NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (2020) WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT:

After 34 years, 3rd National Education Policy is released and approved by the Union cabinet of India on 29th July 2020.This study aims at explaining the opinion of teachers on NEP 2020 in India. The objectives of this study were to identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers towards Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education, support for students, curriculum framework and assessment, Role of Government bodies and institutions on NEP2020 in India. In this study Descriptive research is adopted and a set of questionnaires containing 20 items selected. the target population for this study were teachers of different colleges and universities in Assam. Results showed that the agreement level of teachers on NEP was high and disagreement level was low. This study tries to contribute a valuable suggestion and support for the newly framed policy. Findings of this study may help in modifying the features of framed policy.

Keywords- National Education Policy 2020, Higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

"*Education Is the Most Powerful Weapon Which You Can Use to Change the World*"
–Nelson Mandela.

Education is a backbone of every individual and it determines the destiny of a nation. Education enhances one's knowledge, skills, attitude, personality, values, habits, etc. It prepares a person to face challenges in everyday life. Education plays a vital role in this modern and competitive world.the awareness that enriches life and improves its dignity comes through education and thereby it becomes an indicator of progress and advancement of a society and nation. In the changing socio-economic, cultural and political milieu, one cannot adjust oneself properly without proper education. Education has been rightly accepted as an important variable particularly in developing countries to assess the growth and development of society in economic, social and technological outsets. It is the potential instrument of social change and national upliftment. It would not be an exaggeration to treat education as the guiding mirror in which the civilisation of a nation is reflected in the right direction. A nation can only neglect education at its own peril. In fact, education itself has never been a debatable issue but the outcomes have been debated from time to time.

Drastic changes had happened in the educational field in the past 34 years and the policies framed should be modified according to the needs of the people and the nation. Strong foundation should be laid in education and then only it will produce an all-round development of future citizens. All Indian should receive a quality education at an affordable prize. In this context, education sector needs to drive itself towards the need and demands of 21st century. After 34 years, third national education policy was released in 29.07.2020. The new NEP 2020 suggests structural changes right from school education to higher education and regulatory bodies.

Any change in the system or policy is not directly accepted by the people. After a strong arguments and empirical reasons, it is accepted by all. Implementation of this policy after 34 years, has given rise to several arguments among the educational sectors, politicians, experts, stakeholders, common people, etc.

After framing the policy, it should be properly implemented in the educational set up. Then only it will make the desirable changes in the educational system. NEP 2020 is going to be implemented in the educational system successfully through the teachers. They are the real, direct and significant stakeholders. While implementing the policy, the stakeholders should be recognised and included in the process for its crucial effectiveness. It is essential also, to know their opinion about the NEP 2020. Hence, this study tries to find out the opinion of teachers on NEP 2020.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In India, national education policy (NEP) 2020 is announced recently by the MHRD, with a tremendous transformation in the education system and in order to provide high quality education to all. NEP 2020 aims at making the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary and also to meet the needs and demands of 21st century. The NEP 2020 is based on the foundation pillars such as access, affordability, equity, quality and accountability. The present study aims at explaining the opinion of teachers on NEP 2020 in India. The presence of the positive opinion or the absence of the same may have profound implication in the part of authorities (MHRD). The favourable opinion on the present policy might help the authorities and planners, who involved in making, to continue the same without making and drastic change in it. But the absence of the favourable opinion might help the planners to restructure the present policy in order to refine it. Therefore, the present investigation is very vital from the planning point of view.

It has been 34 years since India made any significant changes to its education system. However finally national education policy was unveiled on 31st July 2020. The aim of national educational policy is to ensure equitable access to the highest quality education. This study helps to eradicate various ailments from society. Higher education institutions need to identify strategies for implementation and to realise vision of national education policy 2020. Lack of accessibility to higher educational institute is identified as one of the reasons for low colleges or university level enrolment in country. University is undertaking very little research there is less scope for conducting any research on any novel or futuristic concept.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

For The present Study the Following Objectives have been formulated: -

➤ To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education.

