



One-Day Multidisciplinary International Conference on Theme “NEP and the Future of Education: Building Employability Skills through Equity, Excellence, and Sustainability”

One-Day Multidisciplinary International Conference on Theme “NEP and the Future of Education: Building Employability Skills through Equity, Excellence, and Sustainability” Organised by Vidyasagar College of Education, in collaboration with Gandhi Shikshan Bhavan’s Smt. Surajba College of Education, Mumbai (affiliated to University of Mumbai) and Kewalramji Harde Mahavidyalaya, Chamorshi (affiliated to Gondwana University) on 22nd December 2025. The conference commenced with the lighting of the lamp, symbolizing the dispelling of darkness and the pursuit of knowledge. Distinguished guests and dignitaries were warmly welcomed and honored with khada, bouquets, mementoes, and seminar kits. The trainees of the First Semester presented a vibrant group song and dance performance, adding a cultural touch to the occasion. Welcome Address given by Dr. B.K. Jha, Director, Vidyasagar College of Education & Inaugural Address given by Dr. Savita Mishra, Principal, Nakshalbari College, Nakshalbari. Keynote Speeches given by Dr. Nita Mitra, Associate Professor, Siliguri B.Ed College, Siliguri & Prof. Vipin Sharma, Faculty and Director, Head of Planning and Development Unit, English Language Institute, Jazan University, Jazan, Saudi Arabia. Chief Guest Address given by Prof. (Dr.) Sunayana Kadle, Principal, Gandhi Shikshan Bhavan’s Smt. Surajba College of Education, Mumbai followed by vote of Thanks by Mr. Paritosh Mahato, Organising Secretary and Assistant Professor, Vidyasagar College of Education. The technical sessions began at 2:00 p.m. in hybrid mode where Offline Chairperson was Dr. Nita Mitra in which 15 participants presented their research papers. Online Presentations were 70 participants across four parallel sessions, grouped into four categories where four Chairpersons of the Sessions were Smt. Vaishali Dhaware, Associate Professor, Gandhi Shikshan Bhavan’s Smt. Surajba College of Education, Mumbai, Dr. Priti Chandorkar, Associate Professor, Gandhi Shikshan Bhavan’s Smt. Surajba College of Education, Mumbai, Dr. Pawan Ramesh Naik, Assistant Professor, Kewalramji Harde Mahavidyalaya, Chamorshi & Mrs. Archana Tamang, Assistant Professor, Vidyasagar College of Education. Beautiful anchoring done by Samir Kumar Sah and Kajal Kumari, 3rd Semester trainees of Vidyasagar College of Education.

The conference successfully brought together academicians, researchers, and trainees to deliberate on the National Education Policy (NEP) and its role in shaping employability skills through the pillars of equity, excellence, and sustainability. The day-long deliberations concluded with the singing of the National Anthem, marking a dignified closure to the event.

Dr. Savita Mishra

Chief Editor

Development of Employability Skills in the Perspective of the NEP 2020

Dr. Nita Mitra (Keynote Speaker)

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The focus of the lecture revolves around Unemployment, Employability skills, and the Role of Education from the perspective of the NEP 2020

The major issues with unemployment are as follows.

Unemployment has a direct impact on a country's economy. First, this indicates underutilization of the country's human resources. Second, it creates severe pressure on the mental health of the eligible persons, which may lead to a serious threat to the stability of that country. Especially in our country, the situation is alarming since the majority of such unemployed persons are young people.

In this context, one can recall the concept of the great psychologist Erik Erikson, who advocated the term 'Who am I?' This is true for his career as well. If he fails to satisfy the answer, he may face confusion and the development gets delayed. Erikson calls this stage of delay the stage of moratorium. Here, the young individual blindly refuses whatever the parents and others advocate. Erikson has called this state a negative identity. Unless taken care of, India may face a crisis with her young generation for this negative identity.

The major reasons for unemployment can be identified as follows.

The reasons for unemployment can be many: local, national and international. Major ones are: Dominance of unskilled or under-skilled labourers, Skill mismatch and Recent advancement in technology.

People are termed as unskilled or under-skilled when they don't **have sufficient skills beyond their normal education, which is not oriented to a job.** Such people either don't get any job or may get exploited with very low wages, getting involved in jobs that require minimum skill, e.g. fast-food worker, elementary construction worker, etc. Definitely, the education system has to be responsible for empowering such workforce and at the same time changing the social mindset against exploitation.

Skill mismatch occurs when **people acquire vocational skills. But those skills may not be required in the job market.** In order to combat such failures, the education system should train the learner how to identify possible openings and then to acquire the relevant skills. Apart from these, the learner should acquire the skill for getting a particular job that can be used in another job as well.

