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# **FOR PROMOTING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A STUDY OF ROLE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY OF INDIA 2020**

## **ABSTRACT:**

According to the 2011 census, India's female population is 48.5 percent of the country's overall population. In today's rapidly changing culture, women's empowerment is critical. Women's self-confidence and social standing can be improved by education, which has a significant impact on women's self-esteem. The ability to make better decisions is aided by education, which increases one's self-confidence. There can be no other way to advance society's goals of economic well-being, education, and family well-being except through empowering its female members. Education and literacy provide women greater agency in their lives. In addition to reducing poverty, increasing career opportunities, delaying marriages, and improving health, education helps empower women. The National Policy on Education (NPE) is an Indian government initiative aimed at increasing access to education for all Indians, men and women alike. All students, rural and urban alike, are covered by the policy, which extends from elementary school through college. The goal of the strategy is to identify the root causes of the unfair treatment females have endured, such as gender stereotypes and long-held beliefs and habits. As a result, this study examines critically NEP 2020's role in women's

emancipation. As a survey of the existing research on the subject, the paper serves as a comprehensive resource for the reader. In the light of what has been said, it appears that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to provide an equitable and inclusive education for all students, with a particular emphasis on girls and young women from low-income families. The research recommends a number of ways to boost the number of women attending college. "Special education zones, Gender Inclusion Funds, Targeted Scholarships and formula-based and discretionary support of gender inclusionary projects in school levels are all part of this plan". For policymakers, findings from this study will aid in the development of initiatives to empower women through NEP. As a result of the study's findings, the researchers also offered ways to empower women through NEP.

**Keywords:** New Education Policy, Education System, Ancient Education, Modern Education, NEP, Women Empowerment

## INTRODUCTION

The universal law of change is constant and unalterable. It changes constantly around here. Every civilisation has been affected by the process of evolution. Social change is a fact of life in the modern world. Indian society is not an exception to this rule, either. The historical study of Indian society has shown numerous social, economic, political, and other shifts that have occurred throughout the course of time, from the prehistoric to the modern eras. The two primary types of transformation are incremental and radical. Nature brings about the first form of change, whereas human effort causes the second type. We have no control over the course of nature. However, one strives to innovate through bringing about improvements in both life and society through human change. Today, if society is to undergo any kind of reform, it must first make changes to its educational policies. It is easy to see how important the government views education as a matter of national security in any country by looking at how much attention it devotes to it.

Government of India's National Policy on Education (NPE) is a policy that promotes education in India. Rural and urban areas of India are both covered by the policy. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi issued India's first NPE in 1968; Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi followed suit in 1986; and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will issue India's third NPE in 2020.

The new educational system in India is outlined in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which was adopted by the Indian Union Cabinet on July 29th, 2020. The 1986 National Policy on Education has been replaced with the current policy. Education from elementary school through university and vocational training are all part of the policy's complete framework in rural and urban India. By 2021, the policy's goal is to completely overhaul India's educational system. With regard to implementation, NEP's language policy is meant to be a wide guideline with a strong advisory component. India's education policy is significantly altered under

the NEP 2020. As quickly as possible, the government wants to increase education spending from 4% to 6% of GDP.

Every civilization, state, or nation needs women to be empowered. Women play a major role in a child's everyday existence. In contemporary society, women play an important role. It is possible that empowering women via education could lead to a positive attitude adjustment. The socioeconomic and political progress of India depends on it. Positive action to promote women's empowerment is mandated under the Indian Constitution. Women's lives are profoundly influenced by their education. In order to empower women in society, the most important weapon to use is knowledge. In addition to the development of an individual's personality itself, it has a major impact on economic, social, and cultural development as well. Women, in particular, can make better decisions for their children's health and well-being when they have more education.

