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NEP 2020: REVITALIZING THE INDIAN EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN NEW INDIA

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Abstract: Youth act as the real oars that propel the wellbeing of society. They have the capacity to lead society through their knowledge, enthusiasm, potential, expertise, innovation, determination, and commitment. If we cultivate their character through essential values, it serves as a catalyst that yields longitudinal societal benefits. The developmental stage of an individual is crucial for empowerment. Therefore, holistic guidance and support make them active participants in the global world. The National Education Policy 2020 is here to revitalize the whole education system of India which equips students to navigate this swiftly changing world of the 21st century. The main focus of this policy is to build holistic learners, giving India the status of a knowledgeable and vibrant country. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the proposed policy guidelines towards youth empowerment through its significant attributes by revitalizing the educational landscape. Education enlightens youth as productive citizens by unlocking their fullest potential to build a progressive nation. Individuals with skills and wisdom can become a resource for the sustainable growth of society. So, this analysis is an exploration of how NEP 2020 may serve as a hub for experiential, flexible, multidisciplinary, and transformative educational practices, which will empower the youth of the 21st century. NEP 2020 facilitates employability by transforming individuals into human resources with globally relevant skills and training through its revolutionary guidelines in education, promoting economic growth. NEP 2020 reforms education as a powerful catalyst for youth empowerment by instilling life skills, ethics, responsibility, resilience, democratic spirit, and decision-making capabilities in youth to make them globally competent. This discussion attempts to establish a linkage between the transformative policy guidelines and their practical implications for creating holistic global citizens to build a sustainable society.

Keywords– National Education Policy 2020, Educational Landscape, Youth Empowerment

I. INTRODUCTION

We, the people, contributors to a beautiful, inclusive, and harmonious society, must have the paramount responsibility to shape the youth for the future. Youth act as the foundation stone for the wellbeing of society. They have the capacity to shape and nurture the society through their energy, curiosity, potential and skills. At the stage of their development from adolescence to adulthood, in this phase of life they can explore their identities, develop their competency and create their own world. It is the crucial stage for empowering them through holistic development. There is a need to guide and support the youth for making them active participants in the global world. Therefore youth

empowerment is an urgent need for this modern society. In the 21st century the National Education Policy is here to transform the youth to be a responsible Indian citizen through empowering them with essential life skills, knowledge as well as values. To turn their aim into a success, NEP 2020 is aiming to design a holistic framework in order to encourage the youth to become a true human being. The main focus of this policy is to build a holistic learner for giving the status to India as a knowledgeable and vibrant country. Its paramount goal is to mould the individual to confront all the challenges of the fast growing world. NEP-2020 is shifting its preexisting structure to learner-centered education. In this system the learner plays a pivotal role. Youth have the power to make the policy successful and fruitful endeavor. Education is the key for youth empowerment. The prime focus of this policy is to ensure a Lerner centric approach in the classroom. The policy is suggesting numerous recommendations to make the youth through the process of empowerment. As it is the 21st century, a fast growing technological era, the youth need to have competency to cater the demands of this contemporary society. The policy's motto is to enable young youth to develop essential learning and life skills with full potential to provide a bright future. It strives to create a holistic multidisciplinary learning ecosystem for new age learners where individuals get the opportunity to think across specific disciplines and become empowered by accumulating knowledge from disparate fields of study. The policy aims to equip the youth with practical skills along with academic knowledge by integrating vocational education into the curriculum from an early age. This holistic approach enhances students' employability by engaging them in a meaningful way for becoming a positive contributor towards society.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the transformative educational aspects of the National Education Policy 2020.
2. To explore how NEP 2020 fosters youth empowerment.

