Spark Among Students for NEP 2020

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Abstract: **India's education policies have evolved over the years, reflecting changing social, economic, and technological conditions. While there have been significant improvements in access to education, there are still challenges to be addressed, such as disparities in the quality of education and the need for improvement in the quality of teacher training. The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 provides a comprehensive framework for transforming the education system, and it is hoped that its implementation will lead to a more equitable, inclusive, and accessible education system for all citizens of India. In this paper, we have discussed the views of students of higher education about NEP2020.**

Key Words-Education Policy, Multidisciplinary, Holistic

1. *Introduction*
Since its independence from British rule in1947, India's education system has undergone numerous changes and developments, a brief overview of the education policies that have been implemented in India from independence to the present day is given below:

1.1 National Policy on Education (NPE), 1968:
The first comprehensive education policy formulated by the Indian government after independence was the National Policy on Education (NPE), which aimed to provide education to all citizens, reduce illiteracy, and promote national integration. It emphasized the need for the universalization of elementary education, an improvement of adult literacy, and the introduction of vocational and technical education. The policy also encouraged the establishment of colleges, universities, and research institutes, and provided for the establishment of Open Universities to reach the most inaccessible parts of the country [1]

1.2 National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986:
A revised version of the 1968 policy was NPE 1986, which was aimed to address the challenges faced by the education system in the wake of changing social, economic and technological conditions. The policy emphasized the need for equal educational opportunities for all and aimed to eliminate disparities in access to education. The policy also stressed the importance of science and technology education, vocational education, and non-formal education. It also recommended the introduction of mother tongue-based education at the primary level and the development of educationally disadvantaged regions [2]

1.3 New Education Policy (NEP), 2020:
The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 was introduced by the government of India in July 2020, to transform the country's education system. The NEP aims to make education more accessible, equitable, and inclusive and focuses on the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The policy recommends a multidisciplinary and flexible curriculum, promoting vocational education and entrepreneurship, and integrating technology into the education system. The NEP also stresses the importance of education in regional languages and the development of a holistic, learner-centric approach to education.

The NEP 2020 replaces the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 and marks a significant shift in the approach to education in India. The main features of NEP 2020 [3] are:

a) Universal Access to Education:
The NEP 2020 emphasises the importance of providing everyone with access to education and seeks to give each student the chance to realise their full potential. The growth of access to early childhood care and education, schooling, and higher education will help to accomplish this. NEP 2020 seeks to increase GER from 26.3% to 50% in higher education by 2035 and to 100% in school education by 2030.

b) Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education:
The policy advocates for a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education, which emphasizes the development of the whole child and not just their academic abilities. This approach will be achieved through the integration of the arts, sports, and humanities into the curriculum, and the promotion of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

c) Mother Tongue as Medium of Instruction:
NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of the native or regional language as a medium of instruction for first graders. This allows students to better understand and retain content and also promotes the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country.

D) Technology-Enabled Education:
This policy recognizes the role of technology in improving the quality of education and proposes the use of technology to improve access to education, enhance education delivery and improve student learning outcomes.

e) Teacher Education and Development: The NEP 2020 recognizes the critical role played by teachers in shaping the future of the country and proposes significant reforms in the teacher education system. This includes the development of a common National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), in consultation with NCERT, SCERT, teachers and experts from all regions, institutions etc.

f) Higher Education:
The policy proposes major reforms in higher education, including the creation of a single regulator for the higher education sector, the promotion of multidisciplinary education, and the establishment of a National Recruitment Agency to conduct a common eligibility test for admission to higher education institutions.

g) Assessment and Evaluation:
 The NEP 2020 proposes a major overhaul of the assessment and evaluation system, including the introduction of a formative and continuous assessment system and the reduction of emphasis on high-stakes exams.

h) Financing of Education: The policy recognizes the requirement for expanded funding for education and proposes measures to increase public investment in education.