➤ To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards support for students.

➤ To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards curriculum framework and assessment.

➤ To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Role of Government departments/bodies/institutions.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In view of the various constraints of the process of conducting the study, the study has been delimited as follows: —

• The study is delimited to collect the opinion from teachers only.

• The study is delimited only to Assam.

• The study is delimited to only 30 respondents of different colleges and universities of Assam.

DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The researcher has taken Assam as the area of the study because it is convenient for the researcher. Assam covers an area of 78,438 km2 (30,285 sq miles). The state is bordered by Bhutan and the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the north; Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur to the east; Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, and Bangladesh to the south; and West Bengal to the west. The climate of Assam is typically 'Tropical Monsoon Rainforest Climate', with high levels of humidity and heavy rainfall. As per the Census 2011, the total population of Assam is 3.12 Cr. Thus, the population of Assam forms 2.58 percent of India in 2011. Assam has total population of 31,205,576 in which males were 15,939,443 while females were 15,266,133. The total literacy rate of Assam is 72.19% according to the 2011 census study. The male literacy rate is 77.85% and the female literacy rate is 66.27% in Assam. Government universities and colleges are located in the state's larger cities, including Guwahati, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Tezpur, and Silchar. Assam also has specialized colleges in the arts, sciences, commerce, law, and medicine. Welfare-extension projects, operating through dozens of centres, provide recreational and cultural facilities for women and children.

METHOD USED IN THE STUDY

In the present study, the investigators have used descriptive survey method.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Population of the present study constituted the faculties of colleges and universities of Assam.

SAMPLE

The present study was conducted in Assam. Data was collected from 30 sample and this sample was comprised of the teachers from both colleges and universities of Assam.

TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

The researchers prepared a set of questionnaires containing 20 items. It has been developed to achieve the objectives of the study. The validity and reliability of the device were checked and corrected by the experts.

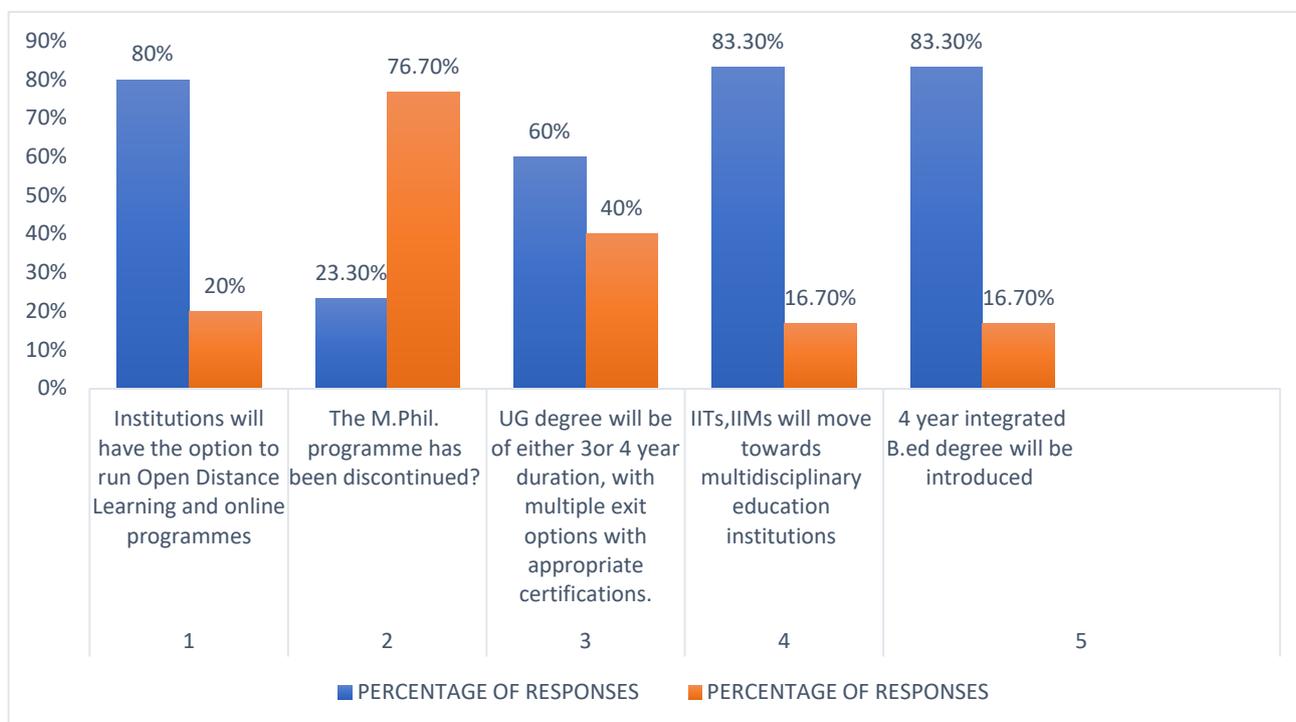**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

