

## LIBRARIES FOR FUTURE ACADEMIC DOMAIN IN LIGHT OF NEP 2020

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**Abstract:** - *This study ascertains the goals outlined in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) concerning academic libraries and information centres. It emphasizes that libraries with strong digital resources must also provide excellent instructional services. According to NEP 2020, libraries are essential for promoting lifelong learning, preserving national history and encouraging a reading culture. The policy addresses the unique digital and online information and communication technology (ICT) resources and services available to all readers nationwide. It describes the integration of several stages of educational levels, including foundational, preparatory, middle, secondary, undergraduate, postgraduate, research, and lifelong learning. Key aspects of NEP 2020 related to digital education, including its opportunities, challenges and the role of educational technology in implementing the policy are discussed here. It also highlights the pedagogical changes needed for effective digital learning and offers recommendations for successful integration. However, some issues must be addressed and resolved while adopting ICT in remote areas. The Digital India Campaign is significantly contributing to the transformation in education across the country by promoting a more technologically oriented approach.*

**Keywords:** National Education Policy 2020, Academic Libraries, Lifelong Learning, Cognitive Abilities, Pedagogical Shift, Digital Literacy

### 1. Introduction

Over the past decade, India has evolved into an information intensive society, increasing the need to embrace technology in education. The NEP 2020 (New Education Policy 2020) was introduced on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, viewing to adapt various changes in every level (primary to higher education) of the education system in India. The committee led by the former chairman of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization), Dr. K. Kasturirangan submitted the draft proposal to the MHRD (Ministry of Human Resource

Development) in 2019. The MHRD is now renamed as the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The union cabinet approved the NEP 2020, replacing the earlier education policy of 1986, revised in 1992. The policy focuses on positioning India in the global educational hub through delivering quality education, which will revive the glorious history of Indian education. The role of libraries in the academic domain is essential for establishing the connection between information and students. Nowadays, information is available in digital

formats for all groups of people, like students, teachers, scientists, politicians, and the general public. The rapid transformation of the information resources and technology catalyses the change in the education system as well as the library system, thereby transforming society as a whole.

## 2. Research Methodology

The study is conducted through a comprehensive analysis of new education policy 2020 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, along with studying published literature related to libraries' role in this context.

## 3. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study are as follows:

- To highlight importance of academic libraries in New Education Policy 2020.
- To point out the directions for academic libraries in NEP 2020.
- To identify the challenges faced by academic libraries in context of New Education Policy.
- To provide recommendations for academic libraries in achieving aims of NEP 2020.

## 4. Literature Review

Patil (2020) explored the function of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, government of India, in constructing the new education policy. This investigation also highlighted the significance of e-resources and online resources, which are important for the development of

library services and infrastructure. Thapa (2022) explored the significance of NEP 2020 in changing knowledge-based society and the development of the youths in India. It also highlighted the changing principals of the education system of India. It also stated about the steps that should be implemented for technology-integrated libraries and acquiring required skills for local level policy setup. Pathak (2023) focused on the government initiative to introduce the various applications and services, including e-sodh-sindhushala, e-pathshala, e-sodh-gangotri, e-sodh-ganga, e-pgpathshala, the National Digital Library, Koha open-source software, etc. This study also revealed the library's role in research, teaching, and extension services in the execution of National Education Policy 2020, which advocated for the inclusion of academic information and technology, user guides, and precise information. Moreover, it emphasized the changes in information services from printed form to digital form. Lawande (2024) showed the purpose of the NEP 2020 and rebuilding the education system of India by 2040. This study also revealed the aim of the NEP 2020 to build supremacy in global knowledge all over the world. Furthermore, it emphasized the value of the library in introducing the education policy.

The outcomes from the above studies as a whole revealed the importance of libraries in reaching the educational goals of NEP 2020.

## **5. National Education Policy 2020 and Digital India**

This education policy strengthens many portions of education system where government of India must have contribution in execution of monitoring on teaching training, evaluation of fund utilizations, curriculum developments. This policy emphasizes investing in digital infrastructure, creating online teaching platforms, developing virtual labs and digital repositories, training teachers to produce high-quality online content, designing online assessments, and establishing standards for content, technology, and pedagogy in online education.

### **6. Libraries in the Context of NEP 2020**

The NEP recognizes the importances of libraries, functioning as learning centers, research works, information centers and encouraging critical thinking.

#### **6.1 Libraries and Teacher Education**

The NEP also recognizes the role of libraries in teacher education. It recommends that all teacher education institutions should have a well-maintained library including digital resources which enables users of these institutions to access the latest scholarly works. Since it is recommended in the policy to boost the library usage, it can be achieved by incorporating it in the curriculum and provide training regarding access and utilization of resources.

