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A Statistical Exploration of Flexibility and Inclusivity under NEP 2020

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ABSTRACT
The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, introduced by the Government of India, aims to transform the educational system to better suit the needs of a knowledge-driven society. Replacing the old policy, NEP focuses on quality, equity, accessibility, and accountability in education. A significant change is made to align with students' cognitive development from early childhood to secondary education. Additionally, it supports a flexible and multidisciplinary approach, allowing students to choose subjects that match their interests and career aspirations. Findings from the study indicate that the NEP is progressing toward creating a more student-centric and flexible education system in India, although continued efforts and stakeholder feedback are essential for maximizing its potential.

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KEYWORDS: NEP, Skill development, survey, NEP Experience

1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian government launched the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to transform the educational system and meet the demands of a rapidly evolving society. Announced on July 29, 2020, this policy replaces the previous one from 1986. The NEP is founded on principles of accountability, quality, affordability, equity, and accessibility, aiming to create a flexible and student-centered educational framework. One key reform is the shift from the 10+2 system to a 5+3+3+4 model, which includes:

- **Foundational stage (ages 3–8):** Focus on play-based learning.
- **Preparatory stage (ages 8–11):** Introduction to basic literacy and numeracy.

- **Middle stage (ages 11–14):** Hands-on and interdisciplinary learning.
- **Secondary stage (ages 14–18):** Emphasis on critical thinking and career readiness.

The NEP promotes flexibility in subject choice, enabling students to select courses aligned with their interests. Skill-based education begins in Grade 6, with options for internships. It also encourages the use of regional languages for instruction until Grade 5 to enhance understanding and emotional connection to learning. In higher education, NEP introduces:

- A multidisciplinary approach with flexible curricula.
- Multiple entry and exit points in degree programs.
- Establishment of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs).
- An Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) for credit storage.
- A target to raise the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) to 50% by 2035.

Assessment methods are shifting towards competency-based evaluations, focusing on higher-level skills rather than rote memorization, outlining a vision for a transformative educational landscape in India.

Reasons for NEP:
- Outdated syllabus and lack of emphasis on key skills.
- Need for global competitiveness.
- Skill development for job readiness.
- Ensuring equity and inclusion in education.
- Fostering holistic development.
- Integrating technology in learning.
- Promoting multidisciplinary education.
- Enhancing early childhood care for a strong foundation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"Innovative Changes in Assessment and Evaluation under NEP" by Dr. Priya and Jasbeer Kaur discusses the shift in assessment methods from rote learning to a holistic, student-centered approach under NEP 2020. It emphasizes competency-based assessments, Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), and revamps the report card system to include diverse feedback. The article also highlights the flexibility of public exams, the establishment of PARAKH for standardizing assessments, and the role of digital tools to reduce exam stress. Key challenges include teacher training and infrastructure, yet the reforms aim to develop critical thinkers.

"NEP Emphasis on Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Approach" by Dr. R. Krishnaveni and Dr. B. Purushottam focuses on integrating arts, sciences, and vocational subjects in education under NEP 2020. It advocates for flexible curricula, elective choices, and vocational education from Class 6 while emphasizing skills development grounded in ethics. The authors draw inspiration from ancient Indian systems like Nalanda and highlight the need for collaborative programs in creating socially responsible, versatile learners.

"Redefining the Role of Assessment in 21st-Century Education" by Mudasir Ahmad Ganie *et al.* critiques NEP's assessment reforms for promoting technology-integrated, student-centered education. The article advocates for moving away from high-stakes exams towards competency-based evaluations and active learning methods. It recommends technological innovations and emphasizes the importance of teacher training while addressing potential equity issues. The conclusion stresses that the successful implementation of these reforms requires significant investment in infrastructure and inclusivity.

"NEP and Assessment Reforms in Indian Education: A Comprehensive Analysis" by Rakesh Meena emphasizes the need for assessment reforms in line with the NEP.

OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this study is to evaluate the National Education Policy (NEP) system for students and its impact on their academic performance. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To understand how well students adapt to the multidisciplinary courses introduced by the NEP.
- To analyze students' perceptions of career opportunities after the implementation of the NEP.
- To assess the skill levels of the students.

