Perceived Challenges of National Education Policy, 2020 by the Students

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ABSTRACT

National Education Policy, 2020 is a progressive shift towards a more scientific approach to education and if it is enforced in its true vision, the new education structure can bring India stood up with the leading countries in the world. It is aiming to develop creative potential, skills, and analytical thinking which will be the need in the global job market. The policy has challenges for the students and the teachers. The present study focused on the perception of college students in India about NEP, 2020 concerning challenges like overburden of syllabus, lack of infrastructure, and transportation facilities, focus on regional languages, Disparity between rural and urban areas in manpower and quality of education. The results of the study indicated that out of 120 respondents, 45(37.50%) respondents agreed, for the statement "Overburden of syllabus", followed by "Universal access to education" were agreed by around half of the respondents i.e. 64(53.33%), and 11(09.16%) were disagreed.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a basis for human dignity. According to S Radhakrishnan (Occasional Speeches & Writings,1956), education is acquiring of knowledge beyond what is academic and professional. It is the base for developing a human beings potential and promoting national development. Access to quality education can act as tool for social mobility and reducing inequalities. India is expected to have the highest population of young people in the world over the next decade, so India must rush to invest in education. Our ability to provide high-quality educational opportunities to them will determine the future of our country.

India has a long and illustrious history of disseminating information and educating its people through the education of the Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanishads, and Dharmasutras being the oldest method of education. Our traditional education system evolved over time, focusing on the holistic development of the individual by taking care of both the inner and outer selves, beginning with the Rigveda. A new chapter in education policy began with India becoming independent. The first Commission to be appointed in independent India was the University Education Commission of 1948, under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. The Commission aimed to reorient the education system to face the challenges emerging from a long period of colonisation. The Secondary Education Commission was set up in 1952 under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar which suggested diversification of high school courses and the establishment of multipurpose high schools then the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) under the chairmanship of D.S. Kothari was formed.

After 34 years, we have a new policy that aims to bring about a revolution in education system. It has several opportunities and challenges to keep and appears to be timely in several regards. Much of its success will depend on its successful execution. It is opportunistic in a way to facilitate an inclusive, participatory and holistic approach which takes into consideration field experiences, empirical research, stakeholders, feedback, as well as lessons learned from best practices. The New Education Policy strives to meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regard to quality education, innovation and research. It plays important role to achieve United Nations fourth Sustainable Development Goal

which strives for quality education and ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

METHODOLOGY

An online survey method was used to collect data from the sample. The study was conducted on a sample size of 120 college students including students of Graduate, Postgraduate and Doctoral degree. Collected data were subjected to statistical analysis by using frequency and percentage, factor analysis (Principal Component Analysis). The data collected was analyzed using percentage and factor analysis. To assess the item reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was considered equal to 0.850 for the items of perceived challenges suggesting that the research tool is acceptable enough to be used in data collection. The responses for perceived challenges were recorded on a five-point continuum representing Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The perceived challenges score of each respondent was calculated by adding up the scores obtained by respondents on all the items. The overall perception of challenges opportunities score on this scale ranges from a minimum of 34 to a maximum of 48. Based on their scores respondents were divided into three categories *viz.* high, medium, and low. To find whether the selected dimension of challenges work independently to affect overall difficulties or rather act as part of broad factors the factor analysis method was adopted. To alleviate the dilemma factor analysis (Principal Component Analysis) with Oblimin rotation and Kaiser Normalization method was employed (SPSS 20) to find out how these separate dimensions behave in the broader setting of perceived opportunities and challenges.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perceived challenges of national educational policy, 2020 by college students

Table 1 depicts the perceived challenges of NEP, 2020 by the college students. The responses were categorized and ranked by using total weighted score and weighted mean score. This technique was applied to show a comparative analysis between the statements.

The data revealed that "Lack of infrastructure and transportation facilities" and "Corruption in the education sector" were perceived as major challenges with weighted mean score 4.00 and ranked 1st. followed by "Lack of optimum funds" ranked 2nd with weighted mean score 3.99. The "Disparity between rural and urban areas in manpower and quality of education" received weighted mean 3.90 with rank 3rd followed by fear of commercialization and privatization, policy framing by central government, universal access to education, vocational education, focus on regional languages, undermining English language, overburden of syllabus with weighted mean scores 3.94, 3.90, 3.84, 3.76, 3.60, 3.42, 3.20 ranked 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th respectively. It is evident from the Table 1 that "Lack of infrastructure and transportation facilities", "Corruption in the education sector" and "Lack of optimum funds" perceived as major challenges of national education policy- 2020 by the college students.