Data collected for the study are presented in a tabular form which helps the reader to clearly understand the findings of the study. After that the analysis was made one by one as per the objectives of the study.

Objective 1:   To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education.

TABLE NO1: Showing the Distribution of Level of Agreement/ Disagreement of Teachers on NEP 2020 Towards Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education

Sl.No	ITEMS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES	
		AGREE	DISAGREE
1	Institutions will have the option to run Open Distance Learning and online programmes, in order to improve access, increase GER, and provide opportunities for lifelong learning. Do you agree?	80%	20%
2	The M.Phil. programme has been discontinued? Do you agree with this step?	23.3%	76.7%
3	Ug degree will be of either 3- or 4-years duration, with multiple exits options with Appropriate certification. Do you agree?	60%	40%
4	IITs,IIMs will move towards multidisciplinary education institutions with more arts and humanities. Do you agree that is a good step?	83.3%	16.7%
5	By 2030, 4 year integrated B.Ed degree will be introduced for teaching and joining the occupation of teaching, do you agree with this idea?	83.3%	16.7%

FIGURE NO – 1 Showing the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education

INTERPRETATION: ⎯

TABLE NO 1 depicts the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education
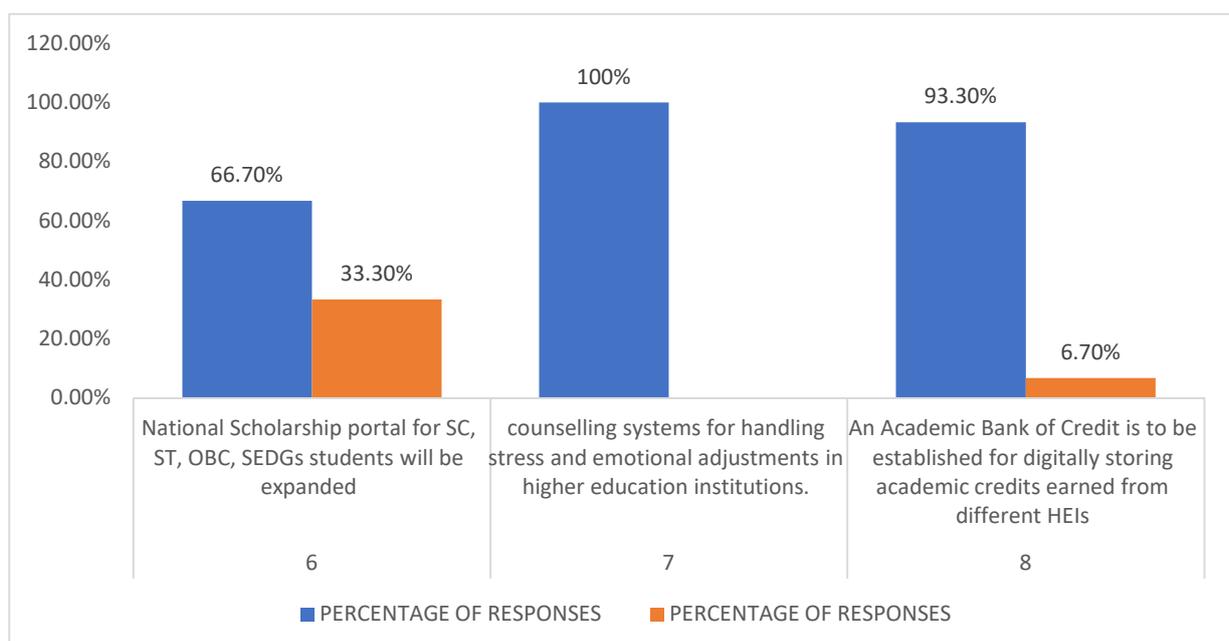
- Above table shows the majority 80% of respondents agree while remaining 20% respondents disagree with the statement of institutions will have option to runODL and online programme.
- Above table shows the majority 23.3% respondents agree while remaining 76.7% disagree with the statement of M. Phil programme has been discontinued.
- Above table shows majority 60% of respondents agree while remaining 40% disagree with the features of 3- or 4-years duration of UG degree with appropriate certification.
- Above table shows majority 83.3% of respondents agree while remaining 16.7% disagree with the features of IITs, IIMs will move towards multidisciplinary education institutions.
- Above table shows majority 83.3% of respondents agree while remaining 16.7% disagree with the features of 4year integrated B. Ed degree.

