

Study of the Perception of Students towards NEP 2020

Sukesh Kumar Pandey, Research Scholar, Department of Education, DDUGU

Prof. Sushma Pandey, Professor, Department of Education, DDUGU

Abstract

This paper investigates the perceptions of higher education students in the Gorakhpur division regarding the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The study was conducted using a sample of 525 students enrolled during the 2022–2025 and 2023–2024 academic sessions. Findings indicate that the majority of students hold an "adequate" perception of NEP 2020, and this view remains consistent irrespective of demographic variables such as gender and academic background.

Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a watershed moment in the Indian educational landscape, introducing a visionary framework designed to make education more holistic, multidisciplinary, and aligned with 21st-century global standards. While the policy outlines sweeping structural and pedagogical reforms, its ultimate success depends heavily on its primary stakeholders: the students. As higher education institutions transition toward these new mandates—such as academic flexibility, skill enhancement, and multidisciplinary learning—understanding how students perceive and receive these changes is critical. Their readiness and attitudes serve as key indicators of the policy's practical impact. Therefore, this paper, titled "Study of Perception of Students Towards NEP 2020," aims to empirically investigate how higher education students view these ongoing reforms, providing valuable insights into their acceptance of the policy across different academic and demographic backgrounds

Statement of the Problem: -

The problem is stated as following: "Study of the Perception of Students towards NEP 2020"

Operational definitions

1. **Perception:** In the context of this study, perception refers to the attitudes, awareness, and viewpoints of the respondents regarding the new educational reforms. Operationally, it is defined as the aggregate score obtained by a respondent on the 50-item, 5-point Likert Scale for Perception of Students on NEP 2020 (SPSN) developed by the researcher. Based on these scores, perception is quantified into three distinct levels: Poorly Adequate (below 128), Moderately Adequate (128 to 156), and Perfect (above 156)
2. **Students:** Operationally, this term refers to the learners currently enrolled in higher education institutions (undergraduate or postgraduate programs) located within the Gorakhpur Commissionerary during the academic sessions of 2023–2024 and 2024-2025.
3. **NEP 2020:** This refers to the National Education Policy approved by the Government of India in 2020. For the purpose of this research, NEP 2020 is operationally defined through the seven specific dimensions of the policy (e.g., multidisciplinary approach, academic flexibility, etc.) that are measured by the researcher's scale.

Research Questions: -

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the overall level of students' perception regarding NEP 2020?
2. Do demographic variables, specifically gender and academic background, significantly influence students' perception of NEP 2020?

Objectives of the Study: -

The present study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To assess the overall level of students' perception regarding NEP 2020.
2. To examine the effect of gender on students' perception of NEP 2020.
3. To determine the influence of academic background on students' perception of NEP 2022

Hypothesis: -

To guide the present study, the following research and null hypotheses were formulated

Research Hypotheses: -

H₁: There is a significant difference between male and female students in their perception of NEP 2020.

H₂: There is a significant difference in the perception of NEP 2020 among students from different academic backgrounds (Commerce, Science, and Arts).

Null Hypotheses: -

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception of NEP 2020.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the perception of NEP 2020 among students from Commerce, Science, and Arts academic backgrounds.

Research Method: -

This study employed a descriptive survey research design.

Population: -

The target population for this study comprised all students enrolled during the 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 academic sessions.

Sample and Sampling Technique: -

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed for this investigation. In the initial stage, a comprehensive list of 363 higher education institutions—comprising universities and their affiliated colleges—within the Gorakhpur division was compiled.

In the second stage, all the 21 aided colleges were selected from this list using purposive sampling. Finally, utilizing an incidental sampling technique, a total of 525 students (25 from each selected institution) enrolled in the 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 academic sessions were chosen to participate in the study.

Data Collection: -

Data for the present study were collected using the "Scale for Perception of Students on NEP 2020," an instrument developed specifically for this research. Because the study relied on primary student responses, the investigator visited the selected higher education institutions within the Gorakhpur division to obtain formal permission from the respective authorities prior to administering the survey.

Nature of Data: -

An assessment of the data's distribution revealed a non-normal curve, demonstrating a skewness coefficient of (0.146) and a kurtosis value of (0.470).

Statistical technique used for data analysis: -

To evaluate the nature and distribution of the data, various descriptive statistics were calculated, including the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, and their respective Z-scores. Additionally, frequencies and percentages were computed to summarize the demographic profiles. To investigate the effects of demographic variables—specifically gender and academic background—on students' perception of NEP 2020, non-parametric inferential statistics were employed, namely the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis H test.

Data Analysis & Conclusion: -

The collected data were analysed, and the findings are presented below in accordance with the objectives of the study

Objective 1: To assess the overall level of students' perception regarding NEP 2020.

