

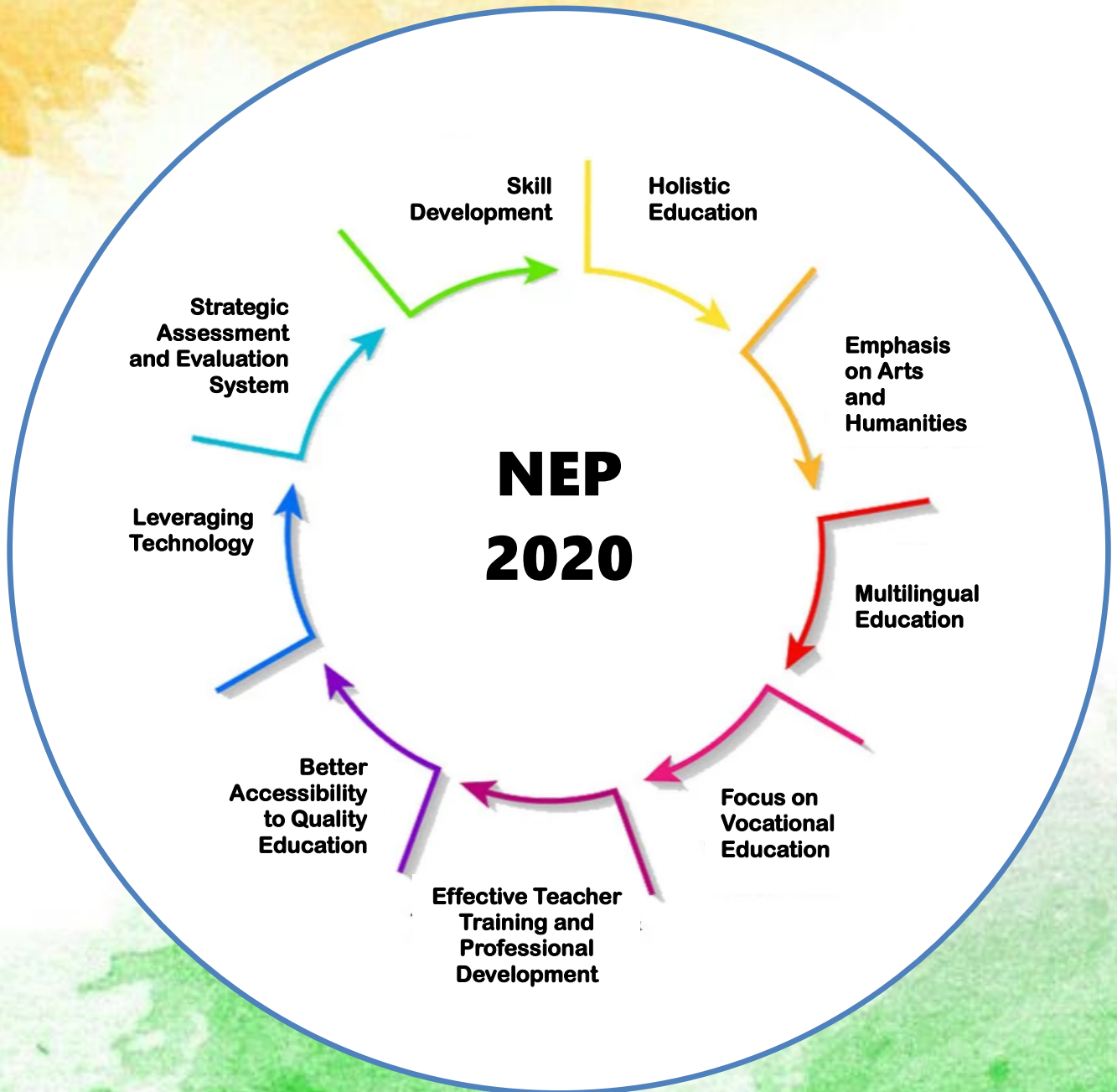
DiscourseZ

The Zillennials' Discourse

An Annual Students' Periodical of the Department of English, Duliajan College
5th Issue: 2024-2025



NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020: THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE



Editors:

Ms. Jyoti Singh Pathak
Mr. Gaurab Sengupta
Ms. Nirupama Dey

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Duliajan

Assam: 786602

Email: duliajancollege@yahoo.in

Phone: 0374-2800356

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E-mail: duliajancollege@yahoo.com, website: www.duliajancollege.in

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Message from the Principal

It gives me immense pleasure to know that the department of English, Duliajan College is going to release its 5th issue of esteemed departmental magazine 'DISCOURSEZ' for the academic year 2024-25 with the theme "NEP 2020: The Students' Perspectives". This milestone is a testament to the creativity, dedication, intellectual sprit and more that define the departmental students as well as faculties.

Over the years, this departmental magazine has served as a vibrant platform for sharing knowledge, celebrating achievements and fostering meaningful dialogue with a different theme every year amongst academic community of the department in particular and the entire college as a whole. Each edition reflects the hard work of the students and faculty, showcasing their creativity, innovations, insightful and thought provoking perspectives.

I sincerely offered my special thanks to the editorial team and all contributors for their relentless efforts in curating valued contents which not only highlights academic excellence but also strengthens the bond between students and faculty.

I encourage everyone to continue contributing ideas, articles and feedback to make future editions even more impactful.

Wishing you all happy reading ahead.



(Dr. Lok Bikash Gogoi)

Principal

Duliajan College, Duliajan

Principal

Duliajan College

Foreword from the Head-Department of English: Duliajan College



As a faculty in Higher Education invariably involved with the implementation of NEP 2020, I have often observed that while there is plenty of literature on the National Education Policy 2020 from multiple perspectives, the views of students who are its crucial stakeholders hardly finds space of importance in the prevailing discourse.

I am extremely privileged to present the 5th Edition of *DiscourseZ*, a journal which goes against the grain by highlighting the students' perspectives on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The policy marks a paradigm shift by emphasizing holistic, multidisciplinary and flexible learning that nurtures critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills.

Our students, as the primary stakeholders in this reform, offer invaluable insights into its potential impact. Their voices reflect enthusiasm for a student-centric approach, greater freedom in subject choices and the integration of experiential and skill-based learning. As we implement NEP 2020 their feedback is crucial in shaping its success and ensuring that education remains inclusive, equitable and future-ready.

I congratulate the contributors of this journal for their thoughtful reflections and commend the efforts of the entire team for bringing this discussion to the forefront. May this initiative inspire constructive dialogue and pave the way for an enriched learning experience for all.

Ms. Jyoti Singh Pathak
Vice-Principal- Duliajan College,
Associate Professor and Head
Department of English
Duliajan College

Message from the Head: Department of English- Dibrugarh University



Dear members of Editorial Board, contributors and readers of *DiscourseZ*.

I first congratulate the Editorial Board for coming out with the fifth issue of *DiscourseZ*. It is indeed a great platform for young writers to exhibit their promise, prowess, and passion in negotiating with the written word. I wish them the very best!

With the launch of the Four Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) in 2023, aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the academic journey of learners has taken a bold, new direction. Gone are the days of being confined to a single discipline. Instead, these learners are getting the opportunity to explore, experiment, and engage with a wide range of subjects—from Core Courses in their primary field to Minors, Value-Added Courses (VACs), Skill-Enhancement Courses (SECs), and Generic Elective Courses (GECs).

This shift is totally aligned with the needs of the time - skilling practices in the twenty-first century - which cannot remain unidimensional, but has to push towards multidisciplinary. It has to prepare the learners for a world that values adaptability, integration, creativity, and interdisciplinary thinking. Whether they decide to dive into a new field or plan to hone a skill outside their comfort zone, this interdisciplinary flexibility will equip them to thrive in an ever-evolving, shape-shifting future.

But with this freedom comes responsibility. While exploring diverse areas, they must remember to stay rooted to the values of their primary discipline. The NEP 2020 envisions a balance—breadth without sacrificing depth, exploration without losing focus.

