approach and based upon data decision making alignments with UNESCO framework.
 - d) Best Practices from Other Nations: The NEP 2020 features from worldwide best practices for promoting gender inclusivity in education. It includes components such as secure and safe learning environment for all, gender sensitive approach, and empowering women in educational leadership, which have showed favourable impacts worldwide that have successfully implemented equivalent strategies.
- 3- *Suggestions: Despite the fact that NEP 2020 shows adherence to global framework and best practices, there may be some areas where further advancement can be done and these include:*
- a) A Comprehensive Strategy to Intersectionality: The NEP 2020 could enhance it align with global framework by clearly addressing the intersection of gender with other social categories, including castes, impairment and socioeconomic status. A strategy that takes an intersectional approach would ensure that it effectively address the needs and challenges that marginalized group experiences.
 - b) A Global Approach to Gender Specific Violence: The policy align with global framework could be intensify by accepting a holistic approach to addressing gender specific violence in educational campus. It advocates for strict adherence of zero tolerance policies and the establishment of a framework to find out and preclude gender related violence in educational intuitions.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research is carried out on women empowerment and gender equality through the NEP 2020 gives valuable depth of understanding, limitations and possible implications of the policy. The findings of the study revel the various aspects of the National Education Policy 2020 and offers suggestions for enhancing its efficiency in addressing gender inequalities in education. Here is a summary of this research, outcomes and their consequences:

- a) Gender Inequalities in Admissions: Although the NEP 2020 acknowledges the gender differences in admissions, findings shows that specific interventions are required to conquer the unique obstacles that girls face. Scholarship, transportation services, and promoting public awareness of the importance of girls' education are among the suggestions. From these improvements, girls' educational academic outcomes could get better and admissions may rise as a result.
- b) Gender Responsive Curriculum and Instructional strategies: According to studies, gender responsive curriculum is crucial for eliminating misconceptions and promoting equality. The development of such a curriculum that adheres to best practices is given prominence in NEP 2020. Nonetheless, it is imperative to guarantee the effective execution of the curriculum by implementing of ongoing supervision and teacher training programs. Policymakers and educational organisational needs to work together and invest consistently to achieve this.
- c) Safety and Gender Specific Violence: According to research, strong steps are required to reduce gender specific violence in educational campus. Even while NEP 2020 acknowledges the necessity of safe learning atmosphere, research highlights the importance of strictly executing zero tolerance law, awareness programmes and institutional support system. To create an environment that is favourable to learning, it is necessary to ensure the security and safety of all students, especially girls.
- d) Empowering women in Educational Leadership: Research highlights the benefits of empowering women in leadership positions in education. The NEP 2020 focuses on a strong emphasis on encouraging the inclusion of women in discussion making roles. To increase women participation and influence in educational leadership, research suggests additional efforts like communication platforms, professional development opportunities and mentorship programs. A more fair and equitable educational system may result for these initiatives.

These research findings are somehow significant. By emphasis the necessity of a thorough and comprehensive strategy for advancing gender equality and empowering women in education. Policymakers may increase the efficacy of NEP 2020 and establish more inclusive and equitable learning environment by putting the research suggestions into practices.

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