About the data:

The present study utilized a survey-based questionnaire method to collect primary data via Google Forms. The target population consisted of students in Hubblli. A total of 13 questions were designed and distributed among these students. Given a population size of 1,500, a sample size of 306 was determined using the standard sample size formula, as illustrated below:

Sample Size Formula:

$$n = \frac{z^2 \, \hat{p} \, (1 - \hat{p})}{\epsilon^2}$$

Where:
z is the z-score corresponding to the desired confidence level
ϵ is the margin of error
N is the population size
$\hat{p}$ is the estimated population proportion.

The questionnaire was completed by the selected respondents, and the collected data were used for further statistical analysis. The findings of the study provide insights into the perceptions and behaviors of students in Hubblli. The list of questions considered in the study is as follows:

1. Name
2. Age
3. Register number
4. Student Courses
5. Do you feel the new curricular structure is beneficial for students?
6. Have you experienced any skill-based learning as part of your curriculum?
7. Do you think NEP 2020 provides better flexibility in choosing subjects?

8. How has the Emphasis on experiential/practical-based learning affected your education?
9. Have you noticed any changes in teaching methods since the implementation of NEP 2020?
10. Are you given more opportunities to explore interdisciplinary subjects (science with coding languages)
11. Do you think the flexibility of subject selection helps in better career planning?
12. How satisfied are you with the updated learning materials under NEP?
13. Do you think learning multiple languages in this system is beneficial for future opportunities?

Survey Findings and Discussion

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to transform the Indian education system. Our fieldwork focused on real-world implementation in schools and colleges, assessing awareness, teaching methods, and policy adoption. Through interviews and observations, we examined the NEP's impact on students and educators, including the integration of skill-based learning and regional languages. This discussion summarizes key findings, challenges, and suggestions from experience.
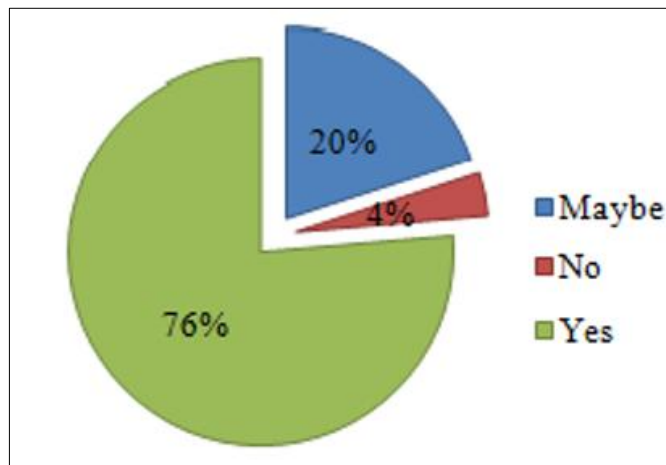

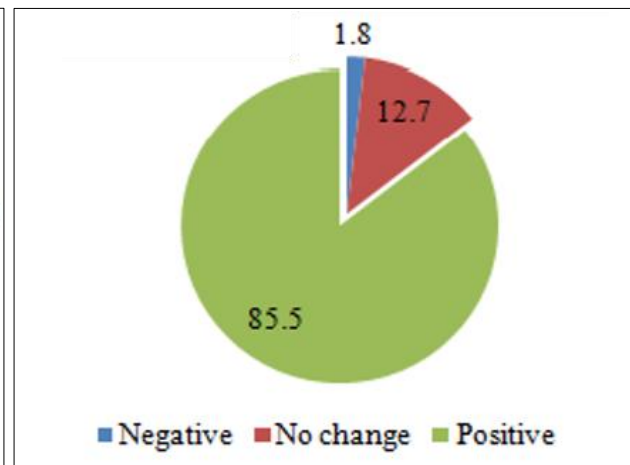**Fig 1:** Perception of the New Curricular Structure among Respondents

