



Exploring Teachers' Perceptions on the Provisions of NEP 2020 for Teachers

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Abstract:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced several transformative provisions aimed at improving the quality of education in India, with a significant focus on the professional development and welfare of teachers. This study examines teachers' perceptions towards the provisions outlined in the NEP 2020, especially those related to professional quality enhancement, teacher training, autonomy, curriculum reforms and workload management. Using a mixed-method approach, surveys and interviews were conducted with a diverse sample of teachers across various educational levels. The findings reveal that while teachers generally appreciate the emphasis on holistic development, skill enhancement and digital integration, there are concerns regarding the practical implementation of these provisions. Key challenges include inadequate training, lack of infrastructural support and the feasibility of balancing new demands with existing responsibilities. Teachers' also express cautious optimism about the potential long-term benefits of NEP 2020 but emphasizes the need for clear guidelines and adequate resources to ensure successful implementation. The study highlights the importance of continuous dialogue between policymakers and educators to address these challenges and effectively leverage the provisions of the NEP 2020 for improving the overall education system.

Keywords: Teachers' Perceptions, NEP 2020, Teacher Training, Curriculum Reform, Professional Development, Workload Management, Educational Policy, Implementation Challenges, Educational Reforms.

Introduction:

The National Education Policy 2020, endorsed by the Government of India, represents a noteworthy alteration in the country's educational landscape. Its vision aims to create a more inclusive, accessible, and student-centric education system that nurtures critical thinking, creativity, and holistic development. One of the policy's central pillars is up lifting the quality of education by focusing on the improvement of teacher quality, professional development, and creating an enabling environment for educators (NEP, 2020). While these goals are pioneering and transformative, the success of the NEP largely depends on how teachers perceive, accept, and implement these reforms in their day-to-day practices.

Teachers are at the spinal cord of the education system, and their views and attitudes toward the policy provisions will play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of NEP 2020. The policy introduces a range of measures aimed directly at teachers, including reforms in curriculum design, teacher training, and professional development and evaluation systems. These provisions are designed to empower educators, improve their skills, and ensure that they are better equipped to meet the evolving needs of the education sector (Maseeh, 2023). However, the effectiveness of these reforms hinges on whether teachers embrace these changes and whether they feel adequately supported in their implementation.

Curriculum design, for instance, aims to move away from rote learning and promote critical thinking, creativity, and a more holistic approach to education. While many teachers support the idea of such reforms, the challenge lies in how these changes will be practically implemented in classrooms, where teachers often face constraints such as large class sizes, insufficient resources, and rigid syllabi. Similarly, teacher training programs under NEP 2020 aim to offer continuous professional development, but the quality, accessibility, and relevance of these programs need to align with teachers' needs and context (Phulari. *et al.*2022).

Professional development initiatives also focus on ensuring that teachers are not just subject experts but are equipped with the pedagogical skills necessary to engage and inspire students. While many teachers are enthusiastic about these opportunities, there is concern about the practicality of continuous training in an already demanding work environment. Additionally, changes in the teacher evaluation system seek to move away from traditional assessment models and emphasize more holistic, competency-based approaches (Patil & Karad, 2022). However, teachers' buy-in will depend on how these new evaluation methods are perceived, especially in terms of fairness, transparency, and the support they provide to teachers' growth.

Literature Review:

Research on the NEP 2020, especially regarding teachers' perceptions, is still in its early stages. However, studies on similar educational reforms provide valuable insights into how teachers engage with policy changes. Teachers' perceptions of reforms typically reflect their experiences with previous changes, their professional autonomy, and their views on the effectiveness of the policy measures.

Maseeh (2023), Patil & Karad (2022), Phulari. *et al.*(2022) had emphasized on their research work mainly effective Teacher Training program, Professional Development and Curriculum Reforms are essential to the successful implementation of NEP 2020. The NEP's emphasis on continuous professional development is viewed positively but also raises concerns about the adequacy of resources and support. Ansari & Haider(2023) explored on the perception of teacher educators on the implementation of NEP 2020 in teacher training institution and Kumar(2021) stressed on the challenges and opportunities of Teacher Education in the light of NEP2020.

