

## NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020 AND WOMEN EDUCATION: A STUDY

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### Abstract:

Education brings about knowledge and a reduction in gender bias which functions as a means of improving the status of women within the family and the community. Education is thus the foundation of women empowerment. After 34 years, there is a change in the education policy in India with the introduction of the New Education Policy 2020 (NEP). This new policy aims at universalization of education in India with 100% gross enrolment ratio by 2030 for school education and 50% by 2035 for higher education. The first such move as the formation of a Gender Inclusion Fund toward equitable education for girls who are underprivileged and creating Special Education Zones is included in the provision. NEP 2020 emphasizes upon inculcating Inclusive educational structure and inclusive educational culture in our school education system through infrastructural support and by making corresponding changes in curriculum incorporating materials on human values such as respect for all persons, empathy, tolerance, human rights, gender equality, non - violence, global citizenship, inclusion, and equity. It calls upon the stakeholders to overcome the barriers and remove biases and stereotypes through sensitization programme. The policy aims to promote inclusion, bringing out equity and developing respect for diversity through developing understanding about various cultures, religions, languages, gender identities, etc. among children, teachers and other school functionaries. Implementing of policy will result in empowerment of stake holders through efficient manner of resourcing and more robust and improved governance and monitoring mechanism with cooperation and support across schools for the education of children with disabilities and SEDGs.

**Key Words:** Knowledge, Universalization, Underprivileged, Sensitization, Functionaries etc.

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### Introduction:

Women Empowerment essentially means women gaining more power and control over their own lives. For a nation to grow, for democracy to be truly established and for wider participation of the population in growth and development of the economy, the empowerment of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status are of vital importance. In National Education Policy 2020, even greater emphasis has been laid on women's education. Several steps have been outlined to make women's education even more progressive. Among them are setting up non-formal education programs

enabling out-of-school girls to enter the mainstream of education and providing education to remote rural women through open schools or distance education systems. Appointing of more female teachers to fructify these means of expanding women's education have also been suggested in the NEP 2020.

### Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the advancements for women education in NEP 2020.
2. To study the Educational provisions of NEP 2020 related to women and their development.
3. To study the challenges of NEP 2020 related to women education.

4. To provide suggestive measures for implementation of NEP 2020 with Related to Women Education.

### Methodology of the Study:

The present study has been descriptive; the data for this study were obtained from secondary sources. The secondary data has been collected from various references which already existed in published form; part of the paper is based on literature review the method comprising of collecting all the available papers relating to the theme and selecting relevant papers/books for the review purpose. Selection of the paper is done on the basis of their relevance and contribution to the body of knowledge. The author has made an attempt to do primary reading of the selected papers which will constitute the core of this review study.

### Advancements for Women Education in NEP 2020:

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) introduces several key advancements aimed at benefiting women in India:

**Gender-Inclusive Education:** NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on providing gender-inclusive education. It seeks to ensure equal access and retention of girls in schools, addressing the historical disparities that have hindered girls' education. By creating safe and supportive learning environments, NEP 2020 aims to encourage more girls to pursue education, thus empowering them with knowledge and skills necessary for personal and professional growth.

**Empowering Female Teachers:** The policy recognizes the vital role that female teachers play in serving as role models for girls. NEP 2020 promotes the professional development of female teachers, ensuring that they are well-equipped to provide quality education. Additionally, the policy encourages the recruitment of female teachers in rural and remote areas, where the gender gap in education is often more pronounced. Empowering female teachers not only benefits girls

academically but also helps challenge traditional gender norms. **Holistic Curriculum:** NEP 2020 advocates a holistic and skill-oriented curriculum. This curriculum goes beyond traditional rote learning and encourages students, including girls, to develop practical skills, critical thinking abilities, problem-solving skills, and creativity. By focusing on a more comprehensive education, NEP 2020 equips girls with the tools they need to excel in various fields, empowering them to pursue diverse career opportunities.

**Gender Sensitization:** The policy introduces gender sensitization programs for both teachers and students. These programs aim to raise awareness about gender-related issues and promote gender equality. By fostering an environment where gender discrimination and stereotypes are challenged, NEP 2020 contributes to creating a more inclusive and equitable educational system. This not only benefits girls but also helps boys develop a deeper understanding of gender issues and promotes respect for gender diversity. In summary, NEP 2020's advancements for women in India are instrumental in addressing gender disparities in education and promoting gender equality. By providing girls with equal educational opportunities, empowering female teachers, offering a holistic curriculum, and promoting gender sensitization, the policy takes significant steps towards fostering a more inclusive and equitable educational landscape for women and girls in the country.