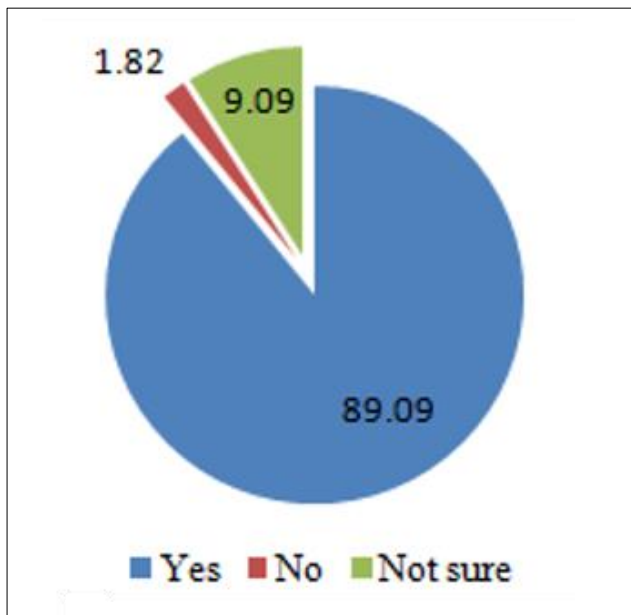**Fig 2:** Impact of Experiential/Practical-Based Learning on Education

Fig 3: Perception of Subject Flexibility and Career Planning
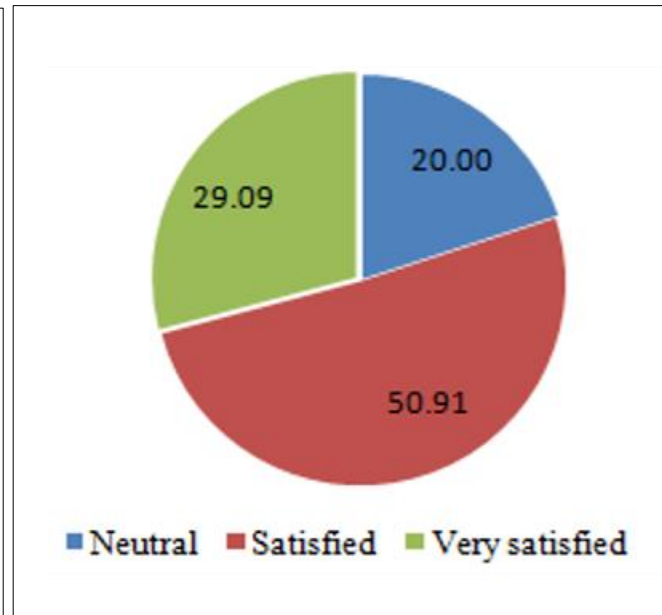

Fig 4: Satisfaction with Updated Learning Materials under NEP

The survey results indicate a positive student response to the key aspects of NEP 2020. A substantial majority (76.4%) regard the new curricular structure as beneficial, particularly in terms of its emphasis on flexibility and holistic development,

while only 3.6% consider it unhelpful. Experiential learning approaches received favorable feedback, with 85.5% of participants indicating that these hands-on methods have significantly enhanced their educational experience. Furthermore, 89.09% of respondents believe that the flexibility in subject selection facilitates improved career planning, thereby highlighting the advantages of the NEP's interdisciplinary framework. In terms of learning materials, approximately 80% of students reported satisfaction, although the 20% who remained neutral suggests a need for more consistent implementation. Overall, the data indicate that NEP 2020 is positively resonating with students; however, areas such as awareness building and uniform execution require further attention to optimize outcomes.
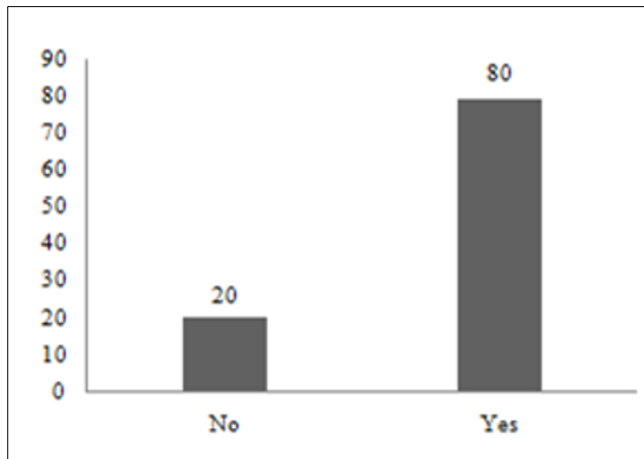