Besides these, a few of the other imperative highlights of NEP in Higher Instruction are:

The NEP 2020 propose the foundation of a single controller for higher instruction of India (HECI) integration of professional instruction into higher instruction to fill the crevice between scholastic information and common-sense abilities. It underlines scholarly and regulatory independence for higher instruction teachers to have the opportunity to plan their educational programs and curriculum

2. Objective and Research methodology of the study:
 Karnataka was the first state, which implemented NEP 2020, in primary education. Lucknow University was among the first Universities in India, which implemented it in higher Education. The objective of the present study is to know the perception of students of higher education about NEP 2020. For the present study, we have taken a sample of 166 students of Lucknow University and its associated colleges of different streams. 10 open-ended and close-ended questions about various features of NEP were asked them. The views of students were noted and data was analysed.

3. Output of the study:
3.1) In NEP2020, the existing 10+2 structure of curricula will be replaced by a **5+3+3+4 structure** to include the unaddressed age group of 3-6 years, which is widely acknowledged as the critical period for a child's development of mental faculties. A **choice-based credit system** will be included in higher education curricula to foster innovation and flexibility. The undergraduate degree in NEP will be of 3 or 4 years duration with **multiple entry /exit options** within this time frame and appropriate certifications to enable creative combinations of disciplines for study. Along with a focus on the **major and minor** of the student's choice, NEP envisions a **multidisciplinary holistic education** at the undergraduate level.
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The responses of students that they are convinced or not convinced with the above features of NEP are shown in figure 1.
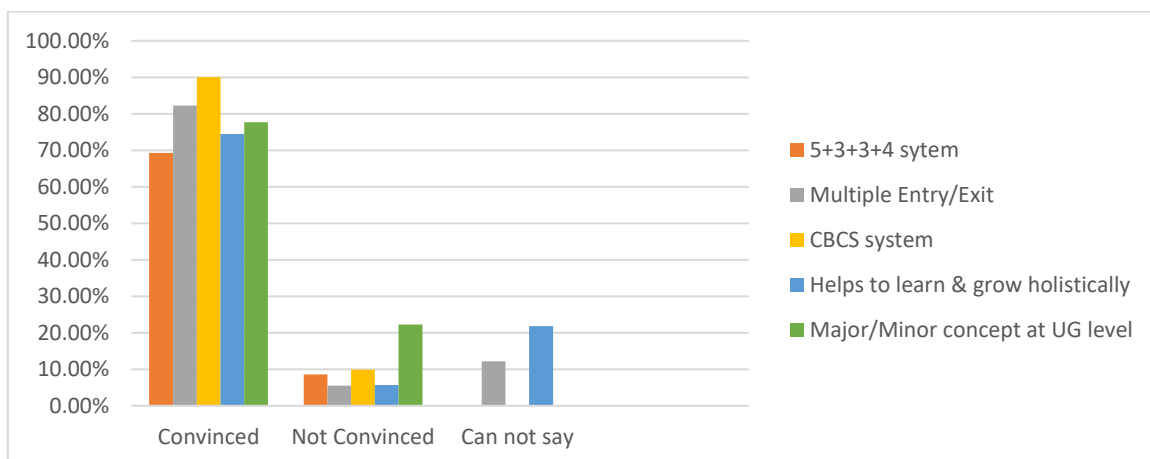

Figure1: Views about 5+3+3+4 system, multiple entry/ exit, CBCS system, Major/Minor, helps to learn & grow holistically

Figure 1 shows that approximately 69.3% of students believe that 5+3+3+4 brings a positive change in the education system as it emphasises early childhood care &education. Most of the students are convinced that multiple entry /exit systems and CBCS in higher education give them flexibility. If due for some reason a student has to drop out, then he can complete his studies by using the credits he earns during his first and second years. About 77.7% of students agree with the concept of major and minor subjects at the UG level as it helps them to move towards a more multidisciplinary undergraduate education.74.5% of students believe that in the long run, NEP helps students learn & grow holistically in almost all undergraduate programmes.