### Educational Provisions of NEP 2020 Related to Women and their Development:

NEP 2020 is the new education policy of India which is based on the needs and challenges of 21st century world. This policy tries to eliminate the limitations of the education policy of 1986 and tries to make a new education system in India. In the context of women education, this policy though directly has not mentioned the provisions but there are some important

educational provisions which are indirectly connected to women and their educational development. Among the different educational provisions equitable education is the significant one. Equitable education implies education should be given to all masses equally ignoring socio-economic background, gender identities, geographical locations, castes-class, disabilities etc. In NEP 2020, it is clearly stated that education is a necessity that should reach to the remotest places and here it is also mentioned a term that is quality education for socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), it means this policy touches the women or female students who live in the rural areas. Introducing ‘gender-inclusion fund’ of the Indian government can help to make equity in education. NEP 2020 has taken the resolution to provide suitable arrangement through Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya, Jawaharlal Navodaya Vidyalaya, Kendriya Vidyalaya who are socio-economically backward and also live in remote areas. The educational issues of the rural areas specially issues of rural women are discussed at length over the years, they are always deprived of quality education because of lack of proper facilities, infrastructure and adequate staff and in this regard, it is assumed that this policy can help to eradicate the educational issues of remote areas. Besides this, NEP 2020 has appreciated the various successful policies and schemes which provide scholarships, transportation facilities, bicycles etc to the students specially who live in rural areas. Generally, the women are always lagging behind to do teaching jobs because of inadequate facilities in the schools but this policy has mentioned that the schools must be based on pleasant service condition with adequate infrastructure and facilities. It is assumed that it will encourage the female workers to do their services. The policy gives importance on making a good environment in schools with clean and sanitization it is expected that a

conducive environment will encourage the teachers and the students equally. NEP 2020 is based on the concept of ‘learning for all’ it means no one can deny to take formal education and this concept can also touch the women who are generally deprived of education. This policy has mentioned to maintain gender equity in higher education also. Making provision of gender balance in higher education, providing special education for the socially and economically backward groups, making strict rule of no-discrimination and anti-harassment, providing suitable government funds for the education of socially-economically disadvantaged groups etc are the important educational provisions which can encourage all people including women of backward areas also for taking higher education. Making provision of vocational education, providing adult education and life-long education etc are another significant educational initiative of NEP2020. Besides these, some important principles of NEP 2020 which indirectly can influence on women’s educational development, these are-flexible education, holistic curriculum, full equity and inclusion, achieving foundation literacy and numeracy, promoting national integration, respect to diversity and multilingualism, preference to local and regional language in education, giving importance to ethics and constitutional values etc.

NEP2020 has clearly also stated that education is a public service that is why access to quality education must be considered as a basic right of every individual. Gender-discrimination at all levels of education is strictly prohibited by NEP 2020. NEP2020 has another educational provision which can influence the rural masses that is to make digital education system for all so that there is no difference in making connection between the learners of the rural and urban areas. Another important provision of this policy is that it has given much importance to develop

scientific temper among all the learners and it can help to eradicate old superstitious beliefs from the society. These above-mentioned features though directly are not connected to women but indirectly can influence on women's educational development if these principles are to be truly implemented, then it will be definitely helpful for all citizens including rural and urban India.

### **Challenges of NEP 2020 Related to Women Education:**

The National Education Policy 2020 in light with equitable and quality education is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the problems and prospects of our country. However there are many issues and challenges with reference to women education.

1. No particular mention of girl child education but it has been brushed under the category of SEDGs (Socio Economically Disadvantaged Groups) also the policy do not address the issue of gender
2. Providing bicycles to every girl child is a farfetched recommendation because of various obvious reasons like geographical barriers and safety reasons
3. No mention of awareness of menstrual hygiene for girl child in the school
4. Sexual harassment to girl child is one of the most common issue that is happening everyday in schools but there is no mention of measures or steps to be taken to address the issue
5. Due to public private privatization there will be a rise in dropout rates among female learners.

### **Suggestive Measures for Implementation of NEP 2020 with Related to Women Education:**

1. A gender responsive educational curriculum will reverse gender bias and discrimination. Gender disparity in School Curriculum.

2. Awareness on the importance of education should be given to parents so that they treat the girl child equally important as the male child.
3. Providing safety for the girl child should be the top priority in every school so that girls are encouraged to attain school.

### **Conclusion:**

National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) and women's rights in India presents a unique and promising opportunity to address the multifaceted challenges faced by women in the country. NEP 2020, with its ambitious goals and transformative agenda for education, has the potential to significantly contribute to advancing women's rights in several ways: Gender-Inclusive Education: NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on gender-inclusive education. It recognizes the importance of providing equal educational opportunities for girls and boys. By promoting the enrollment and retention of girls in schools, NEP 2020 aims to create a more equitable and inclusive educational environment. This not only addresses educational disparities but also empowers girls with knowledge and skills necessary for their personal and professional growth. Empowering Female Teachers: The policy acknowledges the pivotal role of female teachers as role models and mentors for girls. NEP 2020 encourages the recruitment of more female teachers, particularly in remote and rural areas, to provide girls with strong female role models. Empowering female teachers through professional development programs ensures that they can effectively guide and inspire girls to pursue education and career goals.

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7. (NEP) 2020 emerges as an important reformative framework for women's education in India, tackling long-standing gender disparities and injustice. By recognizing education as a fundamental right and a crucial engine of social and economic development, the NEP 2020 lays forth a comprehensive strategy for changing the educational landscape for women. education by creating learning-friendly educational environments. Furthermore, The NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on digital literacy and technology integration in education. In an increasingly digital environment, providing women with the ability to navigate digital platforms is critical to their empowerment and participation in the workforce. The strategy promotes the creation of digital infrastructure in educational institutions and community centres, which can improve access to excellent learning resources and educational outcomes for women. This emphasis on digital involvement not only meets urgent educational demands,
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