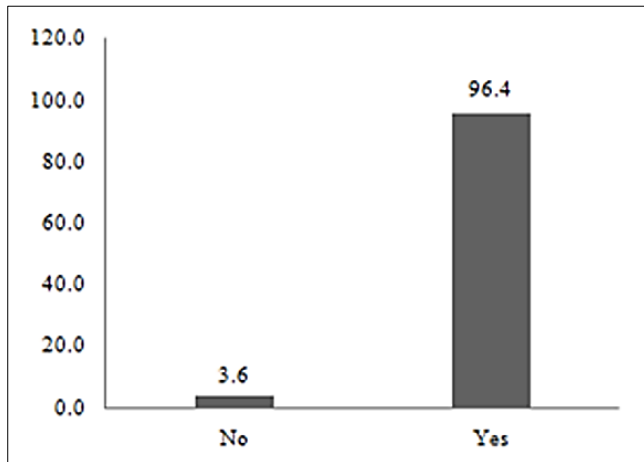**Fig 5:** Experience of Skill-Based Learning in the Curriculum
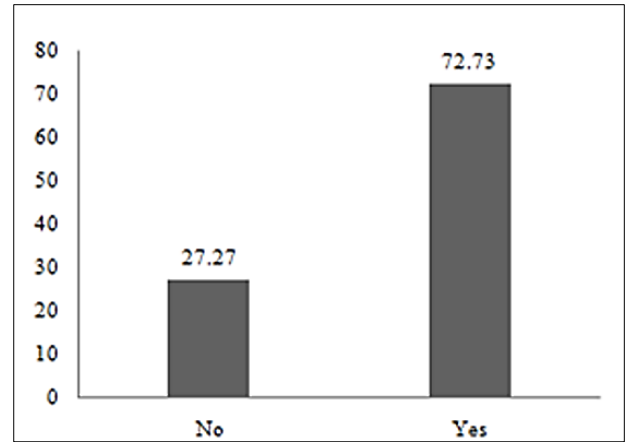

Fig 6: Perception of Subject Flexibility under NEP 2020

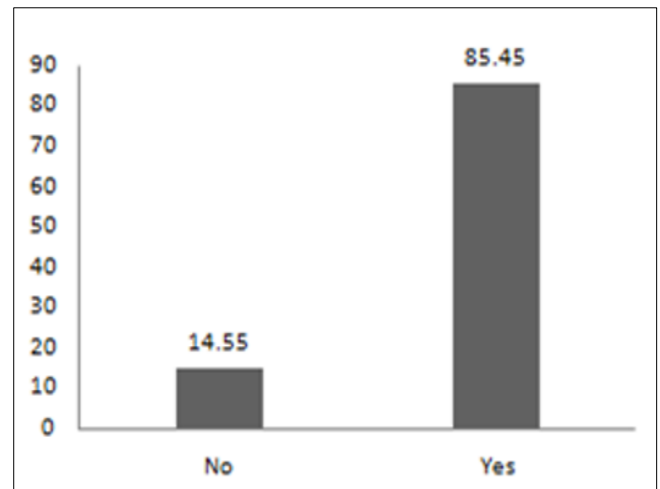**Fig 7:** Changes in Teaching Methods Since NEP 2020 Implementation