These students pursuing FYUGP courses are a pioneer of this transformative approach. How they navigate this journey will shape not only their future but also the future of higher education itself. So, they should embrace this opportunity with curiosity, passion, and a commitment to excellence.

This issue of *DiscourseZ* is a testament to how the challenges posed by NEP 2020 has been turned into opportunities, and how the stakeholders are negotiating with the systemic shift, breaking free from the disciplinary silos, and acquiring knowledge that is holistic, integrative, and relevant to the time and space.

Dr Mridul Bordoloi
Professor and Head
Department of English
Dibrugarh University

Editorial Board: DiscourseZ 2025



From Left: Mr. Gaurab Sengupta (Assistant Professor: Department of English), Ms. Jyoti Singh Pathak (Associate Professor and Head: Department of English), Ms. Nirupama Dey (Assistant Professor: Department of English)

Editorial

NEP 2020 and the Students' Takeaways

Education is the cornerstone of societal evolution and policy frameworks like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to realign academic structures with contemporary needs. As we transition into a knowledge-driven economy, the student community stands at the intersection of pedagogical transformation and global opportunities. NEP 2020 envisions a holistic, multidisciplinary and skill-based education system, shifting from rote learning to competency-based education. However, how does this shift resonate with the primary stakeholders—our students?

From a student-centric lens, NEP 2020 introduces sweeping reforms that promise greater autonomy and flexibility. The NEP 2020 document published by MHRD, Government of India states that the New Education Policy “would offer multiple entry and exit points, thus, removing currently prevalent rigid boundaries and creating new possibilities for life-long learning” (37). The Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES) empowers learners by allowing seamless movement between academic programs, thereby fostering inclusivity. The shift from rigid disciplinary silos to a multidisciplinary approach ensures that students engage in a broader knowledge spectrum, integrating humanities, sciences and vocational training. Yet, the pragmatic challenge remains—are institutions ready to implement this level of academic fluidity within its premise?

Moreover, the policy also states that “every classroom shall have access to the latest educational technology that enables better learning experiences” (40). It underscores the role of technology-driven pedagogy advocating for Learning Management Systems (LMS), digital repositories and virtual labs “for better participation and learning outcomes” (41). While these digital interventions democratize access to quality education, they also widen the digital divide, particularly for students from rural and marginalized backgrounds. This raises a pertinent question: Does technological advancement translate into equitable education, or does it risk further stratification?

The emphasis on ‘Critical Thinking, Creative Learning, and Global Citizenship’ under NEP 2020 seeks to redefine traditional assessment paradigms. As the document further states that “Curriculum content will be reduced in each subject to its core essentials, to make space for critical thinking and more holistic, inquiry-based, discovery-based, discussion-based, and

analysis-based learning. The mandated content will focus on key concepts, ideas, applications, and problem-solving” (12). Moving away from high-stakes examinations, the policy advocates continuous and formative assessments, ensuring a more reflective and application-based learning process. For students, this signifies a departure from performance anxiety toward a more engaged, exploratory and experiential learning ecosystem. However, the successful execution of this reform hinges on faculty training, infrastructural readiness and curricular realignment.

NEP 2020 envisions a holistic, multidisciplinary and skill-based education system, shifting from rote learning to competency-based education. However, while these changes promise to reshape the academic landscape, a critical question arises—are students truly aware of these reforms and the challenges they entail? While the policy emphasizes flexibility through the MEES and a shift towards a more multidisciplinary curriculum, many students remain uninformed about how these changes impact their academic journeys and career trajectories. The transition from a rigid degree structure to a fluid, choice-based system requires students to make informed decisions about their education. Yet, the awareness and preparedness among the student community remain uneven, especially in institutions where systematic guidance and counseling mechanisms are either absent or inadequate. Without proper dissemination of information, students may struggle to navigate this new educational paradigm, leading to confusion rather than empowerment.