#### **6.2 Libraries and Higher Education**

The NEP acknowledges the essential role of libraries in higher education, recommending that

all higher education institutions should provide well-equipped libraries with access to digital resources. It also suggests for the development of research libraries which can provide specialized resources to assist research in various disciplines. Further, it is the duty of the government to furnish appropriate infrastructure for the adult and lifelong learning and foster the community learning from reading materials in regional format.

#### **6.3 Libraries as Centres for Research Support**

This policy acknowledges the libraries' role in building interdisciplinary collections and research, where it recommends the incorporation of digital resources with the assistance of digital resources and the internet. The research librarian must have competency in statistical analysis, open-source technologies, administrative knowledge, and reference services, which need substantive investments for the development of the libraries. The NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework) provides rankings of institutions based on their research activities. The IRINS (Indian Research Information Network System) builds a scholarly network among the research scholars and organizations. The research librarians act as a nodal officer for updating research-related information for individual institutions. Moreover, the Vidwan profiles are also updated by the institutions' librarian as nodal officer.

#### **6.4 Libraries as a Platform for Lifelong Learning**

Academic institutions having well equipped libraries impart formal education to the users without discriminating on the basis of caste, creed or gender orientation. The libraries of these institutions usually maintain those study materials that supports the students' academic syllabus from elementary to higher education levels. Factors such as career aspirations, work, experience, personal goals and interest can influence the need for lifelong learning. Therefore, libraries have an essential role in fostering lifelong learning in our society.

#### **6.5 Infrastructures for the Library**

Development of library rooms may be sanctioned in the annual work plan and budget proposal of the States/UT in schools which do not have them. The proposal may include the cost for civil work, furniture, almirah, racks, fixing and fittings. School complexes and public libraries with facilities of information and communication technology can help in imparting adult education and community engagement activities. Libraries should be strengthened by providing adequate reading materials like books, journals and other teaching and learning materials.

#### **6.6 Ensuring Quality Educational Resources**

A variety of reading materials such as books, journals, periodicals, research works and e-resources are kept in today's academic libraries. By offering these resources to its users, they help

to deliver quality education as highlighted in NEP 2020.

#### **6.7 Supporting Multi-Disciplinary Education**

Academic libraries provide access to books, journals and other resources in various fields of study which is important for multi-disciplinary education. They can organize workshops and events to bring together users from different fields to promoting interactive learning. Pursuing such education has special mention in NEP 2020.

#### **6.8 Strengthening Digital Infrastructure**

The policy underlines the vital role of digital technologies in education. It is important for academic libraries to have a solid digital infrastructure by maintaining and providing remote access to resources like e-books, e-journals, online databases and other electronic documents. This hugely contributes in the process of e-learning.

#### **6.9 Fostering Digital Literacy**

The policy acknowledges the importance of digital literacy in the present world. Here, the academic libraries can aid by providing access to digital resources and tools. They can also arrange training and support to students and faculties in developing digital literacy skills.

#### **6.10 Strengthening Outreach and Engagement**

Academic libraries can organize cultural events and other extension activities in order to connect with their user communities. Their impact can be further extended by partnering with other educational institutions and organizations.

### **6.11 Preserve National and Cultural Heritage**

Since the early period libraries have served as repositories of cultural heritage. They should preserve India's rich history, culture, traditional knowledge, customs, arts and languages in the form of documents that will link contemporary society to its historical past. Presently, libraries are regarded as centers for cultural expression and heritage.

### **6.12 Technology Integration in Libraries**

The integration and use of technology have significantly improved pedagogical practices and various aspects of the educational system. The National Education Technology Forum (NETF) has been established as an independent body within the NEP to facilitate communication about technology's role in enhancing teaching and learning. The NETF will aid in decision-making related to the creation, use and administration of technology in education. For making data-driven decisions, NETF uses a steady flow of data from diverse sources and collaborating with a wide range of researchers for data analysis. To manage these services effectively and meet the need of library users, qualified professionals are essential to keep pace with rapid technological changes.

### **7. Pedagogical Shift in Digital Learning in NEP 2020**

The NETF proposed to apply new technology in the education system where online education with digital resources is placed for the fulfilment of SDG 4 (Sustainable Development Goal 4).

The digital India campaigning extended the government's initiative for the digital education system. The PM e-Vidya initiative has been launched by the MHRD to provide an online, digital, multimode education system through SWAYAM, IIT-PAL (IIT-Professor Assisted Learning), and others. Moreover, the CBSE Shiksha Vani podcast, which is introduced by MHRD, provides curriculum-related audio contents for 9-12 grade students. Moreover, the NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling) provides learning materials to disabled students. The pedagogical shift to digital learning is initiated by NEP 2020, which is also the future of learning procedures. This digital learning environment also made an impact on traditional libraries, which transformed to digital libraries with digital resources.