To address this objective, a frequency distribution was generated. The respondents' scores were categorized into three distinct levels of perception regarding NEP 2020, based on the interpretative criteria detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Criteria for Categorizing Students' Level of Perception Regarding NEP 2020

Level of perception	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Excellent	157	250
Adequate	128	156
Poorly adequate	0	127

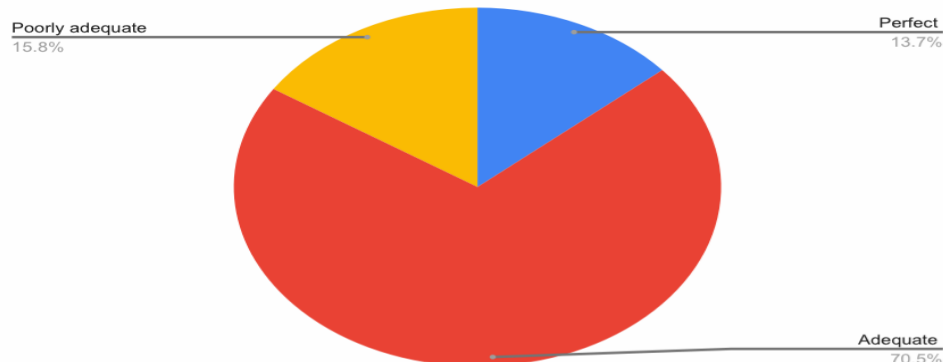
The frequencies and corresponding percentages of students across each level of perception regarding NEP 2020 are detailed in Table 2

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Students in Each Category of Perception Regarding NEP 2020

Level of perception	Frequency	Percentage
Perfect	72	13.7
Adequate	370	70.5
Poorly adequate	83	15.8
total	525	100

Table 2 indicates that a majority of the sample (370 students) perceive the NEP 2020 as adequate. Additionally, the subsequent graph illustrates the percentage distribution of respondents across the three levels of perception regarding the NEP 2020.

Perception of students on NEP 2020

**Figure 1:** percentage of students under each of three levels of perception on NEP 2020.

Based on Figure 1 and Table 2, the majority of students (70.5%) perceive the currently implemented National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as adequate. In contrast, 13.7% of students consider it excellent, while 15.8% view it as poorly adequate. Given that the overwhelming majority falls under the "adequate" category, it can be concluded that the general student consensus finds the NEP 2020 to be satisfactory.

This overall trend remains highly consistent across genders, with both male and female students predominantly rating the policy as adequate.

Gender-Wise Perception Analysis; -

The specific breakdown of how male and female student-teachers perceive the NEP 2020 is detailed below.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of Student Perceptions on NEP 2020 by Gender

Gender	Level of perception	Frequency	Percentage
Male	Perfect	49	16.9 %
	Adequate	199	69.3 %
	Poorly adequate	39	13.6 %
Female	Perfect	23	9.7 %
	Adequate	171	71.8%
	Poorly adequate	44	18.5 %

As Table 3 reveals, the data clearly indicates that the vast majority of students, regardless of their gender, share the perception that the NEP 2020 is adequate.

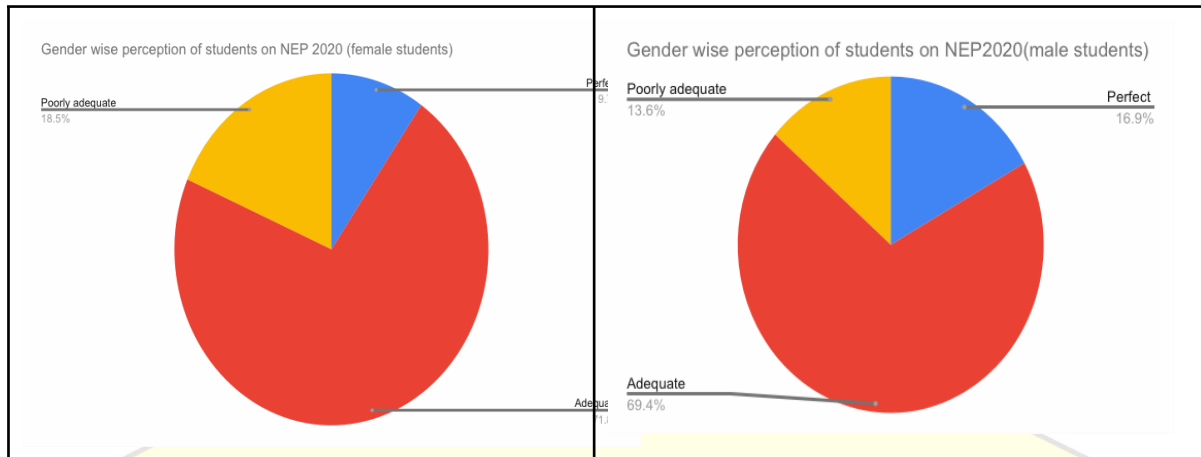


Figure 2 & 3: percentage of male and female students under each of three levels of perception on NEP 2020.

