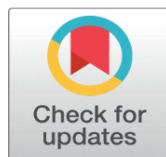
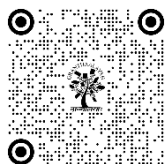


CONNECTING EDUCATION AND INFORMATION: A NEW ERA UNDER NEP 2020

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ABSTRACT

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces strategies to modify Indian education systems by targeting accessibility improvements and maintaining equity and enhancing quality outcomes. In this evolving framework libraries function as centers of learning while serving as knowledge repositories to establish essential connections between education and information. This paper examines NEP 2020's evolving library expectations through an analysis of multidisciplinary teaching methods and digital education initiatives and continuing education strategies. macenagers enable innovation through their capacity to merge digital technologies with traditional resources and develop accessible learning environments which support students from all backgrounds while providing equal information access. The research explores financing barriers alongside missing digital infrastructure and inadequate skills of information professionals in libraries. Through case studies and best practices the paper delivers effective recommendations for NEP 2020 implementation and helps policymakers alongside educators and librarians achieve alignment in service design. The research demonstrates how libraries function as critical infrastructure which enables knowledge distribution and critical thinking capabilities to create a society built on education and empowerment.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Libraries, Education, Information Access, Digital Literacy, Multidisciplinary Learning, Lifelong Education

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 intends to change India's educational system to one that is inclusive as well as flexible, and enables twenty first century skills, It aims to make an instructional guide based on creative thinking, as well as a planned educational progress. Libraries serve as basic learning centers on which this vision can ably be supported.

According to National Education Policy 2020 teaching facilities go beyond bookshelves because they function as transformative educational environments. Libraries function as learning platforms between education authorities and knowledge sources to help users between students and teachers alongside members of the community achieve innovation-based discovery of information. Libraries achieve crucial responsibility through digital literacy programs and multilateral educational approaches that deliver education system across every social space.

The research studies the necessary changes for libraries to align with NEP 2020 goals. As part of their mission libraries must support universal information access and integrate technology while establishing environment where

learners from different backgrounds feel included. Transforming libraries into hubs that support learning and collaboration activities will make them fundamental instruments for NEP 2020 goal achievement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Focussing on higher education in India, this literature review examines the role and duties of libraries in executing the NEP 2020. The study combed through recent scholarly articles and research in an effort to identify the many challenges that library engagement confronts. The findings point to the significant role that libraries can play in fostering digital literacy, fostering innovation and research, expanding access to information for everyone, improving learning experiences, and facilitating networking and collaboration. Nevertheless, the study highlights key areas where the literature is lacking and proposes several directions for future research that might provide light on libraries' contributions to NEP implementation.

Libraries and other resources are emphasised by Patil (2022) as crucial for implementing NEP 2020. The growth of school libraries and the effective implementation of new educational policies go hand in hand. To fulfil the demands of users in terms of learning and research, they serve as both a store of knowledge and a conduit for the transmission of information. Digital resources like as books and academic journals are only the beginning of what they provide to a diverse community of learners, teachers, and researchers. Urgent research endeavours are fuelled by these resources, which aid in knowledge gain

Vagdal and Acharya's (2023) findings provide light on the many ways in which university libraries influence the NEP 2020 program. Libraries play an essential role in supportive academic societies. To achieve this goal, they provide high-quality information resources, including metadata for "consumption" and data and analysis for "use," encourage ongoing education and research, build opportunities for people to work together and network, help people develop their digital literacy skills, and advocate for the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into governmental and corporate management as well as mainstream social services. By doing so, libraries contribute to the advancement of the academic community as a whole and to the realisation of policy goals.

In their 2022 study, Azim and Ajahar compared the Japanese and Indian higher education systems. When it comes to building a country and a society, education is paramount. Using a variety of enrolment, policy, and university-related statistics, this research compares and contrasts the educational systems of two countries, highlighting their recent reforms and policy efforts. The essay delves further into the lower enrolment charges in higher education in both nations and wonders why this is the case, pointing out concerns or obstacles that both nations encounter. At last, the report stresses once again how crucial universities are to a nation's progress. The NEP's mandated digitisation of education has run into a number of problems.