When women are empowered by education, they may tackle their challenges, question their roles, and improve their lives. An education is the most potent tool a woman has to change her place in society. They're still ignorant, backward and weak and exploited in large numbers by our country's ladies. Getting an education can also benefit a person's social standing and reduce disparities. Through education and training, women's empowerment and capacity building can assist them better their lives. Until women are educated and empowered, India can never become a developed country, which is only possible if they contribute to the best of their potential.

The goal of a well-rounded education is to develop the whole person, including the mind, body, soul, culture, emotions, and values. "In the long run, all undergraduate programmes, including those in the medical, technical, and vocational fields, will use this way of providing a well-rounded education. Accomplished curriculum, engaged teaching, consistent formative assessment, and enough student assistance are all part of an ideal learning environment".

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to ensure that all children and young people, especially those from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds, have access to an equal and inclusive education. Even though women's education is a priority, the dropout rate for girls after high school persists despite these efforts. At the secondary and post-secondary levels, enrollment is also declining. In addition to other factors, menstruation and a lack of access to sanitary facilities are two of the most common reasons why girls drop out of school.

## **ANCIENT EDUCATION SYSTEM OF INDIA**

Since the beginning of time, India has been the centre of knowledge. Inscriptions on stones and metals, records written on palm leaves, and our sacred texts all attest to India's long history as a centre of learning. Syllabuses, curricula, textbooks, and assessment procedures are all used in today's education system. The ancient educational system was revered as a repository of wisdom, customs, and beliefs that served as a guide and inspiration for the rest of humankind. Many early travellers to India exclaimed, "India is a place of wonder!"

Throughout our ancient education system, which dates back to the time of the Rigveda, we concentrated on a holistic development of the individual by taking care of both the inner and outer self. The approach emphasised the importance of all four facets of human existence: moral, physical, spiritual, and intellectual. Respect for all creations was emphasised as well as the virtues of sincerity, discipline, and self-reliance. Students were taught to recognise the interplay between humans and nature.

Both a formal and an informal educational system existed in ancient India. Tols and chatuspadis were common places for indigenous students to learn outside of formal educational settings. Young children were taught the virtues of piety by adults in their homes, villages, and temples. Aside from its religious significance in our ancient civilization, temples were also centres for education and learning. Viharas and universities were attended by students in search of higher education. Students were mostly taught orally and were able to retain and apply what they learned.

Pre-colonial India had a flourishing indigenous education system. This was a development on the established formal system.

India's traditional education system was centred on preparing pupils for life by developing their inner and outer selves. Free and decentralised education was the norm.

India's old education system has a lot to teach us in the modern world. As a result, the emphasis is on making connections between what students learn in the classroom and the rest of the world. Multicultural and multilingual education is now widely acknowledged by educationalists as an essential part of bridging the gap between traditional and modern knowledge.

## **INDIGENOUS SYSTEM OF EDUCATION**

Higher and elementary schools were the two most common forms of indigenous institutions. There was no secondary schooling.

The following are examples of colleges and universities:

- a) Tols for the Hindus and
- b) Madrashes for Muslims

There were four types of elementary schools:

1. Pathshalas of Hinduism,
2. Maktabas (Islamic places of worship)
3. Persian and Arabic educational establishments, as well as
4. Institutions that instruct students in modern Indian languages.

(Source: <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/india-2/education-india-2/indigenous-education-in-india-education/89637>)

During the early years of British rule in India, the indigenous educational system was rapidly deteriorating due to the instability that prevailed and the growing poverty that affected the people.

The demise of indigenous educational institutions was due to a variety of factors. In addition to the exclusion of girls and Harijan students, they had other flaws. Teachers were untrained and had little or no education. The failure of indigenous education was largely due to the incompetence and ignorance of its teachers. From a financial standpoint, they were paid an amount that was unappealing. An exceedingly limited and constrained curriculum was offered. The students received a harsh sort of punishment. The administrators of the East India Company encouraged the English method of education because of the complete disregard for the local system. The indigenous institutions were allowed to die out naturally, and a new system of education was established in their place. As a result, the State showed little regard for the already-existing educational establishments. Another factor was the rise in the usage of English in official settings like government agencies. English replaced Persian as the official language of the Court. It was regarded a must to speak fluent English in order to land lucrative government jobs. The local princes and businessmen also abandoned the indigenous schools. Indians' deteriorating economic conditions worsened the crisis. Source: ([http://www.rajimr.com/ijre/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/IJRE\\_2014\\_vol03\\_issue\\_03\\_12.pdf](http://www.rajimr.com/ijre/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/IJRE_2014_vol03_issue_03_12.pdf))