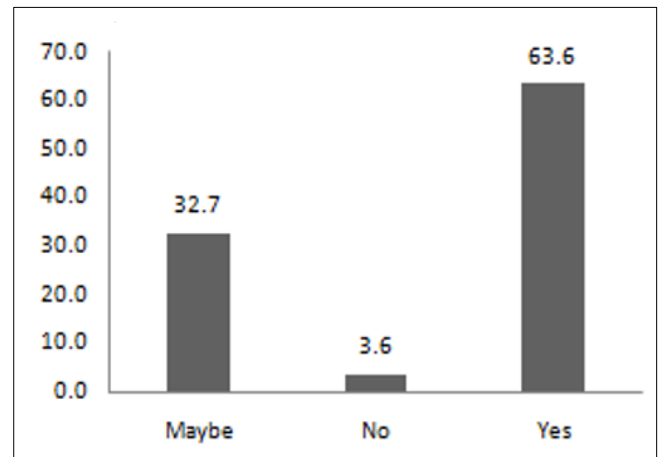**Fig. 8:** Perception of New Assessment Methods Focusing on Overall Learning

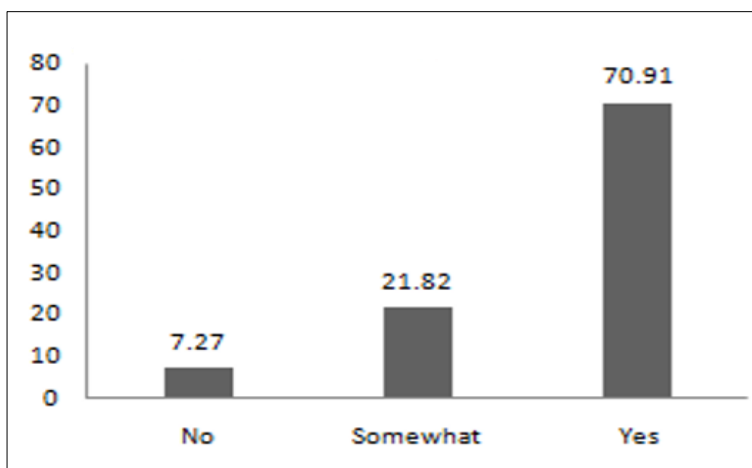**Fig 9:** Perception of NEP System on Higher Education and Career Opportunities

Fig 10: Perception of NEP Syllabus Making Learning More Interesting and Relevant
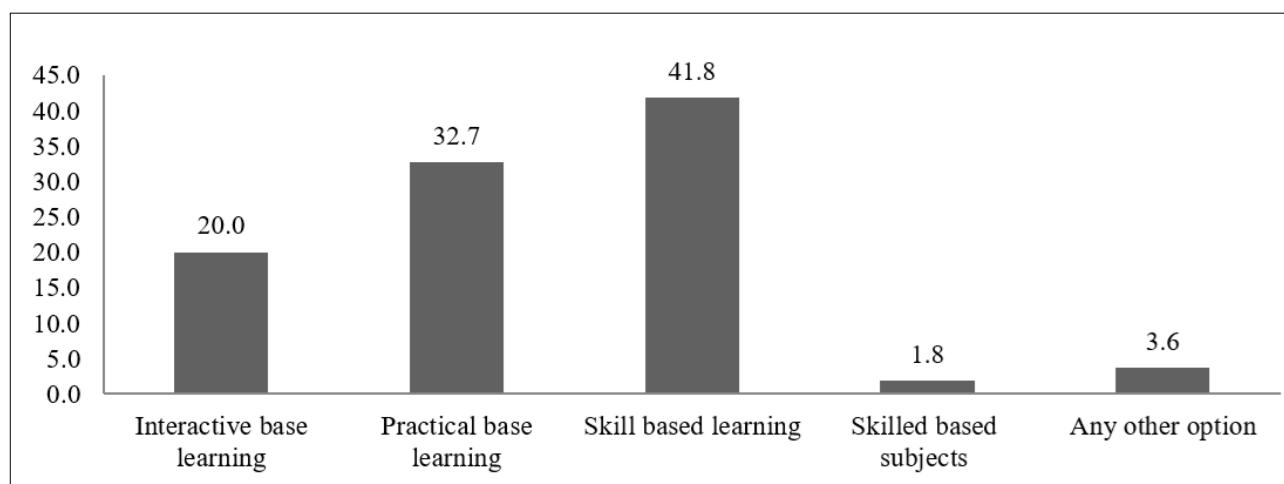