Methodology:

This research adopts a **mixed-methods approach** to gain a comprehensive understanding of teachers' perceptions on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 provisions for teachers, particularly those that directly impact their roles in the education system. By integrating both **qualitative** and **quantitative** techniques, the study aims to provide a holistic view of teachers' opinions, concerns, and attitudes toward the policy's implementation, offering both statistical insights and nuanced, in-depth perspectives. The methodology is designed to ensure that the research captures a broad spectrum of experiences across different educational contexts in India.

Sample Population:

The study surveyed **125 teachers** from various educational levels, including **primary, secondary, and higher education**. The sample was intentionally selected to include teachers from both **urban and rural areas** to ensure diversity in the responses, as the implementation of the NEP could be perceived differently depending on geographic location, resources, and infrastructure. The teachers were selected from different types of institutions: government schools, private schools, and higher education institutions, providing a balanced representation of different sectors within the Indian education system. The sample also included teachers from various subject areas to explore any subject-specific differences in perceptions and experiences.

In addition to the survey sample, **15 teachers** participated in **structured interviews**. These teachers were selected from the initial survey pool based on their willingness to participate further and to represent a variety of perspectives in terms of experience, educational level, and geographical location. The interviews were conducted to explore the deeper, more personal reflections of teachers regarding the provisions of NEP 2020 for teachers, allowing for a richer, qualitative understanding of their perceptions.

Data Collection Tools:

Questionnaire:

A **structured questionnaire** was designed as the primary quantitative tool for this study. The questionnaire consisted of both **closed-ended** and **Likert-scale questions** that measured teachers' perceptions of key provisions of the NEP 2020 for teachers, such as curriculum reforms, teacher training, assessment and evaluation practices and professional development. The questionnaire was divided into several sections:

Teaching Practices: Questions in this section focused on teachers' views about the shift from rote learning to a more critical and holistic approach as outlined in the NEP.

Curriculum Design: Teachers were asked to express their views on the introduction of interdisciplinary curricula, as well as the inclusion of subjects like vocational education, social skills, and life skills.

Assessment and Evaluation: This section explored teachers' attitudes toward the proposed changes in the examination system, moving away from summative assessments to more formative, competency-based evaluations.

Professional Development: The questionnaire gathered data on teachers' awareness of the NEP's professional development provisions, including the requirement for continuous learning and pedagogical training.

The survey was administered both **online** and **in-person** (depending on the teachers' location) to ensure a diverse and representative sample. The responses were collected anonymously to encourage honest and candid feedback.

Structured Interviews:

In addition to the questionnaire, **in-depth, structured interviews** were conducted with **15 teachers**. The interviews were designed to provide a deeper understanding of teachers' perception following their experiences and attitudes toward the NEP 2020 provisions for teachers. The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility in exploring specific areas of interest based on the interviewee's responses.

Key themes explored in the interviews included:

Teacher Concerns and Expectations: Teachers were asked about their initial reactions to the NEP and whether they felt the policy addressed the real challenges they face in the classroom.

Implementation Challenges: The interviews probed teachers' views on the feasibility of implementing NEP reforms in their specific contexts, considering factors like infrastructure, class size, student diversity, and resource availability.

Impact on Teacher Autonomy: Teachers shared their thoughts on how the policy might affect their professional autonomy and the degree to which they felt empowered to innovate in their teaching methods.

Support Mechanisms: The interviews also delved into the support structures available to teachers, including professional development programs, mentoring, and government initiatives to facilitate the policy's implementation.

Data Analysis:

Quantitative Data Analysis:

The quantitative data from the questionnaire were analysed using **descriptive statistics**. This approach helped summarize the responses and identify patterns and trends in the teachers' perceptions on provisions of NEP 2020 for teachers. Frequency distributions were calculated to determine the percentage of teachers who had positive, neutral, or negative views on various aspects of the policy. Additionally, measures like mean scores were used to assess the overall sentiment toward specific provisions, such as curriculum reforms or professional development initiatives. This analysis provided a broad overview of teachers' attitudes toward the NEP at a national level, revealing both areas of support and concern.