III. MAIN DISCUSSION

3.1. The Transformative Potential of Educational Praxis as Reflected in NEP 2020:

Education has been the ultimate key to national development since ancient times. It has the supreme power to shape any nation; therefore, its prime focus should be the overall development of individuals. As we know, learning is a simultaneous and interlinked process, in which individuals learn new things through various activities. Therefore, Competency is achieved through academic, physical, mental, intellectual and socio-emotional skills. Under the National Education Policy, the picture of the whole education system is shifting from a traditional teacher-centered approach to a more flexible, engaging, enjoyable, and learner-centric method in response to the needs of modern society. By that time, the processes and systems of education should be revised and finally after 34 years, our education system is revitalizing the Indian educational landscape in the era of contemporary society. The policy always evokes for students holistic development to prepare the new age learner for our future nation. Teaching is being shifted from rote learning to competency based teaching. NEP 2020 is taking all initiatives to provide a supportive environment for students to prioritize student's emotional and mental wellbeing that balance social, emotional and academic development. Overall youth are the real oars for our nation. So, we need to be very passionate about nurturing our future generations with utmost care. The New Education Policy has been drafted based on the contemporary landscape where the learner is the foundation stone of the whole education system. In the contemporary era, academic skills alone are not sufficient, it needs other additional skills. . If the learner is able to utilize their knowledge practically, only then they can achieve the ultimate goal of education.

3.2. Fundamental Pillars of Revitalizing Education:

It's been Five years since the launch of the National Education policy. After drafting the policy, several issues have been raised regarding its implementation. It's taking time to understand its full feature. Some states of our country have taken initiatives, and some are going to adopt some of its best parts. Still, we are not in a stage of its full implementation. NEP 2020 is undoubtedly a revolutionary document because it tries to re sketch the whole Indian education scenario. The NEP 2020 is built on the foundation of five key pillars such as Access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability. In a country like India all aspects need to be evaluated and have to be well served before its implementations. The purpose of the policy is to empower the youth with the necessary skills and knowledge to address the ever- rising multifaceted challenges in their lives as well as society. Therefore, the first and foremost concern is to ensure the access of education .If we cannot provide the opportunity to access the education to everyone; the education policy cannot hold its significance. So first of all everyone must have the opportunity to receive education before everything else and in order to ensure access the policy should come with quintessential initiatives. The another pillar is equity it's a very essential because if we want to balance or reach the zenith goal of education, the requisite facility will be provided to those people who are actually needed for this .NEP 2020 aims to cultivate the youths who are equipped with skills to bring about change in society so its core slogan is always for holistic education by upholding the quality of education and is fully ready to take initiatives for making the education affordable to everyone. Increasing learning outcomes is the ultimate goal of education so every associative agency and institution must be accountable for their activities, which is the fifth pillar of the National Education Policy.

