



Original Article

Multidimensionality and Innovation in Higher Education in the Context of NEP-2020

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Manuscript ID:

IBMIIRJ -2025-021115

Submitted: 10 Oct. 2025

Revised: 25 Oct. 2025

Accepted: 12 Nov. 2025

Published: 30 Nov. 2025

ISSN: 3065-7857

Volume-2

Issue-11

Pp.60-62

November 2025

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Quick Response Code:



Web: <https://ibrj.us>



DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.17660006](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17660006)

DOI Link:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17660006>



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Abstract

Moving from elementary education to a higher education system that has large multidisciplinary universities and colleges and the main attraction in this is universities and colleges with varied disciplines, course curriculum, education training, assessment and support for better student's scholastic life as an integral important part. Eliminating fragmentation of higher education, creating a community of scholars and peers for students to learn, bridging the gaps between subjects, developing students in all-round ways such as mental, artistic, creative, analytical and sports, as well as multidisciplinary education system to develop all human capabilities such as intellect, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional and moral in an integrated manner, is the main goal of the "New Education Policy-2020".

"The New Education Policy 2020" marks a landmark step in shaping India's educational landscape in the 21st century. It envisions an education system that not only meets the nation's developmental needs but also nurtures the creative potential within every individual. Rooted in India's age-old tradition where the pursuit of knowledge, wisdom, and truth is considered the highest human goal, the policy draws inspiration from the legacy of ancient learning centers like Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, and Vallabhi, which once set global benchmarks in teaching and research. By promoting innovation and excellence, the NEP 2020 seeks to bring transformational changes to higher education and equip learners to meet future challenges.

Keyword: Creative, Supreme, Challenges, Multidisciplinary, Intellect

Introduction:

Swami Vivekananda says that the practice by which Education is when the will power and light of a man are controlled and become fruitful. Education should change according to the need of the student. We need such an education which builds character, brings about mental development, develops intellect and enables a man to stand on his own feet. The New Education Policy 2020, approved by the Union Cabinet on 29 July 2020, envisions a modern, inclusive, and forward-looking education system for India. It provides a comprehensive framework covering all stages of learning—from primary to higher education and vocational training—across both rural and urban areas. The policy aspires to make India's education system multidimensional, innovative, and equitable, ensuring equal opportunities for all, irrespective of religion, gender, caste, or creed. By promoting quality learning and fostering creativity, the NEP 2020 aims to strengthen India's vibrant knowledge society and pave the way for the nation to emerge as a global knowledge Center and superpower.

The "New Education Policy 2020" envisions a comprehensive transformation in India's educational system, where curriculum and teachings nurture respect for the fundamental duties, constitutional values, and a deep sense of connection to the nation and the evolving global environment. The policy aims to cultivate not only knowledge and critical thinking but also the values, ethics, and attitudes that uphold human rights, sustainable development, and global well-being, thereby shaping responsible and compassionate global citizens. Higher education holds a vital role in the growth of both the individual and society. Aligned with the vision of the Indian Constitution—which aspires to ensure justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity—the NEP 2020 recognizes education as the cornerstone of national progress. It emphasizes that higher education significantly contributes to economic growth, employment generation, and societal development, empowering individuals to realize their fullest potential. The policy also acknowledges that the knowledge landscape is rapidly evolving worldwide. With emerging advances in Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, and Machine Learning, traditional job roles are being reshaped. While automation may replace certain skills, there is a growing demand for expertise in data science, computer science, mathematics, and interdisciplinary learning that connects the sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

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How to cite this article:

Tiwari D. Litt, A. (2025). Multidimensionality and Innovation in Higher Education in the Context of NEP-2020. InSight Bulletin: A Multidisciplinary Interlink International Research Journal, 2(11), 60–62. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17660006>

In response to global challenges such as change in climate, environmental degradation, and public health crises, the NEP 2020 highlights the need for skilled professionals in biology, chemistry, physics, agriculture, social sciences and climatology, fostering a multidisciplinary approach to innovation and sustainable development.

To make India's higher education truly multidimensional and globally competitive, the NEP 2020 introduces several key innovations:

World-Class Education with a Spirit of Excellence: The policy envisions the creation of a world-class higher education system that promotes excellence, creativity, and innovation—paving the way for India to emerge as a leading knowledge-driven society.

Multidisciplinary and Holistic Learning: It emphasizes a balanced educational model integrating arts, humanities, social sciences, technology, engineering, and medicine. This holistic approach nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and adaptability—skills essential for the challenges of the 21st century.

Innovations in the Regulatory Framework: A major reform under NEP 2020 is the establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI), structured into four independent yet interlinked bodies:

- National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) – for regulation and oversight
- National Accreditation Council (NAC) – for accreditation and quality assurance
- Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) – for funding and financial management
- General Education Council (GEC) – for setting academic standards and learning outcomes

The main purpose of all these organizations is to work independently as well as to establish coordination to achieve common objectives.

Emphasis on Research Possibilities:- It emphasizes on the culture of research and innovation as central to the vision of future higher education and attempts to create significant funding, incentives and grants for research through the setting up of the National Research Foundation.

Selection of Best Faculty:- Faculty members are the most important centre of the higher education system. It paved the way for the recruitment of best faculty with special focus on mentoring, retention, incentives, achievements and faculty.

Development programmes Academic Freedom and Flexible Curriculum:- It removes today's rigid disciplinary boundaries and provides sufficient academic freedom and makes the curriculum flexible to enhance the possibilities of lifelong learning.

