

IMPACT OF GENDER, LOCATION AND PARENTAL EDUCATION ON AWARENESS OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY -2020 AMONGST STUDENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF GUJARAT

Kishor Bhanushali

Dean – Research, Karnavati University, Gandhinagar

Nishabhen Bharatkumar Dave

Research Scholar, Karnavati University, Gandhinagar

ABSTRACT

Education plays a pivotal role in the economic growth and development of any nation. It not only educates the people but also plays an important role in building character, compassion, ethics in an individual and at the same time prepares them for gainful & fulfilling employment which in turn contributes to the overall development of the nation. With the rapid development in the technical demand globally, it will be required that technically & skilled human beings having sound multidisciplinary knowledge remain available. Hence, the Government of India has changed the way we study by introducing “New Education Policy – 2020”. It will bring foundational change in the education system and will bring innovative changes that will meet global requirement of qualified individuals. The success of the policy depends on the cooperation and awareness amongst all the stakeholders who are going to be affected by the change. Hence, it is essential that the objectives, features, benefits and outcomes of the policy are known to the individual. The present study aims to understand the awareness of NEP-2020 amongst the students of higher education institutions based on structured questionnaire and the information was collected through survey having sample size of 230 respondents. The study focus on awareness based on various criteria and the outcome is distinguished based on gender, residential location & background of parents’ education. On verifying the feedback & statistical result of chi-square analysis, it indicates that there is no significant association between the gender, location and parental education on awareness about the NEP – 2020.

Keywords: New Education Policy; NEP – 2020; Awareness; Higher Education Institution; Stakeholders;

INTRODUCTION

India is known for its diversified religion and their culture hence, it is believed that a quality education should remain available to all irrespective of their socio-cultural background or religious diversity. Education policy is a comprehensive framework which directs the progression of education and a country’s education system. Hence, to strengthen the education system, the Govt. of India framed its first National Education Policy in the year 1968, then after the second policy was declared in the year 1986 which was revised in the year 1992. With rapid development and growth in technology, it is essential that time and again the education policy meets the objectives of the global requirement.

The major problems that are currently faced in the existing higher education system (i.e. declared & modified 1986/92) includes rigid separation of disciplines with early specialization and streaming of students into narrow areas of study, limited access of education specifically in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, lesser emphasis on research at universities and colleges, burden of class room teaching & examination, less scope of multidisciplinary education, lack of learning resources for quality education etc.

The gap between the current learning outcomes and what will be the future needs can easily be gained by focusing on timely development of the education system and that too from early childhood till higher education. Hence, after almost 34 years the government with an aim to change the way we study has revamped and declared its third National Education Policy – 2020. It aimed to provide a creative learning environment, foster research and critical

thinking capacity by extensive use of technology, conceptual understanding with multidisciplinary knowledge and many more. For the purpose of developing holistic individuals, it is essential that an identified set of skills and values is incorporated at each stage of learning, from pre-school to higher education. Higher education plays an important role in promoting human as well as societal well-being in developing India. The purpose of quality higher education is therefore more than the creation of greater qualities for individuals' employment.

There shall be some challenges in implementation of the said policy such as awareness of provisions to some stakeholders, framing curriculum which meets the global demand, proper infrastructure which will require huge investments, coordination between central and state government for implementation of the policy etc.

The new education policy focuses on delivering high quality education with equity and inclusion of stakeholders. It will bring overall transformation in the existing education system. The objectives of the NEP - 2020 can be achieved when there is cooperation & collaboration between all the stakeholders such as students, faculty members, administrative staff, authority / management personnel, parents, industry (placement) etc. which is backed by institutional mechanisms. From all the stakeholders, the centre point of immediate recipient of this change would be the students. The policy must do everything wherein students should be benefited by this policy in terms of equality – creative & research based learning, adequate learning resources, access of good infrastructure, flexibility / multidisciplinary education, good support system etc.