3.3. Multidisciplinary Education for Holistic Growth:

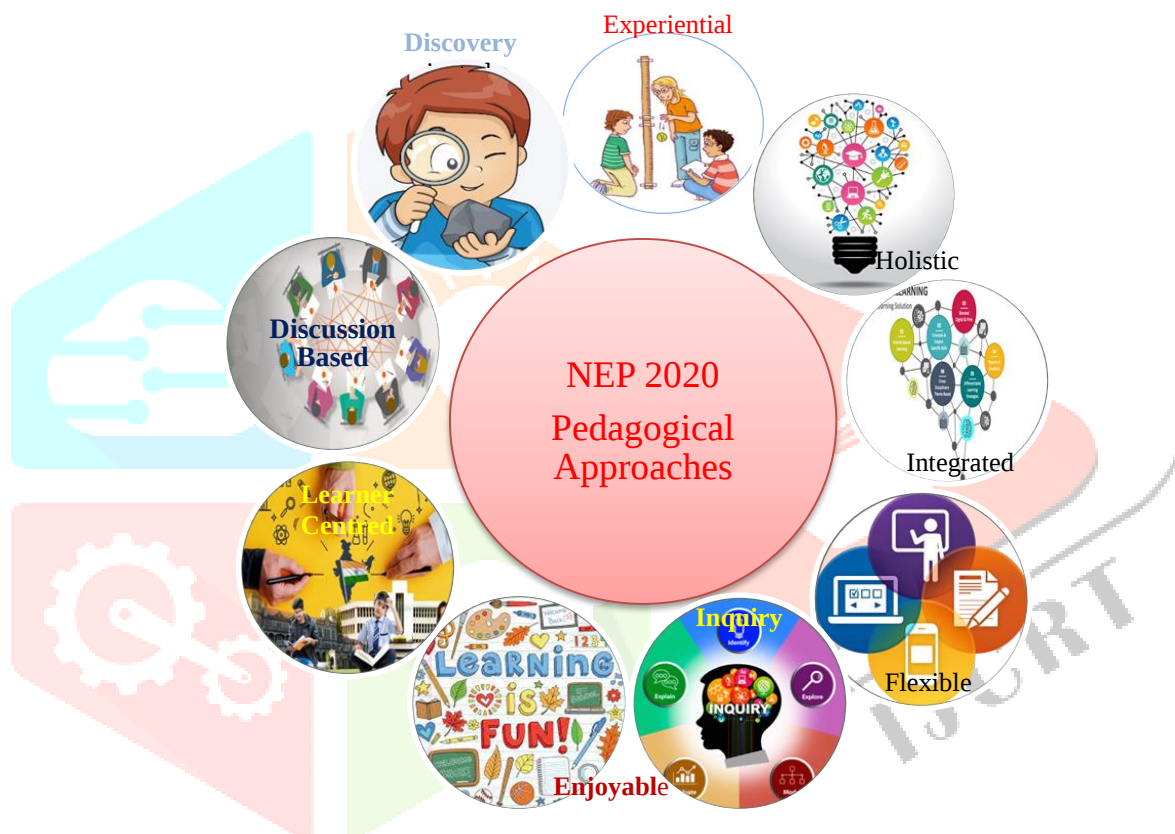
The NEP-2020 is a visionary policy framework aimed at revolutionizing Indian education by ensuring accessibility, making it more inclusive and integrated, facilitating multidisciplinary collaboration, and driving meaningful outcomes. In today's 21st century landscape, the indispensable value of multidisciplinary education is essential for success. The Multidisciplinary and Holistic Education model breaks down our Indian traditional disciplinary boundaries, providing a flexible learning environment for the 21st century that promotes the opportunity to extract their knowledge in various fields like language, science, social science etc. In a multidisciplinary and holistic approach, learners can solely pursue their education based on their interests and potentiality towards their career goals. India is able to produce a versatile and multi-skilled individual with integrated skills from the multiple perspectives of educational discipline.

3.4. Teachers as Catalysts for Empowerment:

Under NEP 2020 Teachers are not only a transmitter of knowledge to their learners but also they are the pedagogical leader to make self-reliant citizens of India. Pedagogical competences of teachers nurture the learners with requisite skills of the contemporary world, by giving the teachers autonomic power and freedom to act as a leader in creation and implementation of innovative pedagogical framework for the excellence and national progress. Teachers as the heart of education should demonstrate multiple roles in shaping learners. Their competencies among the three dimensions like cognitive, affective, psycho motor can lead to change society .As administrators, they should take the responsibility to create the effective curriculum and make a right decision for the benefit of individuals. At the same time teachers must have the capacity to manage and implement the innovative strategies in their classroom. But In today's world above all competencies, teachers should perform as leaders based on a strong affective domain where teachers motivate students through their attitudes, behaviour, value and motivation.

3.5. Transformative Pedagogy:

As per NEP 2020, effective pedagogy for the youth of India must focus on competency building among today's learners, fostering 21st-century innovative and necessary skills. NEP 2020 emphasizes on a learner centered approach providing opportunities for flexibility in subject selection, fostering critical thinking, building a collaborative spirit, and creating an inclusive environment which eventually enables the learners to be active participants in their educational journey. Therefore, relevant pedagogical procedures ensure the accomplishment of the objectives and goals of education. Effective pedagogy must occupy a significant place in ensuring inclusivity, equity and accessibility in our society. Incorporation of practicality in learning enhances job readiness among future professionals as well as their professional prospects. Hence, The National Education Policy 2020 came with a new aspiration to make India's youth self-reliant, enhancing their skills towards the vision of 'Atmanirbhar' Bharat. To make youth future ready, holistic pedagogy should play a vital role.