Thus from the above table it can be concluded that students perceived "Lack of funds" as a major challenge for the implementation of NEP, 2020. If we look at the recommendation of increasing public spending on education to 6 per cent of GDP

Table 1. Perceived challenges of National Educational Policy, 2020 by college students

S. No.	Items	Extent of Agreement					TWS	WMS	Rank
		Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree			
		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)			
1.	Lack of infrastructure and trans-portation facilities	39 (32.50)	57 (47.50)	13 (10.83)	07 (05.83)	04 (03.33)	480	4.00	1
2.	Corruption in the education sector	48 (40.00)	40 (33.33)	20 (16.66)	08 (06.66)	04 (03.33)	480	4.00	1
3.	Lack of optimum funds	40 (33.33)	55 (45.83)	13 (10.83)	08 (06.66)	04 (03.33)	479	3.99	2
4.	Disparity between rural and urban areas in manpower and quality of education	39 (32.50)	57 (47.50)	11 (09.16)	08 (06.66)	05 (04.16)	477	3.90	3
5.	Fear of commercialization and privatization	40 (33.33)	52 (43.33)	14 (11.66)	09 (07.50)	05 (04.16)	473	3.94	4
6.	Policy framing by central government	32 (26.66)	60 (50.00)	17 (14.16)	07 (05.83)	04 (03.33)	469	3.90	5
7.	Universal access to education	31 (25.83)	62 (51.66)	10 (08.33)	11 (09.16)	06 (05.00)	461	3.84	6
8.	Vocational education	23 (19.16)	62 (51.66)	22 (18.33)	10 (08.33)	03 (02.50)	452	3.76	7
9.	Focus on regional languages	28 (23.33)	47 (39.16)	22 (18.33)	15 (12.50)	08 (06.66)	432	3.60	8
10.	Undermining English language	23 (19.16)	42 (35.00)	26 (21.66)	21 (17.50)	08 (06.66)	411	3.42	9
11.	Overburden of syllabus	11 (09.16)	43 (35.83)	31 (25.83)	29 (24.16)	06 (05.00)	384	3.2	10

*TWS - Total Weighted Score *WMS - Weighted Mean Score

was first made by the National Policy on Education 1968 and reiterated by the 1986 Policy. NEP 2020 reaffirms the recommendation of increasing public investment on education to 6 percent of GDP however, there are no specific provisions mentioned in the policy regarding the methods of mobilizing funds for the implementation of the policy. Another major perceived challenge was "Universal access to education". As per (Annual Survey of Education Report, 2019), only 16 per cent of children in Class 1 in 26 surveyed rural districts can read the text at the prescribed level, while almost 40 per cent cannot even recognize letters. As per the 2016 All India Survey on Higher Education, nearly 22 million students (65%) were enrolled in private institutions in various courses. The policy targets Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education to be increased to 50 per cent (currently 26.3%) by 2035 and Universal literacy by 2025 for primary schools

The overall level of perception of the respondents has been presented in Table 2. The study indicated that, 68.33 per cent belonged to medium level of challenges, 20.00 per cent and 11.66 per cent perceived high and low level of challenges about National Education Policy, 2020.

Factor analysis: Suitability for the data

The KMO of present study was 0.847 thus confirming the appropriateness of Factor Analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated whether a given correlation matrix is an identity matrix, which would indicate that the variables are unrelated. In this case, the significance level has a very small value i.e. 0.000 which is less than 0.05 thus suggesting that the variables are highly correlated.

Table 2. Overall perceived challenges

Categories	Respondents (n) = 120	
	Frequency	Percentage
Low (score up to 34)	14	11.66
Medium (score between 35 to 47)	82	68.33
High (score 48 and above)	24	20.00

Mean: 41.65 SD: 7.31

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.847
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. chi-square	446.560
	df	55
	Sig.	.000

Factor analysis: Total variance explained

Table 4 indicates the total variance distribution model for extracted factors. In this case, first three factors as Eigen value for them is more than one (1) and account for a cumulative variance of 63.220 per cent which shows that the eleven dimensions of perceived challenges actually working as three factors to affect students' perception. The initial 3 dimensions which pose characteristic values greater than 1 can be extracted.