This will be possible only when the stakeholders are aware of the provisions of this policy and their benefits out of it. It will take a considerable amount of dedication by the regulatory bodies to implement and acceptance by various stakeholder to achieve the full potential benefits of the policy. As the students being an important stakeholder having direct impact of the changes, the research aims to examine awareness of various features, objectives & benefits of New Education Policy – 2020 amongst the students of Higher Education Institutions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Govt. of India (2020), the Union Cabinet of India approved the NEP-2020 on July 29, 2020 with an aim to have qualitative access of education to all with systematic planning of implementation. It will bring fundamental changes in the current education system for all round development of an individual by providing them qualitative, valued based, skilled based, research based and innovative education. It will bring academic & administrative autonomy with light but tight regulatory framework. Overall it will bring transformative reforms in the existing education system. Paras D M. (2022) & Sarta A. (2022) has focused on an overview of NEP - 2020 with structural changes in the education and has mentioned the important features of the policy with targeted outcomes. It has mentioned some challenges & suggestions to be incorporated for effective implementation of the policy. Patel K J, (2023) and Shubhada M R & Niranth M R. (2021) reported a comparative study of earlier declared education policies by the GoI which has helped the nation in developing the education system and objectives of newly reformed policy for bringing transformation & holistic development of the nation. The research effort covers highlights of earlier education policy & its relevance with the new education policy with merits and drawbacks of the policy. L. Devi and Cheluvvaraju. (2020) has given importance to NEP-2020 on the basis of awareness, impact & benefits that will derive in the field of Commerce and Management disciplines. It has given statistical detail considering various parameters on drawbacks of existing education policy along with suggestions for successful implementation of the policy. Somani, P., & Gupta, U. (2023) has focused on identifying the awareness amongst the students about the policy and its relevance for successful execution. The study is based on descriptive sample study with different criteria such as age, gender, study programmes etc to identify awareness amongst the students and its relevance. It has also suggested steps to be taken for increasing the awareness of NEP – 2020 amongst the students. Sudhagar, D. P., & T D , M. B. (2022) has concentrated on perception and awareness of NEP – 2020 amongst various stakeholders such as students, parents, faculty members etc. It shows that the stakeholder is having moderate knowledge & recommends to have more awareness building activities so as to have awareness. Ambar F A. (2021) emphasis on the need of increasing awareness on NEP – 2020 specifically on Higher Education along with specifying the features, impact areas and opportunities to the stakeholders. It has elaborated the principles of the policy and has focused on thrust area of necessity to change the education system so as to bring transformation by making education a modernized, equitable and progressive one. Chauhan, A., & Ramchandani, D. S. (2023) emphasis on survey being conducted on varied criteria to find out the implementation of NEP and its efficacy in Gujarat. It is aimed to find out opinion of students and stakeholders with regard to the change in policy, its probable efficacy, their familiarity & awareness about the policy.

OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The objective of the study is to examine the level of awareness about NEP-2020 amongst students studying in higher education institutions of the state of Gujarat and the association between gender, location and parental education qualification and the level of awareness about NEP. To achieve the objective, primary survey on online mode was conducted amongst the sample of 230 students. They were assessed on their awareness about various dimensions of NEP - 2020 including various concepts, abbreviations, norms, and their awareness on various benefit of the policy etc. The level of awareness was measured and assessed across rural - urban, gender, and educational qualification of parents.

DATA ANALYSIS:

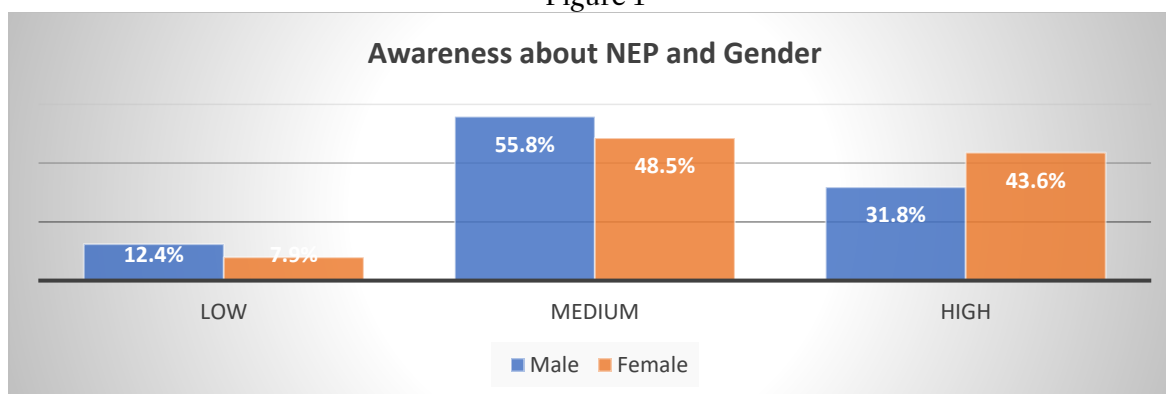
The survey was conducted through questionnaire which includes basic information of respondents such as their personal details, demographic information, background of parent education etc. It also included questions on their awareness of NEP – 2020 such as abbreviations of various terms, their familiarity with various provisions of the policy, their opinion on the effectiveness of the policy etc. The profile of respondent is mentioned as under;

Table: 1

Profile of Respondents		
Gender		
	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	129	56
Female	101	44
Residential Location		
Rural	108	46.9
Urban	122	53.1
Educational Qualification: Mother		
SSC	79	34.3
HSC	56	24.2
Under Graduate	67	29.2
Post Graduate	28	12.2
Educational Qualification: Father		
SSC	68	29.5
HSC	62	26.9
Under Graduate	64	27.8
Post Graduate	36	15.6