3.6. Learning Hub for the Youth of the 21st Century:

When we talk about the learning environment it does not refer to a place of learning. In this technology driven landscape we should not encircle our idea of a teaching learning environment only to physical settings rather we can consider it as a place where effective learning erupts as a product where both teachers and learners involve themselves in this noble process. It can be accomplished through virtual as well as physical means nevertheless it is aimed at supporting the diverse needs of every learner and is accessible to all of them. In the fast paced 21st century we should ponder on the 21st century learning environment as our aim to empower the youth. Educators, administrators and all associative agencies should shoulder responsibilities to prepare a fruitful learning framework focusing on 21st century skills that go beyond the 20th century's 3R framework that supports the learner prioritizing reading, writing and arithmetic. The concept of 21st century learning is not for the future, it's happening right now as we have entered this new age of 21st century therefore we don't have enough time for planning we just need to take action immediately for preparing our youth. Where Teachers should have the utmost priority to the students' learning. By cultivating the collaborative mind set and successful implementation of policy practices we turn the NEP's vision into reality in our classroom.

A well-structured and effective curriculum focusing on the development of 21st-century skills among students will make them feel empowered in this new era of learning. In today's world, extracting knowledge from different core subjects possesses mere knowledge acquisition, but students need to incorporate the practical implementation of theoretical concepts and think critically to solve multifaceted problems in life. A learning environment can create a mirror of real world settings where cultivating 21st century skills are essential to prepare learners to cope with today's modern interconnected era. By nurturing an innovative learning environment it is possible to fulfill our dream to empower the students as active contributors of society and leaders of positive transformation for tomorrow's world.