Objective 2: To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards support for students.

TABLE NO 2: Showing the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards support for students

Sl. No	ITEMS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES	
		AGREE	**DISAGREE**
6	National Scholarship portal for SC, ST, OBC, SEDGs students will be expanded to support and track the students progress of receiving scholarships. Do you agree with this idea?	66.7%	33.3%
7	counselling systems for handling stress and emotional adjustments in higher education institutions. Do you agree?	100%	
8	An Academic Bank of Credit is to be established for digitally storing academic credits earned from different HEIs so that these can be transferred and counted towards final degree earned. Do you agree?	93.3%	6.7%

FIGURE NO: 2. Showing the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards support for student

INTERPRETATION-

Table No 2 depicts the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards support for students:
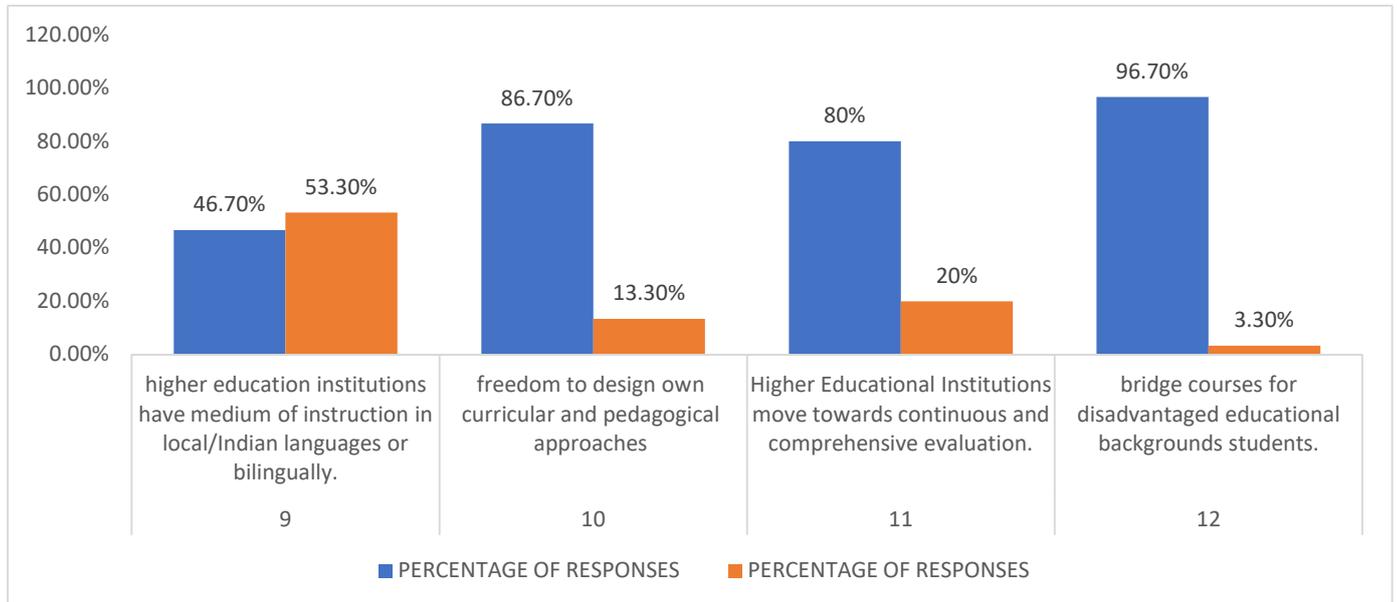
- Above table shows the majority 66.7% of respondents agree while remaining 33.3% respondents disagree with the statement of National Scholarship portal for sc, st, obc, SEDGs students
- Above table shows the majority 100% respondents agree with the features of counselling systems for handling stress and emotional adjustments in higher education institutions
- Above table shows majority 93.3% of respondents agree while remaining 6.7% disagree with the features of Academic Bank of Credit establishment