Awareness and Gender: The questionnaire was scored based on their understanding / perception which was given grading based on three criteria such as partially aware, fully aware & not aware. The awareness amongst the gender was bifurcated based on their insights on the policy and the result indicates that there is only marginal difference in gender participation and the developed hypothesis was verified based on their scale level of awareness i.e., low, medium and high (Fig. 1)

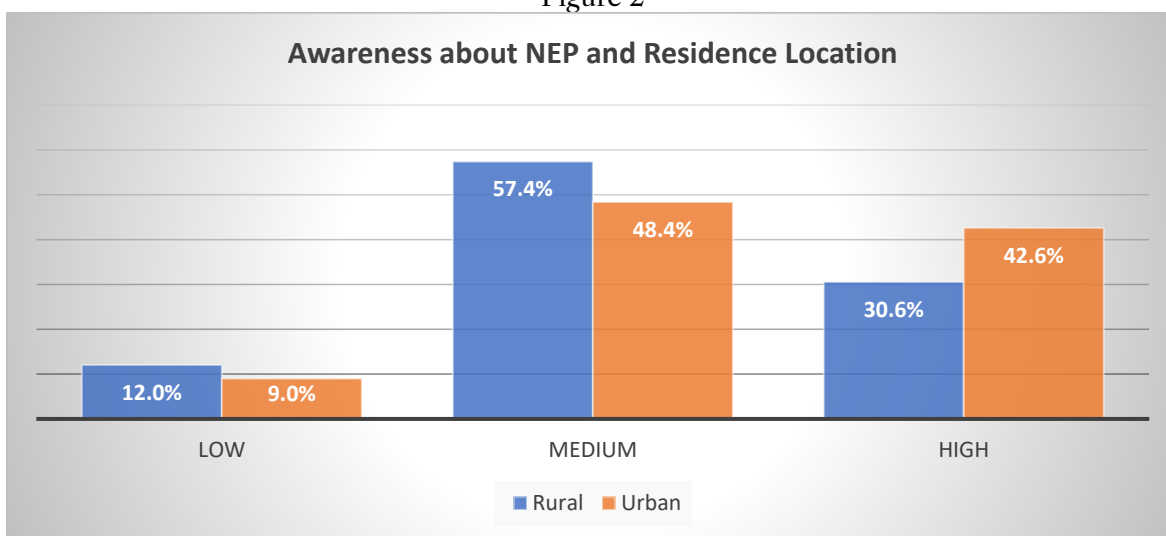
Figure 1



The data shows higher percentage of awareness in female participants as compared to their male counterparts. Further, Chi-Square test conducted to assess the association between level of awareness and gender do not reject the null hypothesis (Chi-Square 3.792, df 2, $p > 0.05$) resulting in conclusion that the level of awareness about NEP and gender are not associated, the awareness is equal among both the gender.

Awareness and Location: The general perception shows higher level of awareness about the policy in urban areas as compared to rural area. In order to access the difference in level of awareness across rural and urban area, respondents were also asked to share the details about their residential location.

Figure 2



The result of the analysis (Fig 2) shows that the proportion of students from urban areas are more in the category of higher awareness as compared to their counterparts in rural areas. Chi-Square test does not support significant association between level of awareness and location of residence (Chi-Square 3.649, df 2, $p > 0.05$). Thus, it can safely be concluded that level of awareness is not associated with location.

Awareness and Parental Education: Education level of parent is expected to have direct impact on the level of awareness about NEP to students. Educated parents are more aware about NEP, the same is passed on to their children. Attempt has been made to access the association between parental education and the level of awareness.