Factor analysis: Extracted pattern matrix

The Table 5 displayed rotated component matrix and reports the factor loadings for each variable on the components or factors after rotation. Each number represents the partial correlation between the item and the rotated factor. Eleven statements relating to perceived opportunities of National Education Policy, 2020 were factor analysed using principal component analysis with Oblimin rotation.
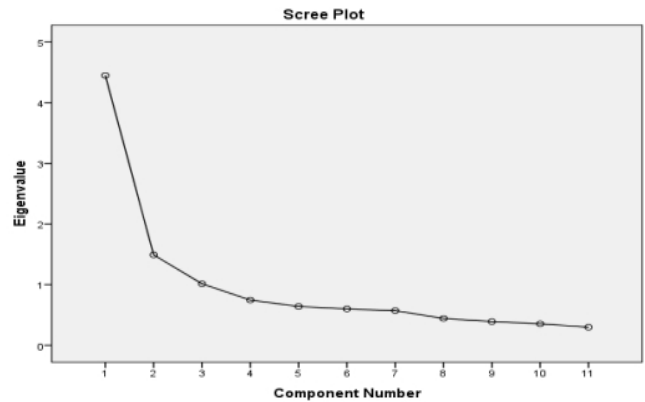

Figure 1. Factor Loadings of extracted factor

Table 4. Total variance distribution model for extracted factors

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a]
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)	Total
1	4.449	40.441	40.441	4.449	40.441	40.441	3.222
2	1.491	13.557	53.998	1.491	13.557	53.998	2.834
3	1.014	9.222	63.220	1.014	9.222	63.220	3.011
4	0.746	6.781	70.000				
5	0.641	5.826	75.827				
6	0.600	5.458	81.284				
7	0.571	5.194	86.478				
8	0.443	4.030	90.508				
9	0.391	3.558	94.065				
10	0.355	3.223	97.289				
11	0.298	2.711	100.00				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

[a]When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.

Table 5. Extracted pattern matrix for identified factor of perceived challenges of NEP, 2020 by the students

Items	Component		
	1	2	3
Policy framing by central government	0.849		
Undermining English language	0.709		
Corruption in the education sector	0.648		
Fear of commercialization & privatization	0.537		
Focus on regional languages		0.814	
Vocational education		0.698	
Overburden of syllabus		0.649	
Universal access to education		0.639	
Lack of infrastructure and transportation facilities			0.835
Disparity between rural and urban areas in manpower and quality of education			0.803
Lack of optimum funds			0.750

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization; ªRotation converged in 13 iterations.

The analysis yielded three factors explaining a total of 63.220% of the variance for the entire set of variables. Factor 1 was labelled as "Centralization of education" due to the high loadings by the following items, policy framing by central government, undermining english language, corruption in the education sector, fear of commercialization and privatization. This first factor explained 40.441 per cent of the variance. The second factor derived was labelled as "Educational disparity" due to the high loadings by the following items, focus on regional languages, vocational education, overburden of syllabus and universal access to education. The variance explained by this factor was 13.557 per cent. The third factor derived was labelled as "Financial and Coverage gap" due to high loadings by the following items, Lack of infrastructure and transportation facilities, Disparity between rural and urban areas in manpower and quality of education and Lack of optimum funds. The variance explained by this factor was 9.222 per cent. This means that we have identified three clear challenges of NEP-2020 among students that are "Centralization of education, "Educational disparity" and "Financial and Coverage gap". These three tendencies are independent of one another (i.e. they are not correlated).

CONCLUSION

This policy is alike to the concept of Basic Education of Gandhi Ji who talked of education that helps a person to earn his livelihood. The study had enhanced the knowledge on perception of challenges of NEP 2020 by the students. The study investigated "Centralization of education", "Educational disparity" and "Financial and Coverage gap" as challenging factors. Main thrust as contemplated is on multidisciplinary, holistic and broad-based education. There is also main emphasis on vocational education, which is supposed to start earlier in school phase itself.

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