Objective 3: To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards curriculum framework and assessment.

TABLE NO 3: Showing the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards curriculum framework and assessment

Sl. No	ITEMS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES	
		AGREE	DISAGREE
9	Steps shall be taken towards developing high-quality higher education institutions both public and private that have medium of instruction in local/Indian languages or bilingually. Do you Agree with this idea?	46.7	53.3
10	Faculty will be given the freedom to design own curricular and pedagogical approaches (textbook, assignment etc).Do you agree?	86.7	13.3
11	Higher Educational Institutions move away from high-stakes examinations towards continuous and comprehensive evaluation. Do you agree that this system will be effective in education system?	80	20
12	NEP 2020 proposes to Develop bridge courses for disadvantaged educational backgrounds students.Do you agree?	96.7	3.3

FIGURE NO -3 Showing the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards curriculum framework and assessment

INTERPRETATION-

 TABLE NO 3 Depicts distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards curriculum framework and assessment:
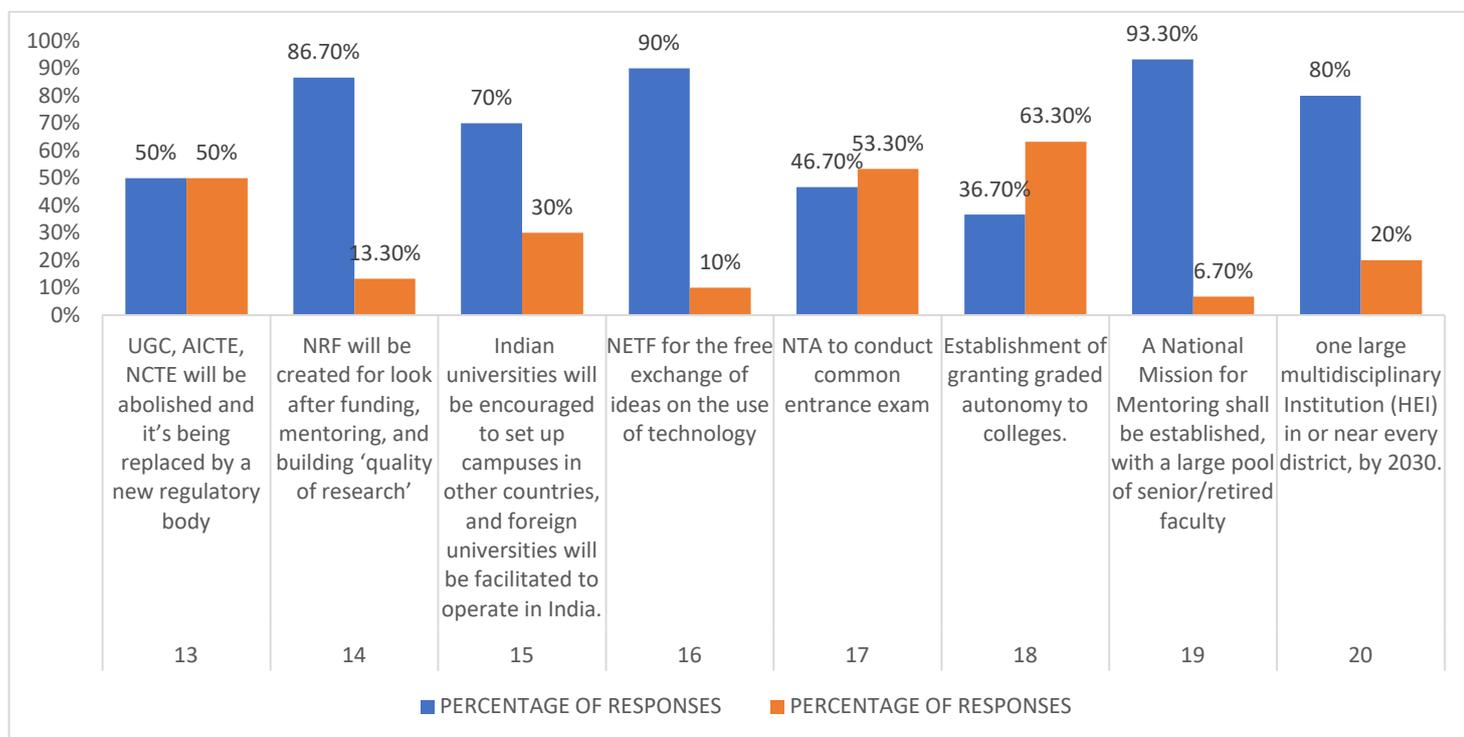
▪ Above table shows the majority 46.7% of respondents agree while remaining 53.3% respondents disagree with the statement of HEIs both public and private that have medium of instruction in local/Indian languages or bilingually.

▪ Above table shows the majority 86.7% respondents agree while remaining 13.4% disagree with the features of Faculty will be given the freedom to design own curricular and pedagogical approaches

▪ Above table shows majority 80% of respondents agree while remaining 20% disagree with the features of Higher Educational Institutions move away from high-stakes examinations towards continuous and comprehensive evaluation.

▪ Above table shows the majority 96.7% respondents agree while remaining 4.4% disagree with the features of Developing bridge courses for disadvantaged educational backgrounds students.

Objective 4:   To identify the level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Role of Government departments/bodies/institutions.