Figure 3

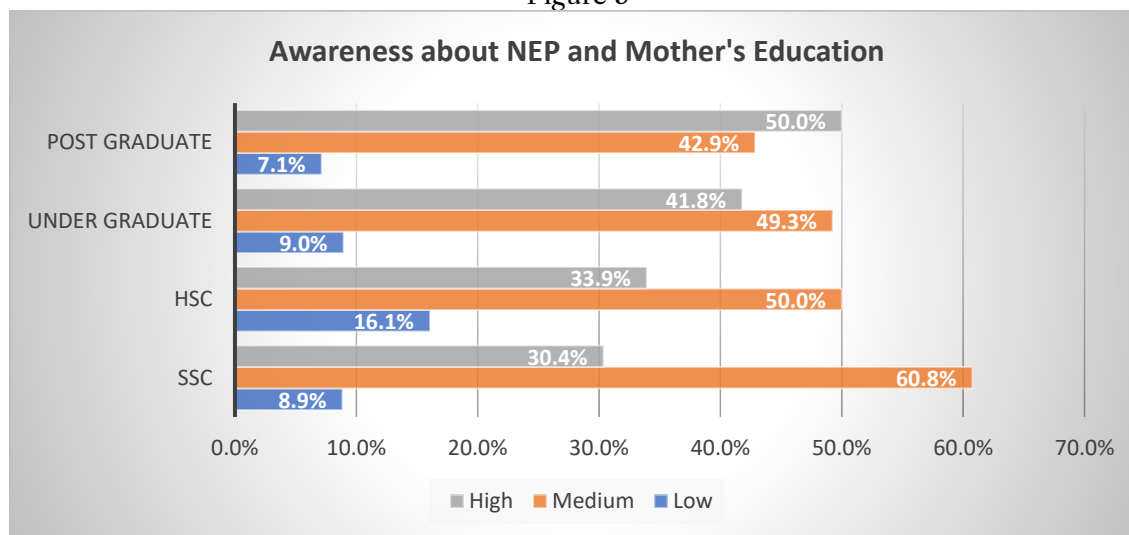
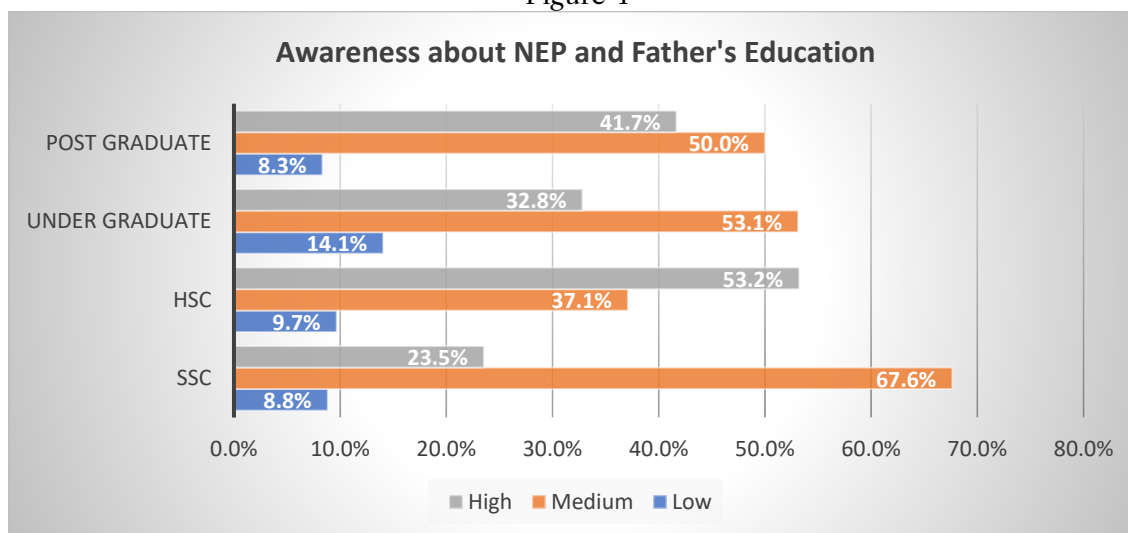


Figure 4



The association between the education level of parents and the awareness about NEP as presented figure 3 and 4 above shows that 50 percent of students with post graduate mother and 41.7 percent with post graduate father are in the high awareness group as compared to 30.4 percent and 23.5 percent among the students with parent having SSC qualification respectively. Thus, data shows some relationship between the awareness level among students and educational qualification of their parents. But the same is not statistically proved when Chi-Square test is applied to the data. Chi-Square test does not reject the null hypothesis about association between awareness about NEP and mother's education (Chi-Square 6.820, df 6, $p > 0.05$) and also with father's education (Chi-Square 15.243, df 6, $p > 0.05$). Thus, we conclude that the level of awareness about NEP is not associated with parental educational qualification.

CONCLUSION

The research question was proposed to check whether the level of NEP-2020 among the student is higher / low and if there has any relevance with gender, demographic factors & parent education. According to the analysis there is no association between the level of awareness about NEP and selected variables i.e. gender, location, parental education. These variable does not have any significant impact on their awareness about NEP. The success of the policy depends on cooperation & collaboration between all the stakeholders with defined strategical planning by the Government by emphasis on making efforts to sensitise them about the objectives & implementation strategy so as to receive the desired output. The study indicates that the respondents were moderately aware of various objectives and provision of NEP – 2020 which will certainly lead to the effective and anticipated results by the Government. The present sampling includes responses from HEI of Gujarat and it may vary within and between other state hence, it is not far from limitations. The study will give insights to the HEI, Government and Policy implementing agency to increase the awareness by conducting campaign, seminars, workshops etc. for the stakeholders. The present sampling includes responses from students of HEI of Gujarat and it may vary within and between other state.

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