## **MODERN EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Colonial era: Macaulay, who brought and established the British educational system in the early 20th century, is largely to blame for the current state of affairs in India's education system. Training Indian Clerks to manage local administration was its principal goal. While English was the only language of instruction for higher education, local languages were used for classroom instruction. British government aid to indigenous schools in need led to some of those institutions being sponsored by the British state over time. In the 1920s, the establishment of missionary schools further cemented British education's hold on India. Education under British rule in India throughout the 19th century was more focused on the humanities than on the advancement of science or technology.

**POST-INDEPENDENCE:** The National Policy of Education (1992) outlined a number of objectives for the development of India's educational system following the country's independence, although not all of these objectives have been met. The exam arrangement is designed to discourage memorization, yet that isn't what is occurring. Education in India appears to emphasise memorization rather than exploration and critical thinking. There is some inconsistency in assessments because each State Board has its own evaluation standards. Additional reservations based on caste and religion are another difficulty in Indian education. Student politics and the allotment of seats in higher education institutions are both fraught with corruption. India's educational system is being confronted with a wide range of obstacles. These include issues relating to funding, infrastructure, curriculum design, distant learning and the universalization of education, among others. These are a few of the issues that need to be addressed beforehand. Indian education has come a long way and will only grow better in the future, despite discrepancies between educational objectives and how they are actually implemented. The contemporary educational system's strength is in improvised adoptions in the fields of information technology, engineering, and medicine. Education in India is very effective even if it lags behind other countries' systems. India is a major producer of software developers and programmers. Many

pharmaceutical and surgical treatments that were developed in other countries are re-created and made available to the general people at extremely low prices in the United States.

The government established a planning commission in 1950 to create a development plan for education in India in order to achieve constant growth in education. After then, other strategies were created, with the following as their primary objectives:

- To implement primary education for everybody
- Eliminate illiteracy
- To provide programmes for skill and vocational training
- To raise standards and modernise all levels of education, with a focus on technical education, science education, environmental education, moral education, and school-work integration
- To establish infrastructure for high-quality education in each and every region of the nation.

### **NATIONAL POLICY OF EDUCATION – 1968**

Kothari Commission suggestions were included into Indira Gandhi's education policy in 1968, when she became India's first female PM (1964–1966). The goal of this programme was to create national integration, increased cultural diversity, and economic growth through the equal distribution of educational opportunities.

- The policy's goal was to establish a national educational structure known as '10+2+3', which was widely approved. It was imperative that all children under the age of 14 get compulsory education, as mandated by the Constitution of India, according to the policy.
- Children were taught regional languages, including Hindi, by the then-government because they were aware of its importance. It was proposed that secondary education follow the "three-language formula" at the time.
- For the formula, it stated that kids were taught English, the state's official language, and Hindi as a supplement to that instruction. Controversy erupted over the plan to make Hindi the official language.

### **NATIONAL POLICY OF EDUCATION – 1986**

A new national education strategy was unveiled in 1986, spearheaded by Rajiv Gandhi. This strategy aimed to provide Indian women, Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Scheduled Castes (SC) with equitable access to higher education.

In an effort to improve elementary school conditions across the country, "Operation Blackboard" was initiated. In addition, the Indira Gandhi National Open University was established in 1985 as part of the Open University system. Many changes were made to NPE following the 1986 adoption of the National Policy on Education (NPE), in response to changing conditions.