As shown in Table 3, Figure 2, and Figure 3, the majority of both male (69.3%) and female (71.8%) students perceive the NEP 2020 as adequate. Because this "adequate" rating represents the highest percentage across both genders, it can be concluded that the currently implemented NEP 2020 is widely regarded as satisfactory by the student body.

A similar breakdown analyzing student perceptions based on their academic backgrounds is provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage of Student Perceptions on NEP 2020 by academic backgrounds

Level of Independent variable academic background	Level of perception	Frequency	Percentage
Commerce	Perfect	20	16 %
	adequate	80	72 %
	Poorly adequate	15	12 %
Science	Perfect	13	9.7 %
	Adequate	95	70.9 %
	Poorly adequate	28	19.4 %
Arts	Perfect	39	14.7 %
	Adequate	185	69.5 %
	Poorly adequate	42	15.8 %

As Table 4 demonstrates, the majority of students across all three academic backgrounds share a highly consistent perception of the NEP 2020.

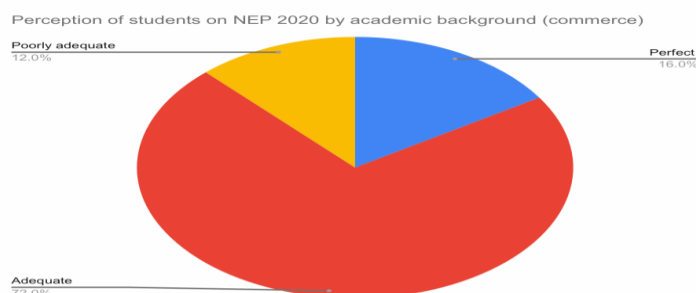


Figure 4: Percentage of Commerce Students Across Three Levels of Perception Regarding the NEP 2020

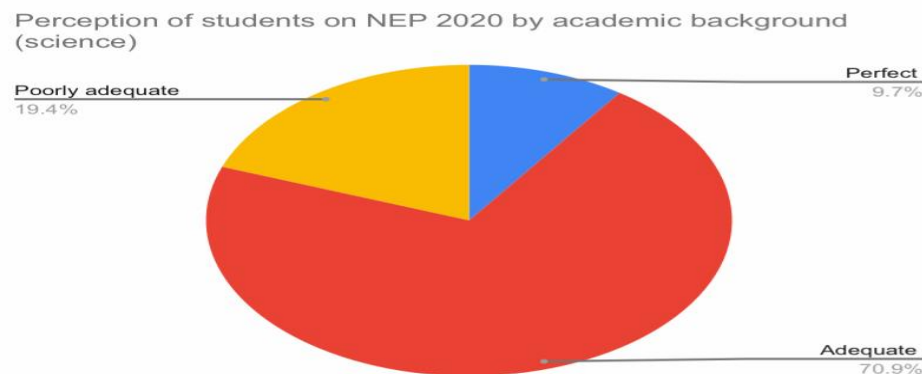


Figure 5: Percentage of science students Across Three Levels of Perception Regarding the NEP 2020

As illustrated in Table 4 and Figure 5, a significant majority (70.9%) of students with science academic background consider the NEP 2020 adequate.

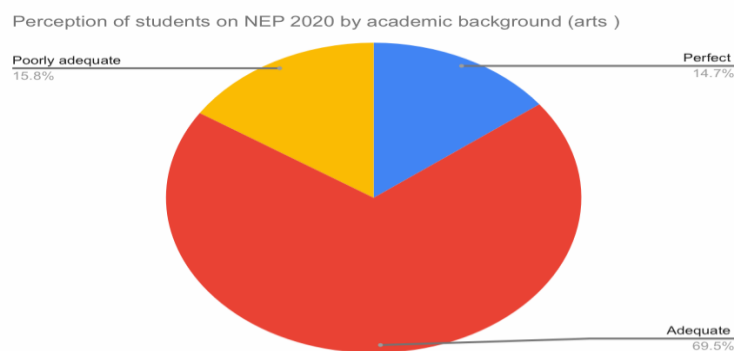


Figure 6: Percentage of arts students Across Three Levels of Perception Regarding the NEP 2020

As illustrated in Table 4 and Figure 5, a significant majority (69.5%) of students with arts academic background consider the NEP 2020 adequate.