Furthermore, the success of NEP 2020 hinges not just on policy implementation but also on student engagement and preparedness. The emphasis on digital learning and skill-based training presents both opportunities and challenges. While digital platforms and online resources democratize learning, they also highlight the existing digital divide, leaving students from rural and underprivileged backgrounds at a disadvantage. Similarly, competency-based assessments and experiential learning demand a fundamental shift in mindset—from passive absorption of knowledge to active problem-solving. However, if students are not adequately oriented to these new methodologies, they may find themselves struggling to adapt. Thus, the key to ensuring the efficacy of NEP 2020 lies not just in reforming the system but in equipping students with the necessary awareness and skills to make the most of these transformations.

As India navigates through this academic metamorphosis, it is imperative that students not only adapt to these changes but also voice their concerns, expectations and

aspirations. NEP 2020 is not merely an administrative blueprint—it is a dynamic space of negotiation between policy formulation and grassroots implementation. As educators, policymakers and students collaboratively engage in this discourse, the success of NEP 2020 will ultimately be measured by its resonance in student experiences.

This edition of *DiscourseZ* will serve as a platform for critical engagement, reflective narratives and constructive dialogues on NEP 2020. The future of Indian education is being rewritten and the students' perspective is central to this transformative journey. As you navigate through these pages, may you reflect, question and engage with the ideas presented, broadening your understanding of the evolving academic landscape. May this issue inspire you to think critically, voice your insights and actively participate in shaping the educational discourse. Knowledge thrives in discussions and we hope this platform empowers the reader to explore, challenge and contribute to the future of learning with an informed and open mind.

Best Regards
Editorial Team
DiscourseZ
5th Issue: 2024-2025

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FACE TO

FACE



Face to Face





Standing: Front Row (From Left): Sandeep Limbu: B.Sc. 4th Semester, Department of Physics, Sneha Dey: B.Com 2nd Semester, Department of Commerce, Mrinal Phukan: B.Sc 4th Semester, Department of Physics.

Standing: Back Row (From Left): Jyotimoyee Talukdar: BA 4th Semester, Manashree Gogoi: BA 2nd Semester, Priyanka Khanikar: BA 2nd Semester, Isha Das: BA 2nd Semester: Department of English

Q1. What do you think about Skill Enhancement or Vocational Education? Did you hear about this course before enrolling in your graduation course? If yes, what did you hear?

Mrinal: Skill Enhancement or vocational education is very important for students in the job oriented market because it helps the student to gain practical knowledge and experience related to a particular skill or set of skills. Vocational education helps one to bridge what we learn in school and what we need to apply practically, in order to succeed in our career. Moreover, vocational education can help one to acquire a job right after completing studies, since students will have the necessary skills ready.

Sneha:- Vocational education is necessary for students because colleges or schools provide us only theoretical knowledge, but with the help of vocational education and skill enhancement courses, student can apply the theoretical knowledge in the practical world.

Sandeep:- Vocational course in degree course is provided through SEC course. Under this course, one can master skills like mushroom cultivation, aquarium making and keeping, etc. which can help students to gain practical knowledge about various skills. Though vocational education is very necessary, there should be teachers who are skilled or trained in order to pass on the practical skills and knowledge to the students.

Q2. Do you have any knowledge about CBCS education? If yes, what is the difference between CBCS and NEP?

Sandeep:- Yes, there are difference between CBCS and NEP. In CBCS system when a student enrolls for the course, one has to complete the entire course to get the certificate. In this system, students are not allowed to exit from the course in between. So, if a student drops out in between, he/she will not get any certificate for the part he has completed. Also in this education system, subjects are mainly oriented to specific stream and there is a strict rigidity within the streams. Students are not allowed to choose subjects from other streams. In NEP however, students have the opportunity to exit in multiple stages with certificate. Not only this, they also have the freedom to choose subjects across other streams as well.

Mrinal:- The CBCS which was adopted in 2018 is all about allowing students flexibility in career choices. However, the main difference between CBCS and NEP is that NEP offers multiple entry and exit strategy where as CBCS does not have such strategy. A certificate which is earned in NEP can later be used to continue the same course later on if a student is willing to opt out in between. The second difference is the introduction of the fourth year in NEP. NEP helps the students to get the taste of research work in the fourth year, which will enables the student to decide whether they want to continue the research for higher education or drop it down altogether.