To reduce the skill mismatch, the following Steps can be taken: One may look at each **vertical sector** of Indian Industry and **assess** the numbers at each level in terms of manpower requirement. The second step is **to create courses** which answer the needs of the skills requirements. The third step is to find **skilled teachers**. One way is to **retain** the experienced workers so that they are able to impart the needed skills to the students. **Skill development** is a major initiative that tries to reach the people who need it the most.

With the above observations, one can take up the issue of recent advancements in technology. Due to the rapid development of technology in the form of AI, Robotics, Machine learning, etc., many jobs are not requiring human labour. In other words, many people are facing the threat of losing their job and the number is huge. However, with a change in the look towards the challenge, one can make it **a helper or a partner.** Let us take the example from the field of teaching and learning. Examples of using technology as a helper are using an overhead projector, power point projections etc. which helped in making the process of teaching and learning more effective. In some critical situations like the lockdown period, there was no other way than to use an online process. We had to make changes in the prevailing pedagogical practices so as to be

possible through an online platform. Here we say, the technology has **become a partner** in the process. One example of the strategy is the TPACK. Job seekers also must be alert about the changes, challenges and opportunities and must be ready to be a lifelong learner.

NEP2020 has given emphasis on the following guidelines to overcome the challenges.

Career mapping: The job seeker should look around with an open mind to the possibilities of careers. While doing so, the person should not be judgmental that this career is good or that career is bad.

Career choices: Here, the job-seeker can make choices. The choice should not be dominated by the feeling that this career is good and that career is bad, or it should not be guided by the opinions of others. Those should be treated as sources of information, and the information available should be cross-checked.

Preparing for the chosen career: Once the choices are made, the person should prepare for the entry requirements for different careers: e.g. relevant content materials, relevant skills like critical thinking and the person's own liking.

Remaining in touch with career counselling through multi channels: Information and guidance are available in the different print media like Employment News, Social Media and other channels. The job-seeking person should keep in touch with these channels.

Now, from the standpoint of education, all of the above activities are not easy and cannot be developed through **the conventional general and even vocational education**. It is a completely new type of education that is multidisciplinary and at the same time integrated. **This is the major recommendation of the NEP2020.**

The recommendations of NEP2020 that promises to enhance employability are compatible with the philosophical bases of education. Prominent philosophical bases are: Swami Vivekananda's **Man-making Education**, Sri Aurobindo's **Integral Education**, Mahatma Gandhi's **Basic Education**, Dewey's **pragmatism**.

Now, one can generalise the need of the moment related to employability skills. Actually, two basic skills required for a teaching post are communication skills and basic psychological counselling skills. Examples of such skills **are innovation, learning how to learn, and transfer learning, the ability to communicate with other persons or a group of persons**. Being equipped with these basic skills, a person is more likely to acquire expertise in other specific skills, and even in multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary environments. Skills can often be divided into **general and specific skills** e.g. in the domain of work, some general skills would include **time management, teamwork and leadership, self-motivation** and others, whereas, domain-specific skills would **be useful only for a certain job**. **Along with this, the words of NEP 2020** deserve important notice: 'Soft skills' are communication, discussion, and debate. This notion of 'knowledge must be brought back to Indian education, as it is exactly the kind of education that will be required for the 21st century.'

With this background, one can have a look at how equity, excellence and sustainability can affect the development of the employability skills.

The act of providing equity ensures extending need-based assistance to different individuals so as to achieve a common goal of building employability skills. In the language of NEP 2020: NEP 2020 rightly points out the importance of 'equitable access to quality education to all students, with a special emphasis on SEDGs.

Excellence means a high level of achievement in some activity. The individual achieves excellence in the attitude, critical thinking and emotional control. The external achievement is an outcome of that internal environment.

Sustainability: means “ability to continue over a long period of time”. For the NEP 2020, the target is: “India’s progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) of ensuring free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education for all children.”

Taken together, the role of Equity, Excellence and Sustainability towards Employability can be summarized as follows. Lack of equity generates inequality on economic and social status that again leads to the digital divide, poor access to modern avenues to information and inability to harness the opportunities. Thus, poor equity leads to poor attitude of excellence and its sustainability, finally leading to lowering employability. In India, the prevalence of poor equity is one of the major problems today. A positive attitude towards sustainability generates the opportunity to create a huge number of job opportunities.

In conclusion, it may be stated that unemployment has a direct impact on the economy of a country. However, the challenge can be overcome. The government and non-government agencies have to develop flexible policies and offer courses which cater to the need of the fast-changing job market. Thanks to NEP2020, it has provided an appropriate guideline in this regard.

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