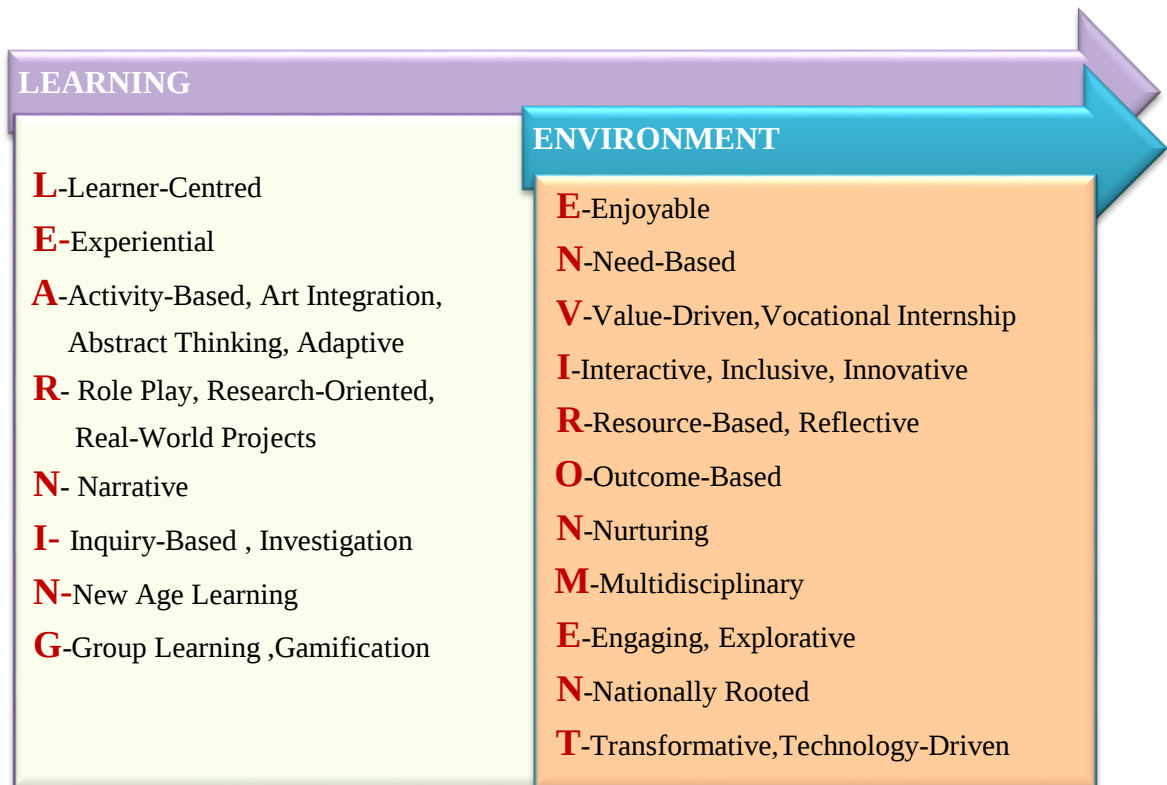


Figure 1: Transformative Pedagogical Practices for Learners

Figure 2: 21st Century Learning Environment

3.8. Competency Building among Youth:

Competency based Education is the core area of NEP 2020, which is a cornerstone of National empowerment. When a learner learns through holistic approaches, it enables them to be competent to embrace our dynamic global era. The flexible curriculum of the NEP 2020 can afford the platform for youth to pursue their learning as per their needs and interest so it will empower the youth to be masters of their learning. NEP 2020 aims to provide a platform where learners can acquire practical knowledge which is required for the 21st century. Education nurtures their hidden potential and develops the right aptitude through training and enabling them to apply their knowledge in the context of real lives and achieve the goals they aspire to.

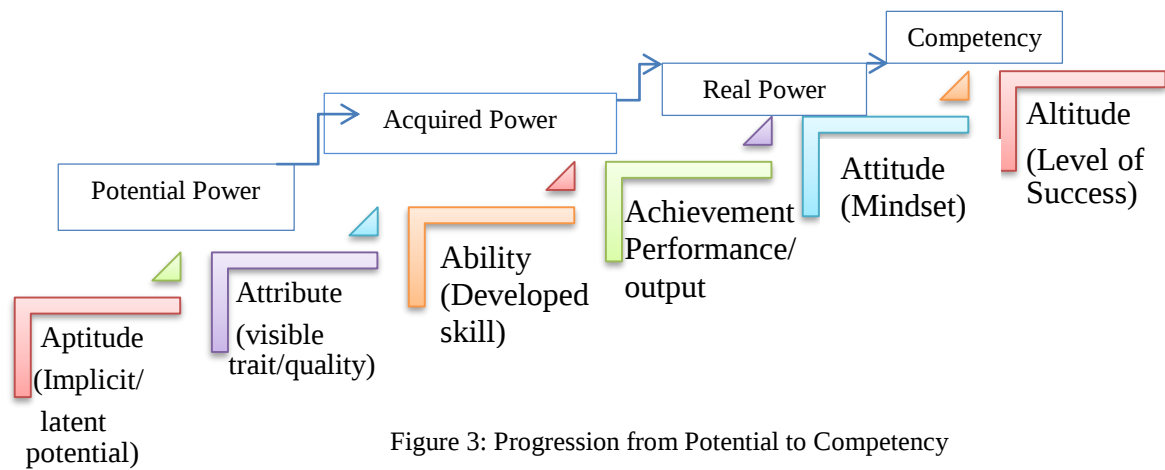


Figure 3: Progression from Potential to Competency

3.9. Skill Development through Vocational Education:

The New National Education Policy (NEP-2020) and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE 2023) represent a significant integration of vocational education into core curriculum which will contribute as an integral part for skill development among students. These pedagogical guidelines aim to break the rigid separation of academic and vocational education for holistic and inclusive society. At the middle stage of learning, the policy has been proposed with few tools such as experiments, hands-on activities, short-term internships, and crafts-based learning. It ensures a career awareness to mitigate the challenge of unemployment with the target of 50 percent engagement of learners in vocational education (NEP-2020 Chapter16, Para 16.1). Integration of 'lokvidya' will introduce to the youth with their indigenous knowledge like local arts crafts, occupation through organizing internships, skill based workshops and curriculum. The vision of this policy is to make the youth Atmanirbhar which could be achieved through skill based education. The concept of "vocal for local" by the government, helps youth to find several job opportunities in their communities. In this regard, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Kendras would be set up in every pocket of the nation. Indian youth will become potential employers rather than job seekers through these diverse skills and knowledge at their various stages of education. Vocational education with its practical skills, make the individual confident, self-reliant, economically independent for holistic empowerment.