Sneha:- CBCS allows flexibility to the students to choose from different courses only with regards to the SEC subject, the course structure is thus limited to their domain. However, NEP allows the student to choose courses from different streams. A commerce student can choose subject from science and arts stream.

Q3. Are you aware of the internship program to be done in the Fifth Semester? What is your opinion about it?

Sneha:- No, I don't know much about the internship program, but I believe internships will be beneficial for us because they will provide real world work environment. It is definitely a good step, but there is a lack of clarity on how students can find internship. As a commerce student we learn lot of

theoretical knowledge about book-keeping and accounts an internship will teach us practical skills related to theoretical knowledge provided by an institution.

Mrinal:- In my opinion, it quite difficult for B.Sc. students to get internship. Many industries such as Thermal Plants often refuse to offer internships to us (students coming from pure science backgrounds) and that's a challenge we face. Even when some opportunities are available they are often limited to short observational visits where students visit the field, observe for a few days and write reports without gaining much practical experience.

Sandeep:- Yes, I completely agree with Mrinal that various industries often refuse to offer internships to B.Sc students. One of the main reason is that we are pure science students, and our studies focus mostly on theory. Because of this industries might feel we lack the practical skills they are looking for. It would really help if we get more chance to learn practical skills and gain real experience.

Q4. What do you think are the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to education for student's overall development?

Mrinal:- The NEP has introduced a wide range of subjects which I believe is a positive step. It gives us the chance to study a wide range of subjects and learn from different fields. Students are allowed to undertake multidisciplinary courses through Minor, Generic and SEC subjects, but it is true that an Arts student often don't opt for Science based subjects. So there is also a need to design more interdisciplinary courses.

Sandeep:- In my opinion, it really depends on whether one has selected a subject out of personal interest, i.e. to learn something new or just to achieve more grades. Multidisciplinary courses like SEC subjects promote practical learning, which is beneficial for developing real life skills.

Sneha:- Multidisciplinary education will be beneficial if the students are taught the basic first. For example, if we choose Computer as Generic subject and we are not taught the fundamental concepts, it can become difficult for students to start directly from an advanced level, especially for those who are not familiar with the knowledge of computers. These are my practical experiences as a student undergoing FYUGP.

Q5. Do you think there is enough awareness about IKS amongst students? How can it be improved?

Mrinal:- No, I don't think there is enough awareness regarding IKS amongst students. As students we understand that it is all about traditional knowledge and cultural practices. But is it only that? The institution can take necessary measures to spread more awareness among students by organizing workshops and on IKS and related matters.

Sandeep:- Honestly, I do not know much about it and I suppose my friends too don't have much knowledge about it. In my opinion, IKS focus on providing knowledge on Indian tradition, astronomy, mathematics and history, mostly through the curriculum. Since awareness about IKS is quite low, it must be raised.

Sneha:- No, I don't know about IKS. It is completely new to me. I actually heard about it just now in the question.

Q6. What do you feel about the flexibility of the three year and four year UG degree structure with multiple entry exit options?

Sandeep:- Yes, earlier I have mentioned that, in the CBCS course, even if we exit in between, we don't get anything. NEP provides a greater flexibility which gives us opportunities to walk out of the course in between, if need arises. But the system hasn't given us enough information about the entry-exit system because we have heard that one needs to complete an internship in order to get a diploma or a certificate. The awareness is low. Awareness should be given to students regarding multiple entry exit options.

Mrinal:- The flexibility of three year or four year UG degree structured with multiple entry-exit options is beneficial for students. If someone faces any crisis or has a household problem, definitely, in situation, one can walk out of the course if necessary. It is therefore, convenient.

Sneha:- I think it is a good idea. If someone is willing to continue study, they can, and if a student wants to leave in between, they can also drop out from his or her studies after completing one year. They can at least get one certificate or diploma and can focus on other things which they want to engage in.

Q7. What kind of guidance and mentorship do you require to make you informed about NEP 2020?

Mrinal:- NEP has introduced one major thing: the multidisciplinary aspect, so it gives us a lot of choice regarding the subject selection. However, teachers should properly inform the students regarding the subjects selection and what they will gain out of it in future. Proper orientation should be given to the students.