### **NPE – 1986: MODIFICATIONS**



In 1992, PV Narasimha Rao revised the NPE and shifted the emphasis to postsecondary education. There was a push for the creation of 20 new universities, as well as increased funding for curriculum modernization and research allowances for MPhil and PhD students.

Manmohan Singh, India's previous Prime Minister, introduced the "Common Minimum Programme" in 2005, revising it to include the idea of holding a single national entrance examination on all Indian bases for admission to the country's professional and technical programmes.

While JEE (Joint Entrance Examination) and All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE) were established at the national level, there was an option to take the SLEEE test for state-level institutions.

### **NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020:**

“On July 30, 2020, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 was published. In order to ensure that everyone has access to an education, the NEP makes several important recommendations, including I redesigning the structure of the school curriculum to include early childhood care and education, (ii) reducing dropout rates, (iii) raising gross enrolment in higher education to 50% by 2035, and (iv) enhancing research in higher education institutions by establishing a Research Foundation”.

Only the availability of a top-notch higher education makes it possible for an individual to accomplish and grow, engage in responsible public life, and make positive contributions to society. Citizens must be given the tools through education to lead fulfilling lives, create productive workplaces, and achieve financial independence. As a result, it is crucial to incorporate a specific set of values and skills at every learning stage, from preschool to higher education. Therefore, NEP introduces a number of corrections and enhancements to have a practical and long-lasting impact on the country's higher education environment.

A comprehensive and multifunctional educational system is being established throughout the nation as part of NEP, 2020. Holistic and multidisciplinary education are longstanding traditions in India. The importance of multidisciplinary learning in Indian education cannot be overstated, as this is the type of education that will be needed in the twenty-first century. The goal of a comprehensive, holistic education is to fully develop each student's potential. Such education will support the holistic growth of individuals in all domains, including the humanities, social sciences, humanities, and technical fields; a social engagement ethic; soft skills, such as communication; and careful specialisation in desired fields.

<https://www.sentinelassam.com/editorial/nep-2020-and-higher-education-543483>

### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

At the 1985 international women's conference in NAROIBI, the idea of women's empowerment was first presented. Women's empowerment is defined as raising women's self-esteem, decision-making capacity, and ability to affect societal change for both herself and others. The empowerment of women is related to gender equality. The concept of gender refers to the set of societal constructs that establish the roles of men, women,

and other genders. Although empowerment can occur in many different socioeconomic classes, it is most frequently observed in business and politics. Human rights consider problems like gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is regarded as a crucial instrument for determining how well a nation is doing. Many countries do not allow women and young girls to attend school. In contrast, a woman who is knowledgeable has the best chance of contributing to society.

Women's empowerment, according to the United National Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), is the process of

- Learning about gender relations and the ways in which they might be altered.
- Gaining a sense of value, the conviction that one can bring about desired changes, and the right to be in charge of one's life.
- Having the power to make decisions increases your negotiating position.
- Gaining the capacity to plan and direct social change in order to establish a more just social and economic system on a national and international level.

### **IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION FOR WOMEN**

The qualities of family members and society at large may be impacted by the education of women. It also helps to get rid of negative habits like dowry, early marriage, and Sati-Pratha, among others. Since education gives women various career options that enable them to work alongside men and support their families, it is essential for ending economic poverty. Education encourages teamwork rather than empowering a woman to be autonomous. Because of her education, she will be able to select the best career for her.

- Every woman has her own goals, which can be great or low. Education helps women build balanced aspirations by enabling them to recognise their interests, skills, and potential, which then enables them to choose the right line of work.
- Education aids in the development of personality
- Effective communication is aided by education.
- An educated woman is a role model for her children, family, society, and nation; she knows how to raise a happy family and sustain harmonious interpersonal connections.
- Education improves mental wellness.
- Education of women aids in population control.
- Education encourages participation in numerous initiatives, including the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Operation Blackboard, and Total Literacy Programs, among others, for women, particularly rural women.

