

Conflicts and Gaps in the Implementation of National Education Policy 2020 in Rajasthan: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to transform India's education system through a multidisciplinary, inclusive, and technology-driven approach. However, its implementation in Rajasthan, a state with diverse socio-economic and infrastructural challenges, reveals significant gaps and conflicts. This paper examines these issues, focusing on inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, the digital divide, and concerns over the regional language policy. Through a comprehensive literature review and contextual analysis, the study highlights how these challenges hinder NEP 2020's objectives in Rajasthan. The findings suggest that addressing infrastructural deficits, enhancing teacher training, bridging the digital gap, and resolving language policy conflicts are critical for effective implementation. Recommendations include increased state funding, localized teacher training programs, and stakeholder collaboration to align NEP 2020 with Rajasthan's unique needs.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Rajasthan, Education Policy, Infrastructure, Digital Divide, Regional Language, Teacher Training.

1. Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, launched by the Government of India, is a landmark reform aimed at transforming the education system to meet 21st-century demands ⁽¹⁾. It emphasizes multidisciplinary learning, inclusivity, technology integration, and the promotion of regional languages through a 5+3+3+4 structure. However, its implementation in states like Rajasthan, characterized by socio-economic disparities and infrastructural constraints, faces significant challenges.

Rajasthan, with its vast rural areas, limited digital connectivity and teacher shortages, presents a unique case for analysing NEP 2020's feasibility. Institutions like SBD Government College, Sardarshahar, established in 1959 to serve economically backward regions, highlight the state's educational challenges and potential. Local and regional experts, provides critical regional insights into these issues.

This paper explores the conflicts and gaps in implementing NEP 2020 in Rajasthan, focusing on infrastructure, teacher capacity, digital access, and language policy concerns, while offering recommendations for effective execution.

1.1 Objectives:

1. To identify key conflicts and gaps in NEP 2020 implementation in Rajasthan.
2. To synthesize existing literature on NEP 2020 and its regional challenges.
3. To analyse the role of local institutions and experts, in addressing these gaps.

4. To propose actionable recommendations through a tabular framework.

2. Literature Review

The literature on NEP 2020 highlights its transformative potential and implementation challenges, particularly in diverse regional contexts like Rajasthan.

2.1 Policy Framework and Objectives: Govinda, R.⁽²⁾ describes NEP 2020 as a visionary policy aiming to universalize education, promote equity, and align with global standards. The shift to a 5+3+3+4 structure and emphasis on vocational education are steps toward holistic development ⁽⁴⁾. However, these reforms require significant infrastructural and pedagogical overhauls, which are challenging in resource-constrained states.

2.2 Infrastructural Challenges: Kannan, V. (2021) ⁽³⁾ notes that rural areas in Rajasthan lack digital connectivity and modern classrooms, hindering NEPs digital learning goals. Analysis of NEP 2020⁽¹⁾ emphasizes that institutions in economically backward regions, like Sardarshahar, rely on limited government grants, restricting compliance with NEP standards. SBD Government College, serving over 3000 students, exemplifies these constraints ⁽¹⁰⁾.

2.3 Language Policy and Inclusivity: NEP 2020s emphasis on mother-tongue education has sparked debate. Singh Kaurav, R. P., (2021) ⁽¹¹⁾ argues that teaching in regional languages like Hindi or Rajasthani enhances inclusivity but may limit competitiveness in English-dominated higher education, creating confidence gaps among rural students. Kumar, K., (2021) ⁽⁵⁾ highlights that rural students in Rajasthan lack English exposure, potentially widening socio-economic gaps.

2.4 Teacher Training and Pedagogical Shifts: The policy's focus on competency-based education demands extensive teacher training. Sk, M. M., & Sk, R. R. (2023) ⁽¹²⁾ notes that Rajasthan faces a shortage of qualified teachers, exacerbated by delays in recruitment and limited training programs. The REET controversy, where lower-scoring candidates were prioritized, underscores governance issues ⁽⁹⁾.

2.5 Centre-State Coordination: As education is a concurrent subject, centre-state coordination is vital. Govinda, R. ⁽²⁾ warns that NEPs centralized approach may exacerbate tensions, as seen in Rajasthan's REET controversy, where state policies conflicted with quality education goals ⁽⁹⁾.

2.6 Equity and Access: NEP 2020 aims for a 50% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 2035, but socio-economic disparities pose barriers. NEP 2020: Opportunities and challenges in inclusive education (2021) ⁽⁸⁾ argues that marginalized communities in Rajasthan face access issues due to poverty and inadequate infrastructure, particularly in rural areas like Churu.