TABLE NO 4: Showing the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Role of Government departments/bodies/institution

Sl. No	ITEMS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES	
		AGREE	DISAGREE
13	According to the National Education Policy 2020 proposal, UGC, AICTE, NCTE will be abolished and it's being replaced by a new regulatory body". Do you agree with this idea?	50	50
14	National Research Foundation (NRF) will be created for look after funding, mentoring, and building 'quality of research' and researchers in India. Do you agree with this step?	86.7	13.3
15	High performing Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries, and similarly, foreign universities will be facilitated to operate in India.Do you agree?	70	30
16	National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration. Do you agree?	90	10
17	NPE2020 highlights NTA to conduct common entrance exam for university admission across the country. Do you agree?	46.7	53.3
18	Affiliation of Colleges to be phased out and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges. Do you agree the idea of autonomous college?	36.7	63.3
19	A National Mission for Mentoring shall be established, with a large pool of senior/retired faculty – who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers. Do you agree with this step?	93.3	6.7
20	The NEP 2020 envisions one large multidisciplinary Institution (HEI) in or near every district, by 2030. Do you agree?	80	20

FIGURE NO-4 Graphical Representation of the distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Role of Government departments/bodies/institutions

INTERPRETATION-

TABLE NO 4 Depicts distribution of level of agreement / disagreement of teachers on NEP 2020 towards Role of Government departments/ bodies/ institution:

- Above table shows the majority 50% of respondents agree while remaining 50% respondents disagree with the statement of UGC, AICTE, NCTE will be abolished and it's being replaced by a new regulatory body"

- Above table shows the majority 86.7% respondents agree while remaining 13.4% disagree with the statement of National Research Foundation (NRF) will be created for look after funding, mentoring, and building 'quality of research' and researchers in India.