### **ANALYSIS OF IMPACT OF NEP ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**



Girl education in India may face a setback after the government unveiled its new National Education Policy, which it claims is designed to meet the needs of today's society. First time in 34 years that the progressive policy has promised to improve the educational process, like a Gender Inclusion Fund for equal education for girls

With a clear grasp on the current socioeconomic landscape as well as the potential of future unpredictability, the policy introduces an array of reforms. "An entirely new set of skills is needed to keep up in today's rapidly changing economy, which necessitates a completely different approach to education for the next generation". The pandemic's acceleration of digitalization and disruptive automation makes this an even more critical prerequisite today. The National Education Program 2020 (NEP 2020) aims to produce experts in a wide range of sectors, from agriculture to artificial intelligence, in order to meet the challenges of the future. India must be future-proofed. As a result of the NEP 2020, a large number of young people who are interested in pursuing higher education will be more prepared than ever before.

In order to achieve a unified structural transformation, the new education strategy must be able to interact with other government policy initiatives like "Digital India," "Skill India," and "New Industrial Policy," among others. This can be achieved by making use of the lessons learned through Skill India's more dynamic interaction with the corporate sector in order to develop vocational education curriculum and make it a successful one. More evidence-based decision making is needed to keep up with the rapid evolution of transmutations and disruptions. NEP has assured us with real-time evaluation methodologies and a consultative monitoring and review system. As a result, the educational system will not need to be constantly reformed by a new education strategy every 10 years. In and of itself, this will be a great accomplishment. The NEP 2020 represents a turning point for higher education's future. This initiative is extremely unique because of its capacity to be deployed quickly.

VP National Education Policy (NEP) will help "every woman become financially independent," Delhi University's Yogesh Singh said on Monday, per the New York Times.

If the National Education Program (NEP) is properly implemented, "we will need more teachers in the coming years," stated Mr. Singh. This policy should be supported by "all university stakeholders," he stated, and they should work together to ensure the NEP is successful.

NEP's various entry and exit options for undergraduates will help the majority of female students, says Mr. Singh, who cites figures that show many girls are unable to complete their education for a number of reasons.

Allow them to take a break from education and restart it at a time that is convenient for them," says the author. If a student dropped out of high school in the middle of the year, she could only show that she had completed the 12th grade. Because they will have a diploma from the NEP, students will be able to find work even if they do not complete their degrees.

In the view of the Vice-Chancellor, new elements such as the NEP's academic bank of credit and skill development will aid every woman in achieving financial self sufficiency.

With its emphasis on dissertation and research in the fourth year of the undergraduate degree for original ideas, Mr. Singh claims that the National Education Policy (NEP) will bring about a system that emphasises innovation, creativity, and originality. " Students who duplicate and buy dissertations are doing us no favours. The V-C argued that a paradigm shift is necessary to produce new ideas.

This college, which began as an intermediate college in two rooms near Jama Masjid, moved to Chandrawali Bhawan in Civil Lines in 1934 and ended up at Alipore House in 1939, was launched by the Delhi University Vice Chancellor with the help of the college's archives and museum.

The United Nations General Assembly endorsed the resolution on "The Elimination of Discrimination Against Women" (CEDAW). CEDAW has drafted a global women's rights charter. Article 10 of CEDAW addresses women's right to education. In support of gender equality, India has ratified the CEDAW.

There are certain fundamental issues connected to gender in India's education system that are addressed in the 2019 National Education Policy. India's educational attainment challenges and solutions for the fourth Sustainable Development Goal can be learned from. One's ability to gain access to information is the most critical of the three. The study suggests a number of approaches to increase the number of female students in college, according to the findings. Gender inclusionary projects at the school level will be supported through formulas and discretionary funding in these special education zones, Gender Inclusion Funds, Targeted Scholarships, and other means. Additionally, the study touches on the subject of sexual harassment that women face when they commute to and from school as well as in the classrooms itself, Girls from low-income families should be given free school lunches as part of the report's recommendations.