2.7 Stakeholder Resistance: Murugesan, R., & Vijayalakshmi, S. (2021) ⁽⁶⁾ and Naskar, A., & Chatterjee, S. (2021) ⁽⁷⁾ highlight limited stakeholder awareness and resistance to NEPs pedagogical shifts. Local experts' expertise in different subjects related to education could help to overcome such resistance by promoting localized teaching innovations.

2.8 Regional Context: Rajasthan's educational landscape is shaped by institutions like SBD Government College, which serves economically backward regions ⁽¹⁰⁾. Dr. M.A. Khans work emphasizes contextualizing NEP reforms to address regional challenges like environmental and cultural education.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive approach, synthesizing secondary data from academic literature, govern-

ment reports and posts on social media to analyse NEP 2020s implementation in Rajasthan. The analysis focuses on four key areas: infrastructure, teacher capacity, digital access, and language policy. Data from Rajasthan's Department of College Education and stakeholder perspectives, provide context-specific insights. A SWOT framework structures the findings, with a tabular analysis summarizing conflicts and solutions.

4. Conflicts and Gaps in Implementation

4.1 Inadequate Infrastructure: Rajasthan's rural areas, including Sardarshahar, lack adequate infrastructure like classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, essential for NEPs multidisciplinary curriculum ⁽¹⁾. The policies emphasis on early childhood care and education (ECCE) requires well-equipped Anganwadi's, but Rajasthan's rural aganwadis often lack trained staff and resources ⁽³⁾.

4.2 Teacher Shortages and Training: NEP 2020 emphasizes teacher training for competency-based and inclusive education. However, Rajasthan faces a shortage of qualified teachers, with delays in recruitment and limited training programs ⁽¹²⁾. The REET controversy highlights governance issues undermining teacher quality ⁽⁹⁾.

4.3 Digital Divide: NEP 2020s focus on e-learning is challenging in Rajasthan, where approximately 90% of rural areas lack reliable internet connectivity ⁽¹⁾. Limited access to devices and costly digital infrastructure further exacerbate the digital divide, particularly in regions like Churu ⁽¹³⁾.

4.4 Regional Language Concerns: The policies push for mother-tongue education (e.g., Hindi, Rajasthani dialects) promotes inclusivity but raises concerns about students' preparedness for English-dominated higher education ⁽¹¹⁾. Rural students in Rajasthan, with limited English exposure, face potential socio-economic disadvantages ⁽⁵⁾.

5. Analysis of Conflicts and Gaps

Table 1: Conflicts and Gaps in NEP 2020 Implementation in Rajasthan

Aspect	Conflict/Gap	Implications	Proposed Solutions
Infrastructure	Limited classrooms, libraries, and Anganwadi facilities in rural areas	Hinders multidisciplinary and ECCE goals.	Increase state funding for rural infrastructure; enhance grants for colleges like SBD
Teacher Training	Shortage of qualified teachers; limited training programs.	Ineffective delivery of competency-based education.	Implement localized training programs; address recruitment issues.
Digital Divide	90% of rural areas lack reliable internet and devices	Restricts e-learning access and equity.	Partner with private organizations for affordable connectivity and devices.
Language Policy	Regional language focus vs. English dominated higher education.	Socio-economic gaps for rural students.	Introduce bilingual (Hindi/English) curricula.

6. Role of Local Institutions and Experts:

SBD Government College, Sardarshahar, serves over 3000 students from economically backward regions, making it a key player in NEP implementation ⁽¹⁰⁾. Regional/Local educationist, brings expertise in contextualizing curricula to include environmental and cultural education, aligning with NEPs multidisciplinary goals. Their involvement in teacher training and curriculum development can bridge pedagogical gaps in rural contexts.

7. Recommendations:

1. Infrastructure Investment: Prioritize state funding for school and Anganwadi infrastructure to support NEPs ECCE and multidisciplinary goals.
2. Teacher Training: Implement localized training programs focusing on competency based and inclusive education, addressing Rajasthan's teacher shortages.
3. Digital Divide: Partner with private organizations to provide affordable internet and devices in rural areas, ensuring equitable e-learning access.
4. Language Policy: Introduce bilingual (Hindi/English) education models to prepare students for higher education while respecting regional languages.
5. Centre-State Collaboration: Align state policies with NEP 2020 through a Rajasthan-NEP Task Force, ensuring transparent teacher recruitment.

8. Conclusion

NEP 2020 offers a transformative vision for India's education system, but its implementation in Rajasthan faces challenges due to infrastructural deficits, teacher shortages, digital divides, and language policy concerns. Institutions like SBD Government College and experts like Dr. M.A. Khan and other professionals are pivotal in addressing these gaps through localized solutions. By implementing targeted investments, training, and stakeholder collaboration, Rajasthan can realize NEP 2020's potential for an inclusive and equitable education system.

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