In 2022, Singh and Srivastava Within the framework of the NEP, there have been a number of challenges to the digitisation of education. The NEP 2020 aims to promote online education, but these obstacles are preventing it from reaching its full potential. The National Education Policy (NEP) has several initiatives to expand infrastructure as well digital education with the goal of substantially reshaping India's educational landscape by 2021. Nevertheless, the transition to online learning hasn't been trouble free either. However, there is future work to be done to overcome these limitations including pedagogical change, cooperation, access to educational materials, digital literacy training and building necessary infrastructure. How we take these steps to fix these issues are what we need to do to make sure NEP 2020 is a success.

On July 28, 2020 Central Cabinet India adopted the National Employment Policy (NEP) 2020, which was draughted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) of the government of India. This new National policy on Education substitutes the previous National Policy on Education of 1986 and enunciates the vision of educational system of India. To restructure and rejuvenate the entire spectrum of the country's educational order from the bottom to top, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020' recognises India's long and glorious cultural heritage and universal values. This policy is in accordance with SDG4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which primarily aspirations to guarantee that all people, everywhere have admittance to education or learning of high quality. The NEP of 2020 describes an overarching framework for the advancements of the domain of the national education system. The basic idea is to combine an educational component with the nucleus of the humanities, as well as enhancing the study of humanities through the use of an interdisciplinary approach (Ibrahim & Patange, 2022).

For generations, libraries had been a hub in areas for educators as these institutions held knowledge and served as a source of resources. Since inception in 2020, libraries have helped the NEP in its objectives in higher education. One of the goals of the NEP is to shake up the Indian edification scheme to focus on research and innovation, to promote an inclusive and total, all encompassing way of teaching, and to bring together different fields of study. Accordingly, according to Asif and Singh (2020) because of their extensive collections of knowledge and materials, Libraries may make a big difference in achieving these goals.

Prior studies demonstrate that libraries play an important role in the success of NEP 2020, but there are still many uncertainties. More widely, researchers have tended to treat libraries as sites to aid research, to enlarge its access to information, or to assist in the creation of digital literacy. Nevertheless, while the information accessible about the difficulties libraries confronted transfusing to the NEP 2020 structure is less, it has been highlighted that there was possibility for the NEP 2020 to effectively integrate with the standard 3R frameworks of the libraries. Integration of digital technologies in abandoned regions, personnel skill development, and budget distribution are some of the concerns surrounding these obstacles. Also, researchers, teachers, and students in less-surveyed and rural regions have not been the focus of much study on the effects of these initiatives. More research is required, therefore, to identify and address these challenges, as well as to determine how libraries might best support institutions' NEP 2020 objectives.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To analyze the role of libraries in implementing the objectives of NEP 2020 in higher education.
- 2) To examine how libraries contribute to fostering digital literacy and multidisciplinary learning.
- 3) To explore the role of libraries in promoting research, innovation, and collaboration.
- 4) To identify the challenges faced by libraries in adapting to the NEP 2020 framework.

4. HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Libraries do not play a significant role in promoting research, innovation, and collaboration in the context of NEP 2020.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Libraries play a significant role in promoting research, innovation, and collaboration in the context of NEP 2020.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The role and functions of libraries in implementing NEP 2020 in higher education are explored through a mix of methods. Primary and secondary combined data were used to provide additional insights. Structured questionnaires and interviews of librarians, faculty members and students of higher education institutions were used to collect primary data. Secondary data was gathered through articles, government reports and policy documents on NEP 2020 and library sciences. Both the qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques are used for the collected data study. Thematic analysis, coupled with descriptive statistics, were used to highlight patterns, challenges and opportunities of library integration within the NEP 2020 framework. In using this methodology all aspects of the subject are analysed and recommendations are given as to how libraries should better serve their role in higher education.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics

Variable	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Role of Respondents	Librarians	50	22.2%		
	Faculty Members	75	33.3%		
	Students	100	44.4%		
Gender	Male	130	57.8%		

	Female	95	42.2%		
Perception of Libraries' Role	Strongly Agree	120	53.3%	4.2	0.85
	Agree	70	31.1%		
	Neutral	25	11.1%		
	Disagree	10	4.4%		
Library Contribution Areas	Research Resources	200	88.9%		
	Digital Literacy	185	82.2%		
	Collaboration Tools	160	71.1%		
Challenges Faced by Libraries	Infrastructure Issues	140	62.2%		
	Lack of Digital Access	100	44.4%		
	Staff Training Needs	90	40%		

The demographics, perceptions and observations about the role of libraries in promotion of research, innovation and collaboration in the NEP 2020 is given through their descriptive statistics. Of the 225 respondents, students (44.4%) formed the largest group, followed by faculty (33.3%) and librarians (22.2%). The gender distribution was skewed with most of the respondents being male (57.8%) than female (42.2%).