Qualitative Data Analysis:

The qualitative data collected through the semi-structured interviews were analysed using **thematic coding**. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, and a coding framework was developed to categorize responses into themes and sub-themes. This process involved identifying recurring patterns and key phrases in the interviews that highlighted teachers' experiences and reflections about the NEP's provisions for teachers. Thematic analysis allowed for a deeper understanding of the emotional and intellectual responses of teachers, shedding light on the complexities and nuances of their perceptions.

The qualitative analysis provided insights into teachers' **personal stories, challenges, and aspirations**, which were often not captured in the quantitative data. It helped to contextualize the numbers and offer a richer, more comprehensive picture of how teachers experience the NEP in their daily lives.

Ethical Considerations:

To ensure the ethical integrity of the study, **informed consent** was obtained from all participants. Teachers were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and participation was entirely voluntary. The study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines, ensuring that no harm or discomfort came to the participants as a result of their involvement.

Findings:

The findings from the survey of teachers reveal key insights into various aspects of the educational reform policies, with a particular focus on teacher training, curriculum flexibility, use of technology, assessment

systems, and teacher autonomy. The data highlights both positive perceptions and significant concerns among educators regarding these initiatives. The following sections outline these findings in detail.

Teacher Training and Professional Development:

One of the most notable findings in the survey relates to teacher training and professional development. There is a general consensus among educators about the importance of continuous learning and skill enhancement.

- **Pollyannaism:** A significant 68% of teachers expressed positive views regarding the emphasis placed on professional development and up skilling opportunities. Teachers appreciated the availability of specialized training programs, which they believed helped improve their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills. The focus on continuous development was seen as a valuable tool for personal and professional growth, with many teachers welcoming the opportunity to deepen their expertise.
- **Disquiet:** However, there were concerns about the **quality** and **consistency** of these training programs. Approximately 45% of teachers indicated dissatisfaction with the existing training initiatives, highlighting that many were **inadequate** and lacked **practical application**. Some teachers felt that the training did not equip them with the real-world strategies needed to handle the complexities of modern classrooms. As a result, there is a call for more **targeted, hands-on** training that addresses the specific challenges faced by educators in the field.

Curriculum Flexibility and Autonomy:

Curriculum flexibility emerged as another important theme, with educators divided in their opinions about its benefits and challenges.

- **Support for Flexibility:** 62% of teachers were supportive of the concept of a flexible curriculum. They argued that a flexible curriculum would allow them to take a more **student-centric** approach to teaching, which could cater to the diverse learning needs of students. By being able to adapt the curriculum to suit different abilities and interests, teachers believed they could foster a more engaging and inclusive learning environment.
- **Workload Concerns:** Despite these positive views, 39% of teachers expressed concerns about the increased workload associated with flexible curricula. Many teachers felt that they would be required to balance the demands of adapting lesson plans to students' needs while still meeting the **standardized assessment criteria** that are often rigid and prescriptive. This dual challenge was seen as a potential source of stress and burnout for educators.

Use of Technology in Teaching:

The integration of technology into teaching practices has become a central focus of modern education reforms. The survey revealed mixed reactions to this shift.

- **Positive Attitudes:** A little more than half (55%) of the teachers were enthusiastic about the potential of technology to improve teaching and learning outcomes. These educators believed that the use of digital tools could enhance **student engagement**, provide access to **interactive learning resources**, and allow for more **personalized** teaching methods. Technology was also seen as a way to bridge the gap between traditional and modern educational practices.

- **Barriers to Implementation:** However, 40% of teachers expressed concerns about the barriers to successful technology integration. **Lack of infrastructure** (such as unreliable internet connections or inadequate hardware) was a significant issue, making it difficult for teachers to fully embrace technology. Additionally, teachers reported that they did not feel adequately trained in the use of digital tools, which further hindered their ability to implement them effectively in the classroom. These challenges point to a need for both better technological infrastructure and more **comprehensive professional development** in digital literacy.