Fig 11: Preferred Improvements in the Syllabus

The findings from the survey indicate a positive response to the National Education Policy (NEP), particularly regarding skill-based and practical learning. Notably, 80% of respondents reported exposure to skill-based education, reflecting alignment with the NEP's focus on job-relevant training. Additionally, 96.4% of students acknowledged greater flexibility in subject choice, while 72.73% observed changes in teaching methods towards more interactive and student-centric approaches. However, disparities remain, with 27.27% noting no changes in teaching practices and 20% lacking exposure to skill-based learning, highlighting implementation gaps. Furthermore, 85.45% felt that assessments now prioritize holistic learning, and 63.6% believed NEP improved opportunities for further education and careers. Despite these positive trends, 32.7% of respondents expressed uncertainty about career prospects, indicating a need for better guidance. This study emphasizes the importance of addressing student engagement and learning preferences within the NEP syllabus. Approximately 71% of students assert that the syllabus enhances their learning experience; however, nearly 30% express concerns, indicating a need for immediate action to rectify gaps in engagement.

Additionally, students favor skill-based, practical, and interactive learning methodologies. These preferences are in alignment with the NEP's objective of promoting experiential, student-centered education. Consequently, the findings stress the urgent requirement for the implementation of innovative teaching strategies and curriculum reforms to effectively meet the needs of contemporary learners.

Table 1: Most Liked Aspects of the NEP Syllabus

SD	% of Respondents Who Like Each Aspect
Any other method	12.7
Assessment	12.7
Learning method	29.1
Subject syllabus	1.8
Syllabus structure	43.6
Grand Total	100

The data shows that 43.6% of students appreciate the syllabus structure introduced by NEP 2020, indicating its organized and flexible format. Additionally, 29.1% favored the interactive learning methods encouraged by NEP. Both the assessment

system and other methods received 12.7% support each, suggesting some students value continuous evaluation and specific tools. However, only 1.8% liked the subject syllabus, pointing to a need for further content revisions. Overall, while the syllabus structure is well-received, ongoing curriculum updates are necessary for improvement.

Table 2: Experience Ratings with NEP-Based System

Ratings	Respondents' Ratings of NEP Experience
Average	21.8
Good	50.9
Poor	5.5
Semi-Average	3.6
Very Good	18.2
Grand Total	100

The data indicate that 50.9% of respondents rated their experience with the NEP-based education system as "Good," and 18.2% rated it as "Very Good". While 21.8% rated their experience as "Average," possibly reflecting mixed feelings due to challenges in implementation, 5.5% rated it as "Poor" and 3.6% as "Semi-Average." This suggests that a minority faced difficulties adapting, likely due to resource limitations or inadequate training. Overall, while the NEP system is positively received by most students, improvements in consistency, infrastructure, and support are needed for a better experience for all.

CONCLUSION

The survey findings offer valuable insights into students' perceptions of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, particularly concerning curriculum structure, teaching methods, and assessment strategies. Overall, responses indicate a positive reception, with many students satisfied with the policy's various aspects.

A key feature appreciated by over 70% of respondents is the increased flexibility in subject selection, which supports individual interests and career planning. Additionally, 80% of students reported engaging in skill-based learning, aligning with the NEP's goal of enhancing employability through practical knowledge.

The shift toward experiential learning has also been notable, with 85.5% believing it positively impacts education, bridging the gap between theory and real-world application. Furthermore, 73% noticed changes in teaching methods, indicating innovation in pedagogy.

Regarding engagement, 71% felt that the NEP has made education more interesting, contributing to better academic outcomes and motivation. Additionally, 85% believe that new assessment methods focus on overall learning rather than grades, reflecting a shift toward conceptual understanding. While most respondents rated their NEP experience as "Good" or "Very Good," many emphasized the need for more skill-based learning and content enrichment.

In conclusion, the survey indicates that the NEP is positively reshaping India's education system to be more student-centric and flexible. Continued efforts in teacher training,

infrastructure, and curriculum revision, along with ongoing feedback from students, will be crucial for fully realizing the policy's potential.

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