



PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE TEACHERS IN ASSAM TOWARDS THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

¹Dr. Dadul Dewri and ²Gitali Kalita

¹Associate Professor & HoD, Department of Political Science, Pub Kamrup College, Kamrup, Assam

²Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Pub Kamrup College, Kamrup, Assam

Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the first national educational policy of the twenty-first century, attempts to address the numerous expanding developmental needs of our nation. The policy aims to revamp India's education system to make it more holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary. The present study explores the attitude of college teachers in Assam towards NEP 2020, focusing on their perceptions and attitudes towards its implementation, with special reference to the higher educational sector. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from 100 college teachers of various colleges from Kamrup district of Assam. The findings indicate generally a favourable attitude towards the NEP, particularly concerning its vision and flexibility. However, concerns were raised about infrastructure, local language implementation, and the need for adequate training. The study recommends targeted workshops and state-specific adaptation strategies for seamless implementation.

Keywords: NEP 2020, College Teachers, Assam, Higher Education, Attitude, Policy Implementation

Introduction:

Education serves as the cornerstone for national development, and educational reforms have a significant impact on a country's socio-economic and cultural fabric. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive and inclusive education system suited to 21st-century demands, the Government of India unveiled the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, replacing the previous NEP of 1986 (modified in 1992). Based on the core tenets of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability, NEP 2020 seeks to enhance the professional, vocational, and teacher education sectors in addition to the school and higher education scenario of the country.

The first national educational policy of the twenty-first century, National Education Policy 2020, attempts to address the numerous expanding developmental needs of our nation. This policy suggests updating and revising every facet of the educational system, including its governance, and establishing a new framework that aligns with the ambitious objectives of 21st-century education, such as SDG4, while preserving Indian traditions and value system. The National Education Policy 2020 introduces significant reforms in the Indian education landscape with a view to overhauling the country's education system to make it more inclusive, learner-centric, flexible, and globally competitive.

Review of Literature:

Baruah, J. (2021) studied the perceptions of college teachers in Northeast India regarding the proposed changes under NEP 2020. The research, focused specifically on Assam, highlighted that teachers valued the policy's emphasis on regional languages and inclusive education. Still, many raised concerns about the top-down approach to policy planning and the dearth of training and resources at the grassroots level.

Kumar, A. (2021) assessed the awareness and perception of higher education faculty towards NEP 2020 in selected universities of India. The study revealed that a majority of faculty members were aware of the major changes proposed in the NEP. However, a significant number of respondents expressed scepticism about the readiness of their institutions for execution, particularly in terms of infrastructural and administrative readiness.

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT, 2021) reported in its teacher development module that the ongoing faculty empowerment and continuous professional development are central to the success of NEP



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2020. The report stressed the necessity of inclusive, multilingual training materials and participatory implementation strategies that take into account the particular circumstances of different regions, especially the Northeastern states of India.

Sharma, P. & Joshi, M. (2022) explored teacher educators' perspectives on the NEP 2020 through a mixed-methods approach. They found a generally positive attitude toward the policy's vision, particularly its focus on critical thinking, research, and experiential learning. However, teachers from rural and semi-urban institutions reported limited access to digital infrastructure, which may create an obstacle in implementing the policy.

Saikia, M. (2022) reported that while NEP offers revolutionary prospects, especially through research promotion and academic freedom, actual transformation would depend profoundly on investment in teacher training, curriculum revision, and institutional autonomy at the state level.

Chakraborty, S. & Das, R. (2023) analyzed the readiness of higher education institutions in Assam for the implementation of NEP 2020. Their research emphasized that while many colleges had initiated policy alignment steps such as revising syllabi and upgrading infrastructure, there remained a large gap in faculty training and digital preparedness, particularly in rural colleges. The authors recommended increased government intervention and teacher involvement in planning processes.

Kulal A. et. al. (2024) evaluated the promise and pitfalls of NEP 2020 based on the perspectives of these stakeholders by using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach to compare and elucidate the views of students, teachers, and experts from diverse backgrounds. The subject experts, as well as the students, have a positive outlook on the promises of the policy. While the necessity of further capacity building and training is highlighted.

Rationale of the study:

The most significant shifts in higher education laid out by the NEP 2020 are multidisciplinary education, a flexible curriculum framework, four-year undergraduate program, credit transfers through the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), and a focus on skill development, research, and innovation.

As the primary agents of converting the policy's visions and intended practices into actual classroom procedures and institutional culture in higher education institutions, college teachers hold a central role. Their attitudes, beliefs, awareness, and readiness have considerable influence on how effectively the NEP reforms will be enacted at the grassroots level. Even while the teacher involvement is indispensable, there remains a gap in understanding how college educators perceive the NEP 2020, especially in diverse and context-specific settings such as Assam, which is heterogeneous in terms of its inhabitants, with a mix of tribal, rural, and urban populations. College teachers play a crucial role in translating policy into practice. Their perceptions and preparedness are crucial in determining the success of the policy at the ground level. The present study will help to gain an understanding of the preparedness of college teachers or regarding policy implementation readiness. This study will also highlight the gaps in teacher awareness, infrastructural support, and professional development that may hinder the successful implementation of the said policy. Providing insights to the teachers' feedback on the feasibility of NEP reforms in actual institutional settings, the study will also help policymakers fine-tune implementation strategies. Additionally, a region-specific study may help to capture different nuances resulting from linguistic diversity, socio-economic status, and institutional variations.