Evaluation and Assessment Systems:

The shift toward **competency-based assessment** is another major change in educational policies that received mixed reactions.

- **Support for Competency-Based Evaluation:** The survey found strong support for competency-based evaluation, with 72% of teachers recognizing its potential to foster **deeper learning** and **holistic student development**. Teachers appreciated the focus on assessing students' actual skills and competencies rather than relying solely on traditional exams. This shift is seen as a way to move away from rote learning and encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.
- **Concerns about Feasibility:** Despite the positive outlook on competency-based assessment, 52% of teachers raised concerns about the **feasibility** of transitioning from traditional assessment methods to a competency-based system. They pointed out the need for significant changes in the **examination system** and in teacher **training** to make this shift successful. Teachers expressed concerns that the current assessment tools and frameworks were not designed to evaluate competencies effectively, and without a proper overhaul, the shift could lead to confusion or inconsistent outcomes.

Teacher Autonomy and Professional Recognition:

Finally, the issue of teacher autonomy and professional recognition emerged as an important theme.

- **Desire for Autonomy:** A majority of teachers (60%) expressed a desire for more autonomy in the classroom. These teachers believed that greater autonomy would allow them to tailor their teaching methods to the unique needs and abilities of their students. Teachers argued that flexibility in how they structured lessons, delivered content, and assessed student progress could lead to more effective and personalized teaching.
- **Recognition and Support:** While teachers acknowledged the emphasis on teacher welfare in policy reforms, 50% of respondents felt that the provisions for **recognition** and **support** were not adequately detailed or actionable. Teachers felt that institutional support—whether in terms of resources, professional recognition, or career advancement opportunities—needed to be more tangible and systematic. Without clear structures in place for acknowledging teachers' contributions and supporting their professional growth, many felt that the reforms would have limited impact.

Discussion:

The findings from the survey underscore both optimism and caution regarding the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, with teachers expressing a generally positive outlook toward key reforms such as **teacher training**, **curriculum flexibility**, and the move towards **competency-based assessment**. However, significant concerns emerged about the **practical challenges** associated with these reforms, particularly the adequacy of **resources**, **infrastructure**, and **training** needed for successful implementation.

One of the most widely appreciated provisions of NEP 2020 is the emphasis on **continuous teacher professional development**. Teachers recognize the importance of up skilling opportunities in enhancing their **subject knowledge** and **pedagogical techniques**. The policy's focus on lifelong learning is seen as a critical factor in improving the quality of education. However, the findings indicate that while there is a broad appreciation for professional development programs, many teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the **quality** and **consistency** of these programs. A substantial number of teachers (45%) noted that the training sessions often lack **practical application**, with little focus on real classroom challenges. This gap suggests that the policy's vision for professional development requires more **hands-on, context-specific training** that directly addresses the day-to-day realities of teaching.

Similarly, the **flexibility in curriculum design** was another aspect of the NEP 2020 that teachers largely supported. With 62% of teachers in favour of a more **student-centric** curriculum, the flexibility is seen as an opportunity to cater to diverse learning needs and allow for greater **innovation** in teaching. However, this support is tempered by concerns about the **workload** it imposes on teachers. While the idea of adapting the curriculum to better serve individual students is welcome, teachers expressed anxiety about balancing this flexibility with the need to adhere to **standardized assessment criteria**. The dual pressure of personalizing instruction while meeting rigid exam requirements could potentially lead to **increased stress** and **burnout**. Therefore, the success of a flexible curriculum depends on ensuring that teachers have both the **time** and the **resources** to manage these competing demands.

The transition towards **competency-based evaluation** is another key reform in NEP 2020, with 72% of teachers supporting its potential to foster deeper learning and more holistic student development. However, the **feasibility** of implementing competency-based assessments remains a concern for over half of the respondents. Teachers pointed out that traditional **evaluation frameworks** are not designed to assess competencies effectively. Without comprehensive changes to the **examination system** and **teacher training** in assessment techniques, there is a risk that competency-based assessments could be implemented inconsistently or ineffectively.