- Above table shows majority 70% of respondents agree while remaining 30% disagree with the statement of High performing Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries, and similarly, foreign universities will be facilitated to operate in India.

- Above table shows the majority 90% respondents agree while remaining 10% disagree with the statement of National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration.

- Above table shows the majority 46.7% of respondents agree while remaining 53.3% respondents disagree with the statement of NPE2020 highlights NTA to conduct common entrance exam for university admission across the country.

- Above table shows the majority 36.7% respondents agree while remaining 63.3% disagree with the statement of Affiliation of Colleges to be phased out and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.
- Above table shows majority 93.3% of respondents agree while remaining 6.7%disagree with the statement of A National Mission for Mentoring shall be established, with a large pool of senior/retired faculty – who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.
- Above table shows the majority 80% of respondents agree while remaining 20% disagree with the statement of one large multidisciplinary Institution (HEI) in or near every district, by 2030.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY:

The various findings of the study include the followings:

1) The study was found that Majority (80%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that Institutions will have the option to run Open and Distance Learning and online programmes. After some key changes, it can play an important role in enhancement of the total Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in high.

2) The study was found that 76.7% respondents reveal high level of disagreement with the statement of abolition of M.Phil. Degree.

3) The study was found that 60% of the respondent's response are in favour of the proposal that UG degree will be of either 3or 4-year duration, with multiple exit options with appropriate certifications. This step will encourage the students to continue the study on their conditions.

4) The study found that 83.3% of the respondents agreed that the NEP 2020 will likely transform India into a knowledge hub through moving IITs, IIMs towards multidisciplinary education institutions.

5) The study found that The respondent's response are 83.3% who are in favour of the proposal that 4year integrated B.Ed degree for teaching and joining the occupation of teaching.

6) The study found that majority (66.7%) of the respondents agreed that National Scholarship portal for SC, ST, OBC, SEDGs students will be expanded to support and track the students progress of receiving scholarships.

7) The study found that 100% respondents agreed with the step 'counselling systems' for handling stress and emotional adjustments in higher education institutions . This is a new concept it was never existed in old education system hopefully it will yield results.

8) The study found that 93.3% of respondents agreed the step of an Academic Bank of Credit establishment. This is again a nice step proposed for the betterment of studies and beneficial to the students.

9) The study found that Results of the present study depicts high level disagreement (53.3%) with the statement of medium of instruction in local/Indian languages or bilingually. introducing mother languages in academic institutions for each subject is a problem. This is simply because finding a competent teacher is a challenge at times. And now the challenge is to bring study material in mother languages.

10) The study was found that a vast majority of respondents (86.7%) agreed the step of Faculty will be given the freedom to design own curricular and pedagogical approaches.

11) The study found that the responses collected for these questions seems to be positive. A vast majority of respondents (80%) agreed the step of Higher Educational Institutions move away from high-stakes examinations towards continuous and comprehensive evaluation.

12) The study found that responses collected for these questions seems to be positive. Again, it's a new thing and never before existed in the system. Majority respondents (96.7%) agreed the step Developing bridge courses for disadvantaged educational backgrounds students.

13) The study found that half of the respondents (50%) agreed with the statement of UGC, AICTE, NCTE will be abolished and it's being replaced by a new regulatory body"

14) The study found that majority of the respondents (86.7%) agreed with the statement National Research Foundation (NRF) will be created for look after funding, mentoring, and building 'quality of research' and researchers in India.