3.10. Online and Digital Education:

The NEP 2020 with its goal of technology-enabled learning ensures the access, equity, and quality education for all, which will support the youth for customized learning. This policy suggests establishing an independent organization, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), to facilitate and improve learning, evaluation, planning, and administration by utilizing technology in both school and higher education (NEP-2020, page 56, para-23.3). Initiative like the PM eVidya provides the students the accessibility of the internet especially from distant places. The online platform such as DIKSHA is developed to avail the high quality, multilingual e-content. Use of AI, AR, VR, and mixed learning foster critical thinking among students. As the learners are associated with coding and computing from a very early stage, they become globally competitive in the technology driven era. For Transdisciplinary research, universities will provide access to machine learning for Ph. D., master's and professional domains like health care, agriculture, and law (NEP-2020, page 58, para-23.11). The policy aims to promote artificial intelligence (AI), 3-D machining, big data analysis, machine learning, genomic studies, biotechnology, nanotechnology, and neuroscience for the benefits to health, the environment, and sustainable living. Online Education under this new policy is the progressive step for digital transformation of the Indian education system to drive youth empowerment through essential digital skills and quality learning. Integration of digital platforms and tools enhance the capacity of youth beyond their traditional learning and aims to mitigate the challenges in accessing education from remote areas.

3.11. Human Resource Development:

India's new NEP has brought radical changes to the educational environment with its revolutionary strategies towards Human resource development. The Initiatives of NEP 2020 put a strong emphasis on transforming India's traditional educational systems from memorization to comprehensive, multidisciplinary education, which builds the cornerstone for modern Human resource development. The opportunities of the new policy could produce equipped citizens for tomorrow's India. NEP 2020 is a pioneer of holistic citizens as its aim is to nurture talent and boost employability by integrating practical skills with factual knowledge. Prioritizing effective investment in human capital is crucial to a nation's success, and education is the only way to grow as a human. NEP is aligning learning outcomes with career pathways and emerging as a job creator rather than merely providing employment opportunities.

3.12. Endeavor of NEP 2020: Making the Youth Self-Reliant Entrepreneurs:

The 21st century is the landscape of advancement of knowledge. The most crucial thing of NEP 2020 is focusing on what learners fancy learning rather than what society or external entities expect of them. In this context a significant shift has occurred with this policy prioritizing experimental learning over the burden of the old school method of learning. According to NEP 2020 the youth of 21st century will be more inclined towards becoming job provider by generating employment opportunities and fostering economic growth rather than being job seekers. The primary objective of NEP is not merely to produce the masses with exemplary academic excellence that lacks practical applicability but to focus on employment generation while creating an all rounded citizens by nurturing their potential. Its vision can contribute significantly to the development of the workforce of the future in many different ways. Undoubtedly, better education will increase the employability among the learners. In this new era, Schools and Colleges will play the role of shaping the youth with a growing personality rather than functioning as degree providers.

3.13. Empowered Youth towards a Sustainable India:

Young individuals are the major contributor of national growth. They have the potential to bring socio economic prosperity by availing sustainable education which ensures their engagement and responsibility for sustainable development of the society. Youth with essential competencies may have the potential to shine in various spheres like industry, science, technology, research, engineering, politics, civics, etc. The NEP-2020, with its creative and revolutionary aims, takes transformative initiatives which may fulfill the vision of the UN Sustainable Development Goal globally. The vision of this policy is to make India a super intellectual heritage and inclusive developed country. NEP-2020 seeks to transform India by curricular alignment, adaptive pedagogy, multidisciplinary heritage of learning, professional development of a teacher, collaborative effort of the government and the institution, digital infrastructure, and adequate funding. These holistic frameworks envisioned the ability to prepare youth to navigate the world of reality. This education system may have the potential to shape an individual who can lead the future India through their holistic skills. Moreover, the inclusive approach of this policy can tie up all the people in a single thread from every stratum for ensuring social sustainability. A competent, self-reliant individual could bridge the gap between education and employment. They can address the emerging socio economic and environmental challenges. Therefore Youth empowerment and Sustainability is a deeply interconnected pillar of the nation. Empowered youth can bring sustainable change to society through their innovative solutions and sustainable practices. They can give leadership when our country faces the global threats such as poverty, inequality, and environmental challenges. They will resolve those degradations through their critical thinking and eco-friendly practices. Therefore, India can be called a progressive nation through its empowered citizens.