Women's empowerment relies heavily on their educational and economic opportunities. It's possible for a woman to feel powerless even if she works as a maid or other low-level employee. The opposite is also true: a lady may be intelligent. Her lack of wealth means she is still not powerful. As a result, financial stability is essential for women's empowerment. As a society, women who have received an education are in a far better position to succeed in the workplace than those who lack education.

The process of empowerment can be seen in the rise of self-confidence and sensitivity to issues of gender equity. These elements can be cultivated through education. Educated women are more aware of their rights, and empowered women are less likely to face prejudice.

Girls' educational access and expansion demands not only improve enrolment, but they also remove to a considerable extent barriers to girls' equal educational opportunities. Along with this, the correct execution of laws and regulations from the central to the grassroots level is necessary to achieve UEE's goal for all children and make them worthy of delight. More research and better analysis of the core reasons are equally important in their implementation in this setting. " The issue of girls' quality educational development will continue unless the mindsets of parents, teachers, school authorities, and administrators are shifted toward a gender-sensitive setting.

- Reduced dropout rates and dropout of school-age children will result from ensuring and completing children's sustainability from primary to upper primary level.
- Program staff participation is required in the communities in question to raise awareness among the parents of dropouts and school-age children. With the help of SMC members, these youngsters will be identified as helpful measures in this respect.
- Program managers will be able to spot school issues and take the necessary action with the support of the authority's routine school visits and inspections.
- The school administration must use funds effectively and with careful preparation in the school's needy areas.
- To fill the open positions and close the gap required by the PTR standards, the government should hire more teachers.
- To fix the flaws in the "policy of not holding back in any courses," it is necessary to regularly evaluate the quality of teacher learning students.

## CONCLUSION

If effectively implemented, the new “National Education Policy, 2020”, which has been approved by the central government to improve the Indian educational system to match the needs of the 21st century India, will make India one of the top nations in the world. Equivalent Children from three years old to eighteen years old have been subject to the Right to Education Act of 2009 under the new education strategy, 2020. This new education strategy, which was introduced after 34 years, intends to universalize pre-primary education (for children between the ages of 3-6) by 2025 and to give higher education to all students.

Women's empowerment can only develop from fundamental sources when we address contemporary difficulties through a participative and value-adding form of education invested in building significant social infrastructure for women. The policy acknowledges the increased educational obstacles faced by female students, particularly in primary school. The policy identifies four separate socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), and it acknowledges that girls in each segment face additional disadvantages owing to their gender – around 50 percent of each group. By enhancing the infrastructural credibility of government schools, which will assure the availability of safe, clean, and completely operating toilets, important measures have been taken to reduce the gap of female dropouts in school. Provisions for the formation of walking groups and the distribution of bicycles, which have been proven to promote female attendance in schools by providing a safe way of transportation, have been included in the policy.

Although the succeeding governments have put up a variety of initiatives for the welfare and empowerment of women, obstacles still exist for women in our society. As a result, significantly greater actions like NEP 2020 are required to safeguard women. Additionally, it's important to maintain their dignity on par with men's stature in society. This can only be made possible through education and NEP 2020, will help to accomplish this.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PROMOTING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

1. There must be a broader definition of "education" in order to include all students, especially girls, in educational decisions. Education policy should also address young men and boys in order to modify their attitudes toward women and girls.
2. In order to lower the greater dropout rate among girls in secondary school, financial incentives should be increased.
3. Families with two girls should be eligible for the Postgraduate Indira Gandhi Scholarship, which is now only available to single girl families.
4. Education, information, and communication efforts should be offered to communities and districts that are able to achieve an equal child sex ratio.
5. Legislations that emphasise women's empowerment through education must be strictly enforced.
6. For the sake of keeping track of government spending on scholarships for female students, e-governance should be given more attention.
7. Hostels should have facilities for both sexes for the sake of comfort and safety.
8. Public schools must provide transportation services for female students that enable last-mile connectivity in order to broaden their reach.

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