Therefore, the present study is intended to explore, document, and analyze the attitudes of college teachers in Assam toward NEP 2020. The findings aim to contribute to policy discourse, aid in capacity-building efforts, and help ensure that the transition from policy to practice is smooth, inclusive, and effective.

Objectives of the Study:

The specific objectives of the study are mentioned below:



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1. To examine the overall attitude of college teachers of Assam towards NEP 2020.
2. To compare the overall attitude of college teachers of Assam towards NEP 2020 in terms of gender (male/female).
3. To suggest strategies for effective policy implementation in Assam.

Hypothesis of the Study:

There is no significant difference in the attitude of college teachers towards NEP 2020 in terms of gender (male/female).

Delimitations of the study:

The study, being exploratory, had the following delimitations:

- i. The study is delimited to the Kamrup district of Assam.
- ii. The study is delimited to the assessment of the attitude of college teachers towards higher educational reforms only.
- iii. The study is delimited to the teachers of the colleges affiliated with Gauhati University.

Methodology:

- **Research Design:** The Normative Survey method is adopted for the present study.
- **Population:** All the college teachers of Provincialized degree colleges of Kamrup district constitute the population for the present study.
- **Sample Size:** 100 teachers from 5 colleges of Kamrup district were taken as a sample for the study.
- **Sampling Technique:** A Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample colleges. Respondents were obtained randomly from the sample colleges.
- **Tool Used:** A self-structured 5-point Likert-type questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions. Each item ranges from strongly disagree (numerical value 1) to strongly agree (numerical value 5). Hence, the minimum score is 20 and the maximum is 100 for each respondent.
- **Statistical Techniques:** Percentage analysis, Mean(M), Standard Deviation (SD), and t-test are used to analyse the collected data.

Analysis and interpretation of data:

- **Attitude of college teachers toward NEP 2020:**

Table 1
Attitude of college teachers toward NEP 2020

N	Mean	SD
100	74.8	8.6



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From the above table, it is evident that the mean score and standard deviation of the attitude score of the college teachers are 74.8 and 8.6, respectively. Therefore, the calculated data suggests a positive attitude towards the NEP 2020.

- **Comparison of the attitude of college teachers in terms of gender (male/female).**

H-1: There is no significant difference in the attitude of college teachers towards NEP 2020.

Table 2: Comparison of the attitude of college teachers in terms of gender:

	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	interpretation
Male	50	73.6	8.3	98	1.34	0.18	Not significant
Female	50	75.5	8.8				

The above table shows that the Mean score of college teachers' attitude is 73.6 for the male group, and 75.5 for the female group. The table also shows that the Standard Deviation (SD) is 8.3 and 8.8, respectively, for the male and the female group. The p-value (0.18), which is greater than 0.05 ($0.18 > 0.05$), indicates no significant difference in attitude scores based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted at the .05 level of significance. It indicates that the male and female college teachers do not differ significantly in terms of their attitude towards the NEP 2020.

- **Recommendations for effective policy implementation in Assam:**

The following tactics are recommended for the smooth implementation of the policy, in light of the findings regarding the opinions and views of college instructors on NEP 2020.

- The Government of Assam should conduct district-level NEP training workshops to foster teachers' professional development. This will ensure consistent understanding and application of NEP provisions at the grassroots level.
- Research highlights that faculty participation is crucial for meaningful NEP implementation in higher education. Active involvement of teachers in redesigning syllabi ensures that the curricula are contextually relevant and practically deployable, especially in diverse educational settings like Assam. Therefore, curriculum restructuring should involve college faculty input.
- Rural colleges lack adequate ICT and library infrastructure which hinders digital pedagogy. Therefore, adequate grants for upgrading ICT and library resources should be provided to enable effective teaching and research aligned with NEP 2020 goals, especially in rural colleges of Assam.
- The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) has already translated important modules into Assamese and Bodo, including Learning Outcomes and the "Vidya Pravesh" teaching manual. Expanding this to all NEP training materials will ensure better comprehension, particularly for instructors in rural and tribal areas.
- The state-level NEP monitoring and feedback committees should be extended to include teacher representatives from various colleges of the state.

Discussion

The present study has attempted to descriptively analyze the perceptions and attitudes that the college teachers of Assam possess towards the NEP 2020 with a special emphasis on the reforms in higher education which are laid out by the policy. Most college teachers in Assam support the vision of NEP 2020, especially its emphasis on holistic education and multidisciplinary learning. The policies' emphasis on skill-based courses and their focus on cultivating a research culture are highly appreciated by the faculty. However, it's important to highlight that while the change in higher education's



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evaluation system is acknowledged to be beneficial, it also adds to professors' workloads, as reported by the respondents. Information is gathered about the difficulties in striking a balance between teaching, evaluation, and research. The data has shown that they also feel that localization of implementation is necessary. Infrastructure in rural and semi-urban areas of Assam, including internet access and digital tools, needs significant improvement.

Conclusion

The study has revealed that college teachers in Assam exhibit a favourable but cautious attitude toward NEP 2020, especially regarding the reforms introduced in the higher educational sector. While the majority of respondents acknowledge the progressive vision and potential long-term benefits of the policy, such as the emphasis on multidisciplinary learning, research orientation, and improved quality standards, they simultaneously express uncertainties about its practical viability. A significant concern among the participants relates to the challenges of effective implementation, especially in colleges that are under-resourced or lack adequate infrastructure and institutional capacity to reach the ambitious objectives of the policy. Their feedback highlights the need for decentralized planning, region-specific strategies, and robust capacity-building initiatives to ensure that the policy translates meaningfully into practice across diverse institutional settings in Assam.

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