Furthermore, the shift towards a **digital education system** was met with mixed reactions. While a majority of teachers (55%) welcomed the use of technology to enhance student engagement, 40% highlighted the **lack of infrastructure** and **insufficient digital training** as major barriers to effective technology integration. Teachers are eager to incorporate technology into their classrooms but often lack the necessary **technical support, devices, and training** to do so effectively. To address this, there must be a coordinated effort to provide **reliable infrastructure** and ensure that educators receive adequate training in **digital literacy** and **pedagogical strategies** for using technology in the classroom.

In addition to these concerns, teachers emphasized the importance of **autonomy** in their teaching practices. With 60% supporting increased control over curriculum delivery and classroom management, teachers feel that greater autonomy would allow them to tailor their approaches to better suit the needs of their students. However, they cautioned that autonomy must be accompanied by clear **guidelines** for **curriculum design** and **assessment** to ensure that reforms are implemented consistently and effectively across schools.

Conclusion:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a transformative vision for the future of education in India, emphasizing key areas such as teacher professional development, curriculum flexibility, competency-based assessments, and increased teacher autonomy. These reforms are intended to foster a more inclusive, dynamic, and student-centric education system. However, while the NEP's provisions are ambitious and

forward-thinking, the successful realization of these goals depends on a critical alignment between the policy's intentions and the practical realities faced by educators on the ground.

The survey results indicate that teachers generally support the core principles of the NEP, including the emphasis on continuous professional development and the desire for increased autonomy in their classrooms. Teachers recognize the potential benefits of these reforms, such as the ability to create more personalized learning experiences for students and to enhance student engagement through technology and competency-based assessments. However, teachers also raised concerns about the challenges inherent in implementing these reforms. The gap between the vision of the NEP and its practical application is particularly evident in the areas of training, infrastructure, and support.

One of the most significant challenges highlighted by teachers is the lack of sufficient, high-quality professional development. While there is widespread appreciation for the policy's emphasis on up skilling, many teachers reported that the training programs provided so far have been inadequate and often lack real-world applicability. For the NEP's focus on teacher development to be effective, training programs must not only address theoretical knowledge but also equip teachers with the practical skills necessary to navigate the complexities of modern classrooms. Furthermore, the policy must ensure that training is consistent, ongoing, and tailored to the unique needs of individual educators.

In addition to training, the infrastructure and resources required to support the NEP's reforms are also a major concern. Teachers have expressed frustration over the insufficient technological infrastructure, such as poor internet connectivity and a lack of digital tools. Given that the NEP envisions a significant shift towards digital learning and technology integration, it is essential that these barriers be addressed. Teachers need not only the physical tools but also comprehensive training to integrate technology effectively into their teaching practices.

Another critical issue is the need for clearer guidelines and support systems to help teachers implement the flexible curriculum and competency-based assessments envisioned by the NEP. While many teachers are enthusiastic about the potential of these reforms, they also express concerns about the feasibility of such changes without detailed frameworks, appropriate resources, and sufficient institutional backing. The transition to a more student-centred curriculum and assessment system requires substantial changes in existing practices, including alterations to examination formats and evaluation criteria, as well as on-going support from educational institutions.

Ultimately, the success of NEP 2020 hinges on creating a supportive ecosystem for teachers. This ecosystem must include adequate infrastructure, continuous professional development, and institutional support to help educators navigate the evolving landscape of education. Policymakers must ensure that these provisions are not only visionary but also practical, providing teachers with the tools, training, and resources needed to effectively implement the reforms. Only by addressing these challenges and ensuring that teachers are well-equipped to take on the roles and responsibilities envisioned by the NEP can India hope to achieve its ambitious educational goals.

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Citation: Majumdar. R. & Bairagya. Dr. S., (2025) “Exploring Teachers’ Perceptions on the Provisions of NEP 2020 for Teachers”, *Bharati International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Development (BIJMRD)*, Vol-3, Issue-03, March-2025.