Hence it can be concluded that As Table 4 demonstrates, the majority of students across all three academic backgrounds share a highly consistent and adequate perception of the NEP 2020.

Objective 2: To examine the effect of gender on students' perception of NEP 2020.

To meet this objective, the researcher established null and alternative hypotheses, subsequently evaluating the two-level independent variable of gender via a MannWhitney U test.

H01: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception of NEP 2020.

Mann-Whitney U test has been conducted. Computed results are displayed in table no. 5

Table no.: 5: Results of Mann-Whitney U test for Perception on NEP 2020 by Gender

Dependent Variable	Gender	N	Mean rank	Value of MannWhitney U	Z value	pvalue
Perception on NEP 2020	Male	287	250.55	30579.000	-2.575	0.010
	Female	238	278.02			

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to evaluate differences in NEP 2020 perceptions based on Gender (see Table 5). The test revealed a statistically significant difference between male (N = 287, mean rank = 250.55) and female (N = 238, mean rank = 278.02) students (U = 30579.00, Z = -2.575, p = 0.010). Because the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, concluding that perceptions of NEP 2020 vary significantly by Gender

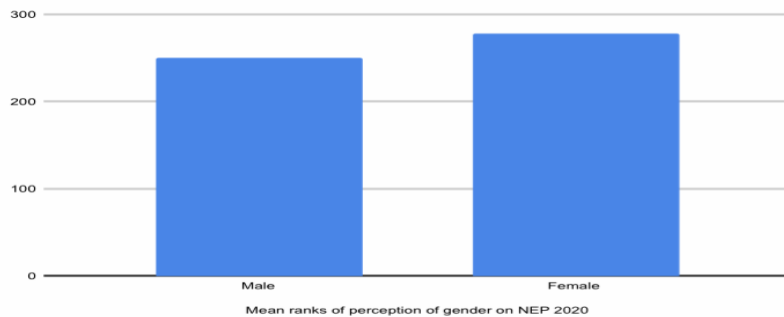


Figure 7: A graphical representation of the mean ranks for male and female students regarding their perception of NEP 2020

The evidence provided in Table 5 and Figure 7 affirms that Gender acts as a determinant in student perception of NEP 2020. Furthermore, the results indicate a directional difference, wherein female students possess a comparatively higher level of perception than male students.

Objective 3: To determine the influence of academic background on students' perception of NEP 2020.

To address this objective, a Kruskal-Wallis H test was utilized to test the following null hypothesis:

H02: There is no significant difference in the perception of NEP 2020 among students from Commerce, Science, and Arts academic backgrounds.

Results of Kruskal-Wallis H Test for Perception of NEP 2020 by Academic Background

Dependent Variable	academic background	N	Mean rank	Kruskal Wallis H value	df	p-Value
Perception of NEP 2020	Commerce	125	249.32	4.280	2	0.118
	Science	134	280.01			
	Arts	266	260.86			

As detailed in Table 6, the Kruskal-Wallis H test revealed no statistically significant differences in NEP 2020 perception scores among Commerce (N = 125, mean rank = 249.32), Science (N = 134, mean rank = 280.01), and Arts (N = 266, mean rank = 260.86) students (H(2) = 4.280, p = 0.118). Because the p-value exceeds the 0.05 alpha level, the null hypothesis is retained. This confirms that a student's academic background (Commerce, Science, or Arts) does not significantly influence their overall perception of NEP 2020.

Conclusion: -

This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of higher education students regarding the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, specifically examining how demographic and academic factors influence these views. Based on the statistical analysis, two distinct conclusions have emerged regarding the variables of sex and academic background.

First, the research establishes that sex significantly impacts how students perceive the NEP 2020. The Mann-Whitney U test results revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups, with female students exhibiting a notably higher and more positive perception of the policy compared to their male counterparts. This suggests that the core tenets of the NEP 2020—such as increased flexibility, emphasis on equity, and multidisciplinary approaches—may resonate more strongly with female students or align more closely with their educational aspirations.

Conversely, the study found that academic background does not play a significant role in shaping students' perceptions of the policy. The KruskalWallis H test demonstrated no statistical difference among students from Commerce, Science, and Arts streams. This uniformity is a critical finding, as it indicates that the NEP 2020's goal of dismantling rigid disciplinary boundaries is being received with a shared level of understanding across different academic domains.

Ultimately, these findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and educational institutions. While the overarching framework of the NEP 2020 is uniformly perceived across academic disciplines, the gender gap in perception highlights a need for targeted awareness programs. Institutions should strive to understand the specific reservations male students might hold and continue to leverage the positive reception among female students to ensure a smooth, inclusive transition into the new educational paradigm.

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