Figure-4: Relationship between NEP 2020 Initiatives and Youth Empowerment

Implementation and Challenges:

NEP 2020 was introduced in India, on July 29, 2020 and it has now crossed five years since its formulation. All recommendations of this draft still have not yet been adopted by the country. India as a developing country will take more time to reach the policy's target. The policy also mentioned the same and advised to make a review before its implementation. The leading bodies like Ministry of Education, CBE, NTA, NCERT, SCERT, and all authorities related to school and higher education should take the responsibility for successful implementation. It has already started to take initiatives towards implementation but remains incomplete till after five years of policy formulation. Significant initiatives like foundational literacy under NIPUN Bharat Mission, the progression is noticeable, FLN competencies have increased from 58% to 70% between 2020 and 2023. Several states, likely 23 states have adopted the curricular framework based on NEP. In higher education several institutions have implemented Four years undergraduate programmes. Millions of student registered through Academic Bank of Credit (ABC). Digital platforms like DIKSHA and SWAYAM is providing the access of four crore students. In order to professional development 4 lakh teachers have been trained through NISHTHA. (Retrieved from <https://education.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/school-education/implementing-nep-2020-progress-challenges-and-success-stories-in-india/116711149>).

Vocational education has been implementing through 400+ IDEA for fostering skill development. Despite these few successes, there remains uneven adoption by several states. Few states have their own policy and they adopted it partially like West Bengal has not adopted 5+3+3+4 structure.

The execution of NEP 2020 is on the way. The diverse India is facing major obstacles for its implementation. The resources, infrastructure, funding, qualified teachers, accessibility in remote areas, and stakeholder collaboration are all barriers to its goal achievement. The flexibility in availing the course as a degree or diploma is undoubtedly a transformative strategy to reduce the drop rates, but it may raise the question of the worth of the certificates and diplomas that have been gained. To provide the multidisciplinary education, institutions need to reframe the curriculum first. To fully execute the NEP's recommendations, it will demand huge funding for education. The allocation of GDP for education increased from 3% to 6%, but it is still not sufficient to meet the policy's recommendations (Ash, 2025). Although e-learning is becoming popular, it still is far from having full access in remote locations. Expertise in AR/VR technologies is necessary for these digital instructions and labs. In short, although it addresses several challenges still, it provides a transformative plan for India's transition into a global eminence. Therefore; success depends on its efficient execution and ongoing review and assessment

IV. CONCLUSION

Youth empowerment has emerged as a driving force to rejuvenate global growth by transforming Indian education and nurturing global citizens with capabilities in leadership, innovation, and practices within the framework of the new policy. NEP 2020 reforms the era of the 21st century, where productive skills and a skilled workforce are at the heart as a revitalizing mechanism for transforming New India. The New Educational Policy encourages students' voices in making a democratic and collaborative country through a holistic education system. The creation of a holistic learner ensures India develops skill-oriented, ethical, emotionally balanced, value-driven, and culturally aware citizens who are well prepared to cater to all the challenges of the dynamic 21st century. NEP 2020 broadens its educational landscape, especially by including all youth from every stratum of our social structure in India, which strengthens social justice and equality through multi learning pathways for learners. The policy's Gender Inclusion Fund will help reduce barriers among marginalized and socioeconomically disadvantaged groups. Additionally, the strategic intervention of the new policy in digital infrastructure for digital literacy has rejuvenated the Indian education system by providing equal access to diverse learning resources in remote areas as well, which will help to strengthen skill development among youth. Integration of vocational education in the curriculum from an early stage creates the potential for future employability. Thus, the implementation of NEP 2020 will have a sustained impact on the education ecosystem, acting as a catalyst for developing resilient youth in New Bharat.

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