15) The study found that majority of the respondents (70%) agreed with the statement of Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries, and similarly, foreign universities will be facilitated to operate in India. The policy of introducing multi-disciplinary institutes will lead to a renewed focus on every field such as arts, humanities and this form of education will help students to learn and grow holistically. Thus, students will be equipped with stronger knowledge base.

16) The study found that majority of the respondents (90%) agreed with the statement of National Educational Technology Forum(NETF)will be created to provide a platform

for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration. this was never existed before and it is a new step to collect new ideas and encourage people to think out of the box. The responses are in support of this new proposed forum.

17) Results of the present study depicts high level disagreement (53.3%) with the statement of NTA to conduct common entrance exam for college and university admission across the country. setting an exam as an entrance will let the student remained unexplored. Might be the student is not good at studies but having an interest in other fields. Judging student calibre on the basis of the exam will serve a barrier in the way to success.

18) Results of the present study depicts high level disagreement (63.3%) with the statement of Affiliation of Colleges to be phased out and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.

19) The study found that majority of respondents (93.3%) agreed with the statement of A National Mission for Mentoring shall be established, with a large pool of senior/retired faculty – who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

20) The study found that majority of respondents (80%) agreed with the statement of one large multidisciplinary Institution (HEI) in or near every district, by 2030.

SUGGESTIONS

1) Findings of the present study shows high level of disagreement with the statement of Autonomous colleges. Therefore, it is recommended that policy makers should consider these opinions and should make necessary changes in the policy.

2) it is recommended that the policy makers should explain the importance of the NTA testing in admission procedure. So, it will lead to have clear concept about this issue

3) Responses of this opinion questionnaire reveals high level of disagreement with the statement of abolition of M.Phil. Degree. So, it is recommended that the policy makers should give clear and accurate explanations for this change

4) Results of the present study portrays high level of disagreement with the statement of medium of instruction. Therefore, it is suggested that the policy maker should know the reason for the disagreement and necessary steps should be taken to restructure the policy.

5) Policy makers should review annually and make suitable changes, if necessary, in the implemented policy.

6) Policy makers should ensure whether the needs and demands of people are met during the implementation process.

CONCLUSION

The National Education Policy 2020 anticipates for a complete renovation of the school and higher education system. NEP 2020 is designed for transforming the Indian education system to meet the needs and challenges of 21st century. Based on the interactions of the findings of the present research and the elaborate methodology followed by the researcher, the researcher is convinced that, implementing new educational policy in the Indian educational system will make a drastic change and provide a high-quality education to all. Then it will also produce an all-round development of the future citizens to the nation. This study tries to contribute a valuable suggestion and support for the newly framed policy. Findings of this study may have direct or indirect impact on the features of NEP 2020. This study also helps in modifying the features of framed policy. To conclude this big policy that has been proposed by Indian government to improve the Indian Education System is a big task. There was the need for a big change after 34 years of education system there was the gap that could be seen between Industry and academia and this gap result into the production of the skilled and educated students that won't find their place in Industry or corporate results into unemployment scenario or if employed, they are under paid. In both the situation a person gets frustrated and leads towards depression and similar other things.

The new education policy has a laudable vision, but its strength will depend on whether it is able to effectively integrate with the other policy initiatives of government like Digital India, Skill India and the New Industrial Policy to name a few, in order to effect a coherent structural transformation. Hence, policy linkages can ensure that education policy addresses to and learns from Skill India's experience in engaging more dynamically with the corporate sector to shape vocational education curriculum in order to make it a success. There is also a necessity for more evidence-based decision-making, to adapt to rapidly evolving transmutations and disruptions. NEP has reassuringly provisioned for real-time evaluation systems and a consultative monitoring and review framework. This shall empower the education system to constantly reform itself, instead of expecting for a new education policy every decade for a shift in curriculum. This, in itself, will be a remarkable achievement. The NEP 2020 is a defining moment for higher education. Effective and time-bound implementation is what will make it truly path-breaking

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