Sandeep:- There should be proper counseling for the students before admission into the course. There should be proper orientation. Orientation should be given to students when they are in Class 12 itself.

Sneha:- I think the first classes of every semester should be a introductory classes regarding the course structure and the subjects that we are going to take. Students should know what they are choosing, which department will teach that particular subject. So the basic introductory classes are required for all

the students. I want that the students should choose their subject in their guidance of mentors.

Q8. Is the multidisciplinary approach envisaged by the NEP being properly implemented in the colleges of Assam?

Sneha:- I don't think that the multidisciplinary approach is properly implemented in the Colleges of Assam. Many government colleges do not have the necessary infrastructure, faculty or study materials to continue their education system.

Mrinal:- The answer is No. There is a disparity of implementation in the central government institutions and rural colleges. The rural colleges don't have enough or proper resource. The government should take some measures. They should expand the infrastructure first and then should move forward.

Sandeep:- Lack of faculty results in the disadvantages. Even many colleges are not able to provide such courses to students because the teachers are not skilled or trained to educate the students.

Q9. Can you tell some positive and negative aspects of NEP?

Mrinal:- There are two huge benefits as a science student. First positive aspect is the multiple entry and exit strategy. If any student face any sort of problem in continuing their studies, they can exit from the program and still have the scope of further education. The second positive aspect is the introduction of fourth year, which enables a student to get knowledge about research work. The negative aspect of NEP is the problem with infrastructure. Only the central universities with proper infrastructure can reap the full benefits of NEP. Where as the rural colleges might be at a disadvantageous position.

Sandeep:- As already mentioned, the first positive aspect is multiple entry and exit system. The second positive aspect is the facility of providing multidisciplinary courses. The third positive aspect is the research scope in the fourth year. The positive features can also act as the negative. Firstly, when a student enrolls in the degree course and wishes to exit from it, he/she is provided with the certificate, but the question is what can be the benefit of those certificates in students' career. The certificate may enhance portfolio, but may not do anything with industrial purpose or provide good jobs in the job market. The second negative aspect is many colleges are only able to provide limited courses even if we are talking about multidisciplinary courses. This happens because of the shortage of skilled faculty members and infrastructure facilities.

Sneha:- The positive aspect of NEP is definitely the multidisciplinary courses and the multiple entry exit structure it offers. Flexibility is the positive aspect of

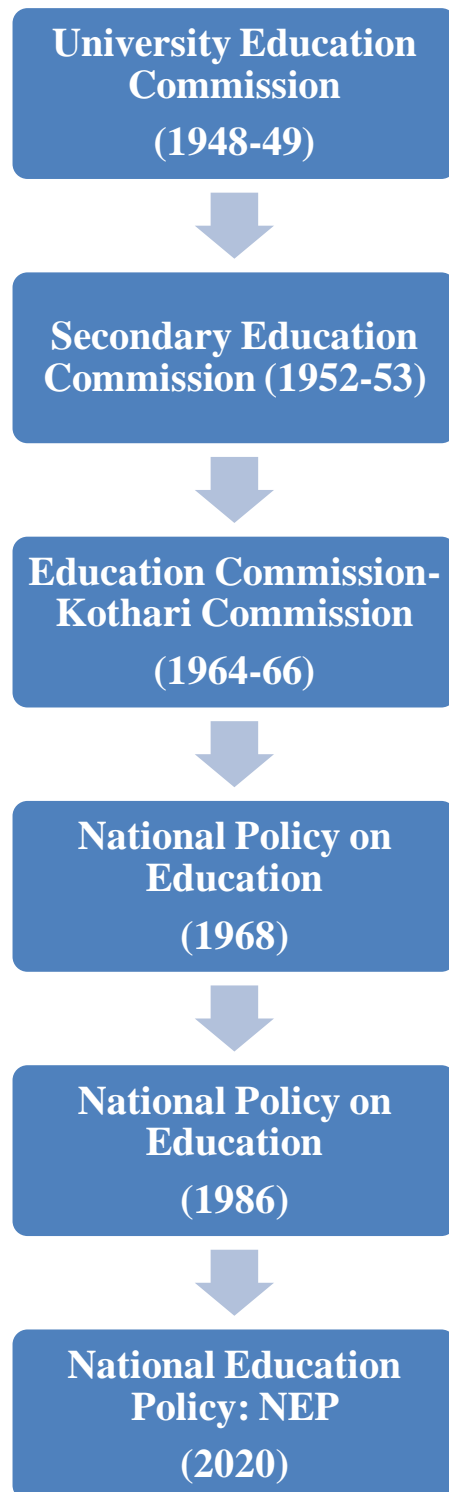
NEP. The negative aspect of NEP is that courses which are based on theory should have more practical aspects to enhance career opportunities.