3.2) NEP aims to offer students a top-notch higher education that will enable economic independence and prepare them for meaningful and fulfilling lives and careers. Instead of rote learning, NEP focuses on better evolution processes to help students develop their **practical knowledge and critical thinking**. It aims to be making school and higher education more comprehensive, adaptable and multidisciplinary to achieve global quality education, it seeks to transform the face of education
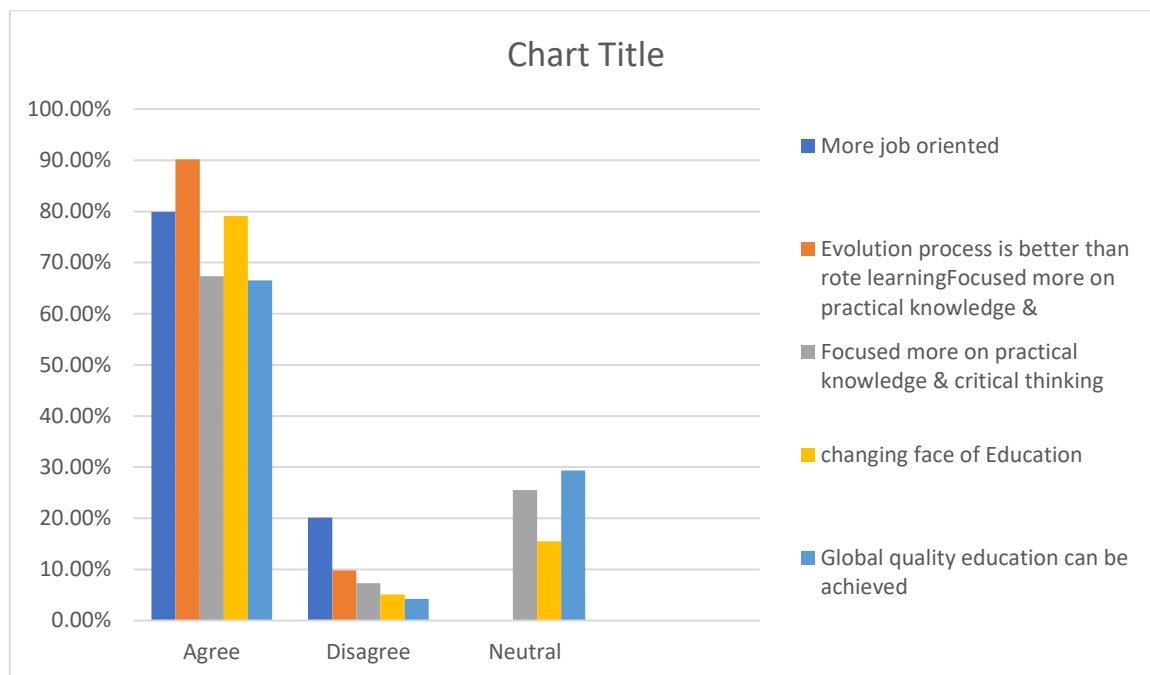

Figure 2

According to our study, the majority of students think the New Education Policy will improve the educational system. They think that if the policy is executed properly, it will enable students to achieve economic independence. The majority of pupils think that NEP can lead to global quality education.

Conclusion
Based on the sample, it can be inferred from the discussion above that student also support and have full belief in NEP 2020. It proposes extensive reforms to enhance access, quality, and equity in the educational system, and it represents a substantial shift in how India views education. The policy is aligned with the vision of the government to produce an encyclopaedically competitive and knowledge-grounded society and to achieve Sustainable Development goals related to education. Still, the success of the policy will depend on its perpetration &the vacuity of coffers to support its perpetuation.

The government will need to allocatesufficient coffers and take concrete ways to ensure the policy objectives are achieved andthe education system is converted to meet the requirements of the 21st century.

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