### **8. Challenges of Academic Library in Achieving the Goals of NEP 2020**

Academic libraries play a very significant role in the National Education Policy 2020 aimed at revamping the overall Indian education system. However, there are several challenges for academic libraries in achieving the goals of this policy.

#### **8.1 Funding**

Academic libraries are required to acquire and manage resources, upgrade technology and provide essential services. But due to lack of funds they are unable to carry out these services.

## **8.2 Changing User Needs**

The policy emphasises on developing skills related to critical thinking, problem solving and communication, which require a wide range of resources and services. Academic libraries must adjust to these evolving user needs to provide the support for development of these skills.

## **8.3 Limited Space**

Quite a number of academic libraries have very little area to accommodate their resources as well as provide area to study. This limitation makes it challenging to balance space demands with services requirements.

## **8.4 Technology Integration**

Since NEP 2020 advocates the integration of technology throughout education, academic libraries need to adopt innovative technologies to carry out their services. This involves substantial investment and staff training

## **8.5 Outreach and Engagement**

In order to understand the requirement of the users and to promote their resources and services, academic libraries need to reach out to them. But it is difficult for libraries with restricted resources to arrange for these outreach programmes.

## **8.6 Digital Divide**

Academic libraries face certain challenges like inadequate infrastructure, unreliable internet access and limited device availability that may hinder the access to educational opportunities for the students in rural and urban areas. Moreover, there is requirement for assessing teachers'

digital literacy needs and training for online work.

## **9. Recommendations and Future Directions**

The MHRD builds specialized wings for the development of digital content, digital infrastructure, and capacity building to meet the requirements of all levels of education.

### **9.1 Emphasis on Digital Knowledge Ecosystem**

In the present and future of this technology era, several digital equipment and technological tools are transforming the direction of the education system. The increasing Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies penetrate in the field of education as well as in the library system, which accelerates personalized user-based services according to their interests and usage. Mobile platforms and internet facilities can play a vital role in the dissemination of resources to all, irrespective of socioeconomic background or geographic location. The virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies will provide interactive education facilities in digital libraries.

### **9.2 Enhancing Cognitive Abilities of Students**

The policy refers to several challenges faced by India's education system and identifies areas where librarians can contribute to its improvement. The NEP emphasizes that there is insufficient focus on augmenting cognitive abilities which are conceptualized as mental skills that allow people to process information, understand the world and perform tasks. The education system needs a robust program and dedication for its implementation to increase cognitive abilities. Library and information

centers in education sector provide additional sources on various topics that helps to increase the students' cognitive skills. Cognitive ability is vital for critical thinking, reflective thinking and emotional intelligence and plays a crucial role in core leadership abilities of library professionals.

### 9.3 Promotion of Digital Libraries

The digital collections help users to get their desired documents through the digital library websites even during the pandemic (Covid-19). The academic libraries in India makes available their digitized resources available to their users.

### 9.4 Narrowing the Digital Divide

Technology can help digital libraries in mitigating the achievement gap between urban and rural students, reduce the financial burden on students, promote critical thinking and raise the standard of education through technology. These measures are essential towards bridging the digital divide and ensuring that students have access to high-quality educational resources, regardless of their location or socioeconomic status. Policymakers should prioritize the implementation of digital initiatives to ensure that every student has the access to quality education. In addition, policies that encourage the adoption of digital technologies in education are necessary, along with adequate training for both students and teachers. Digital libraries can help in narrowing the digital divide by providing access to resources for students in remote areas where they have limited opportunities to access digital resources.

## 10. Conclusion

The new education policy NEP 2020 targets to enhance the library infrastructures with adequate staffing to support the education system of India. The research librarians with specialised librarianship can uplift the research activities. Libraries should focus on developing cognitive skills and promoting lifelong learning. This policy recognises the essentiality of academic libraries and provides recommendations for strengthening infrastructure, providing regional language books, and increasing reading habits among the users. The Samagra Shiksha scheme takes the initiative to provide grants for the development of the libraries. This policy enhances the education system through the implementation of a multidisciplinary education system, multilingual learning, technology-integrated education, and training. The Digital India Campaign rebuilds the nation with a digital society and knowledge economy. However, the barriers to implementation of this policy are poor internet connection, insufficient electronics gadgets, and electricity outages.

In conclusion, the NEP 2020 acknowledges the importance of academic libraries in this digital environment, advocating the importance of innovative teaching, learning and research activities.

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