**True knowledge is
not attained by
thinking.**

**It is what you are;
it is what you
become.**

-Sri Aurobindo

Major Education Policies in India: Post-Independence Period



The Kasturirangan Committee: Architect of NEP 2020 and the Future of Indian Education



The Committee led by the Chairman Dr. Kasturirangan submitting the Draft National Educational Policy to the Union Human Resource Development Minister, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and Minister of State for HRD, Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre in New Delhi, in the presence of Shri R. Subrahmanyam, Secretary Department of Higher Education and Smt. Rina Ray, Secretary Department of School Education & Literacy and other senior officials of the Ministry.

The Kasturirangan Committee was formed to draft a new National Education Policy (NEP) for India, replacing the outdated NPE 1986. Chaired by Dr. K. Kasturirangan, the committee aimed to reform the education system to meet 21st-century needs. It proposed a new curricular structure (5+3+3+4), emphasized multilingual education, promoted experiential learning, vocational training, and integrated technology in education. The committee also focused on higher education reforms, introducing flexible learning pathways, multidisciplinary institutions, and a four-year undergraduate program. The Draft National Education Policy (DNEP) 2019, prepared by this committee, formed the basis for the NEP 2020, which was later approved by the Government of India.

- **K.Kasturirangan (Chairman):** An Indian space scientist, Kasturirangan headed the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) from 1994 to 2003. He is a recipient of the three major civilian awards -- the Padma Shri (1982), Padma Bhushan (1992) and Padma Vibhushan (2000). He was previously the chairman of the NEP drafting committee.

- **Mahesh Chandra Pant:** He is the chancellor of National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, a body under the union education ministry.
- **Govind Prasad Sharma:** Sharma is the chairman of the National Book Trust, a book publishing body of the government.
- **Najma Akhtar:** Akhtar is an academicians of repute. Since April 2019, she has been the vice-chancellor of the Jamia Millia Islamia, a central university in New Delhi.
- **T V Kattimani:** A former VC of Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak (M.P.), Kattimani is now the vice-chancellor of Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh.
- **Michel Danino:** He is an Indian author of French origin. He is a guest professor at IIT Gandhinagar. In 2017, the Government of India conferred Padma Shri for his contribution towards Literature and Education.
- **Milind Kamble:** An Indian entrepreneur, Kamble is also the founder of Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In 2013, he was awarded Padma Shri, and currently he is the chairperson of IIM-Jammu.
- **Jagbir Singh:** Singh, is a former professor and HoD, Department of Punjabi at Delhi University. He is now the chancellor of the Central University of Punjab, Bathinda.
- **Manjul Bhargava:** He is a renowned American mathematician of Indian origin and was also part of NEP drafting committee.
- **M K Sridhar:** He is a trainer and a social activist and has served as member secretary of Karnataka Knowledge Commission and Karnataka State Innovation Council. Recently, he served as a member of a committee for draft NEP.
- **Dhir Jhingran:** Jhingran is a retired bureaucrat and has served as principal secretary of Education in Assam and as a Director in the union Ministry of Human Resource Development. He is the founder-director of 'Language and Learning Foundation (LLF)', a non-profit focused on improving foundational learning of children in government primary schools.
- **Shankar Maruwada:** He is the co-founder and CEO at 'EkStep Foundation' and he is an entrepreneur and marketing professional with a wide range of experience working on large-scale projects such as Aadhaar, India's national identification programme.