The majority of the respondents' perceptions about the role of libraries were scored positively; 53.3 percent agreed strongly that libraries play a significant role other than providing books; 31.1 percent agreed. A very small fraction (11.1%) remained neutral and a smaller percentage (4.4%) even disagreed. Overall mean perception score was 4.2 (standard deviation = 0.85) which showed strong consensus in the opinion of the importance of the libraries by both groups.

Overall, steering committee members agreed that libraries offer research resources (88.9 percent); digital literacy programs (82.2 percent); and collaboration tools (71.1 percent) as some of the most important aspects of their contributions. Despite this, challenges were identified, including infrastructure issues, which proved the most prevalent (62.2%), digital access (44.4%) and staff training (40%).

Taking an analysis of this, it can be understood how libraries can be considered in accordance with NEP 2020 goals as they are considered as the pillars for research and innovation; yet, confronting challenges regarding infrastructure, digital accessibility and training is the key to unlocking their maximum potential.

Table 2 – One-Sample t-Test Output

Variable	Mean	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Mean
Perception of Libraries' Role	4.20	15.45	224	0.000	(4.10, 4.30)

Table 2 shows the results of one-sample t-test analysis of respondents' perception towards the role of libraries in the NEP 2020 context.

The mean score of the perceived contribution of the libraries in the framework of the NEP 2020 is 4.20 hence average respondents have positive perception of what libraries do for research, innovation and collaboration in the framework of the NEP 2020.

It has a very large t-value, 15.45, so we can say that the sample mean is different from the hypothesized population mean (we assumed it is neutral, say 3.0 on a Likert scale). Derived from the sample size of 225 respondents, the sample is able to provide 224 degrees of freedom (df) for estimating population parameter.

The p value (Sig. 2 tailed) is $0.000 < 0.05$, so it is sig. Hence, the result is statistically significant for which the data strongly supports the alternative hypothesis (H_1) that libraries actually do add to research, innovation and collaboration under NEP 2020 framework.

Finally, we arrive at the 95% confidence interval for the mean as (4.10, 4.30), which gives a range about which the true mean is expected to lie within, and with 95% confidence. This interval is above the neutral point (3.0), hence reinforcing the fact that libraries are considered an integral part of educational ecosystem as suggested in NEP 2020.

Finally, these results validate the statement in which libraries play a major role in the promotion of discoveries, research, and collaboration which makes them key components of the NEP 2020 framework.

7. CONCLUSION

Overall the conclusion of this study reiterates the important role that libraries play in the framework of NEP 2020 specifically in promoting research, innovation and collaboration. Analysis of the librarians, faculty members and students' perceptions suggest that libraries are important in nurturing academic and intellectual development from the perspective of NEP 2020. Respondents strongly agree that libraries offer important resources and tools to support research and enhance digital literacy and collaborative endeavors among academic institutions.

According to the one-sample t-test for hypothesis testing we conclude statistically significant positive perception of roles of libraries, since respondents constantly are aware that libraries play essential role in the academic ecosystem. In addition, the challenges library faces like infrastructure problems, inaccessibility of digital means, staff training, which can hinder them from completely using their potential in imparting the goals of NEP 2020 are to be revealed.

The findings support the important role of libraries in realising goals in the NEP, including interdisciplinary learning, innovation promotion, and balanced access to knowledge. However, it becomes glaringly clear that there is a need for further investment and strategic development to tackle the challenges of libraries which will be central to the success of the implementation of NEP 2020.

In the light of the above barriers, this research advocates that libraries must continue to evolve along their roles by accepting new technology, increase their digital resources and strengthen consorted working with educational institutions to whom they share their existence with, in order to fully carry out the conceptualized vision as envisaged in NEP 2020. Future research can be conducted to learn about specific interventions and approaches that may be used to mitigate the very challenges that libraries face in making a contribution to educational progress in India.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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