Holistic and multidisciplinary education:- This policy envisages the establishment of a model public university called Multidisciplinary Education and Research University on the lines of IIT, IIM etc. for holistic and multidisciplinary education. Its objective is to establish the highest global standards in quality education.

Value Based Education:- The policy envisages value based education such as credit based courses, community engagement and service, environmental education in flexible and innovative curriculum in higher educational institutions to bring the idea of multidisciplinary education to life, with topics such as climate change, pollution, waste management, sanitation, conservation and management of biodiversity, wildlife conservation, etc. as its integral parts.

Integrating State Funding and Private Support:- It has strengthened the funding framework with increased GDP investment in higher education and emphasised on private support. The role of treasury and private sector has been given prominence in the policy.

Internationalization and digitalization:- It gives prominence to internationalization to promote global partnerships with leading universities around the world. This also includes recognition and ranking of universities globally. It envisages significant support for digitalization of higher education and the need to promote online education and upgrade the existing digital infrastructure. During the Corona period, the importance of online education was understood not only in higher education but also in school education and through this medium the course was completed and examinations were conducted.

Greater opportunities for public education for the deprived and the poor:- Substantial increase in scholarships for students by private/charitable universities, providing ample opportunities through open schools, online education and open distance learning, along with prioritising infrastructure and availability and access to learning material for students with disabilities.

Development of vocational skills in schools, colleges:- To integrate vocational education programmes into mainstream education at the university in a phased manner, ensuring that every child learns the skills of at least one vocation and becomes aware of the importance of labour and the significance of other vocations including Indian arts and crafts. To prevent commercialization of education in all public and one of the main objectives of this new education policy is to treat private higher education institutions equally in the regulatory system and to develop a transparent system.

Outstanding Leadership:- A rigorous, The main objective of the new policy is to select all leadership positions and heads of institutions through a fair, merit-based, capacity-based process and to ensure that the process of change and innovation continues.

Promotion of Indian art and culture:- Art is the main medium to spread culture. To promote Indian art and culture, local music, art, handicrafts should be promoted through association with local artists and handicrafts. Skilled personalities will be appointed as guest teachers and the dormant folk art and culture of our country will be revived.

Knowledge of the India's country's rich diversity makes this policy:- It gives the students an opportunity to gain direct knowledge of the rich diversity. For this, an innovation has been made to identify various tourist destinations under "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" and take them on a tour of different parts of the country to increase knowledge about these areas and to know their history, scientific contribution, traditions. Promotion and propagation of Indian languages Higher education Subject experts and experts in translation and interpretation will be appointed in the system for the widespread promotion and propagation of Indian languages. The importance of mother tongue/local language has been given attention in this policy and for their promotion and propagation, language related programmes will be conducted in the education system and software and e-content will be made available for increasing the knowledge of languages.

The New Education Policy 2020 draws attention to the rich educational heritage of ancient India, always emphasizing its holistic approach to learning in mix-disciplinary. India's ancient centers of knowledge, such as Takshashila and Nalanda, exemplified the integration of diverse disciplines within a unified framework of education. Historical and literary evidence from these institutions reveals that education in ancient India combined the study of arts, sciences, and practical skills. Texts such as Kadambari by Banabhatta portray education as encompassing the "knowledge of sixty-four arts", which extended beyond creative pursuits like music and painting to include scientific domains such as chemistry and mathematics, vocational fields such as carpentry and tailoring, and professional disciplines like medicine and engineering. Furthermore, it emphasized the cultivation of essential life skills such as communication, discussion, and reasoning, reflecting the broad-based and integrated nature of learning in India's intellectual tradition.

In alignment with the demands of the twenty-first century, the NEP 2020 envisions quality education as a means to foster intellectually vibrant, ethical, and creative individuals equipped with versatile talents. It promotes both specialized study in chosen disciplines and the development of core human values such as character, empathy, and civic responsibility. The policy seeks to nurture intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, and a spirit of innovation and service among learners, while building competencies across a wide spectrum of domains — including the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, languages, and vocational and professional fields. Thus, the NEP 2020 reaffirms education as a dynamic process aimed at holistic human development and nation-building through knowledge, creativity, and ethical engagement.

Conclusion

Education is a lifelong process. It creates future citizens for the development of society and works to bring out the skills of a person by developing his aptitudes. It continues from birth to death of a person because a person keeps learning something or the other at any age. In the New Education Policy-2020, the focus has been on developing the inherent abilities of a person, whether it is school education or higher education, and innovations have been made to make the higher education system multidimensional and bring about radical changes.

Acknowledgment

I express my profound gratitude to all those who have extended their support in the completion of this research paper. I am deeply thankful to my academic mentors, colleagues, and well-wishers whose insightful suggestions and constant encouragement strengthened the quality of this work. Their constructive remarks helped refine the analysis and gave greater clarity to the ideas presented in the context of NEP-2020.

My sincere thanks go to the Department of Geography, Govt. Mankunwar Bai Arts & Commerce Autonomous College for Women, Jabalpur, for providing a supportive academic environment that enabled the smooth progress of this study. I also acknowledge the valuable reference materials, policy documents, and scholarly resources that enriched the conceptual depth of this research.

I extend heartfelt appreciation to the pioneers of educational policy and the architects of NEP-2020, whose visionary framework inspired a deeper exploration of multidimensionality and innovation in higher education. Their contributions continue to guide scholars, educators, and policymakers toward transformative reforms in the Indian education system.

Lastly, I am grateful to my family and friends for their unwavering support, motivation, and patience throughout the research process. Their belief in my academic pursuits has been a constant source of strength.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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