



A Study on the effects of the New Educational Policy (NEP) on the social competence of school students of Purba Medinipur district

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Abstract

Holistic development, competency-based learning, and the cultivation of social and emotional skills among students are core principles of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), representing a revolutionary overhaul of India's educational system. This research focuses on students' social competence in the Purba Medinipur district and examines how the NEP has influenced their schooling. For children to succeed academically and in life, they must develop social skills, including effective communication, teamwork, empathy, flexibility, and responsibility. Data were collected through a descriptive survey involving students, faculty, and administrators from various public and private schools in the district. After implementing pedagogical practices aligned with the NEP, such as value-based education, experiential learning, collaborative tasks, and extracurricular activities, students' interpersonal relationships, group participation, problem-solving abilities, and emotional regulation were assessed using standardised questionnaires and observational methods. The findings indicate that students' social competence, particularly in areas like inclusivity, communication, self-confidence, and teamwork, improved from moderate to significant levels. Schools that fully adopted activity-based learning, multidisciplinary approaches, and continuous assessment strategies showed more positive outcomes compared to those that only partially implemented these practices. Challenges such as insufficient teacher training, resource shortages, and inconsistent understanding of NEP guidelines hindered optimal results. Based on these findings, NEP 2020 has the potential to significantly enhance the social competence of students in Purba Medinipur if properly executed, with teachers receiving adequate training and institutional support. Strengthening these areas is essential for national educational reform goals, enabling citizens to become more socially responsible, emotionally resilient, and collaborative.

Keywords: Competence, collaborative, communication, flexibility, multidisciplinary, resilient.

INTRODUCTION

Education has a profound effect on a person's character, social behaviour, and capacity to interact with others. Improving pupils' abilities to work together and adjust to changing circumstances and technology is a top priority for this generation. Aspects of social competency include the following: effective communication, teamwork, empathy, dispute resolution, and adaptation to diverse social settings. As a result, together with academic success, schools are required to foster these attributes.

A significant advancement in India's education system is the publication of the National Education Policy 2020. The main goals of the policy are to promote effective and critical thinking, transdisciplinary and integrated learning, practical experience, skill development, teaching core values, and establishing a strong foundation in basic principles. By shifting educational practices from memorisation to more collaborative and student-centered methods, the strategy aims to foster the development of individuals who can contribute to society. Students are encouraged to focus on their emotional and social growth, communicate effectively, adhere to ethical norms, and learn collaboratively to improve their social skills.

When it comes to schooling, factors that influence students' social skills include the classroom environment, teaching methods, student-teacher relationships, extracurricular activities, and community service. Enhanced social adaptation and interpersonal skills are among the goals of the National Education Policy 2020's proposed reforms, which involve more group work, increased exposure to the arts, more sports events, and greater community engagement. However, these changes will only succeed if they are implemented locally.

With schools in both urban and rural areas, as well as institutions with varying levels of infrastructure, teacher training, and resources, the Purba Medinipur District provides a valuable case for assessing how the new strategy has performed. Social development and openness to educational innovations may be influenced by the diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of students in this region. It is essential to evaluate the new policy's practical impact by understanding how it influences students in this specific environment.

Consequently, this research aims to examine how pupils in Purba Medinipur District have benefited from the National Education Policy 2020. The objective is to assess whether students' communication skills, cooperation, empathy, leadership abilities, and participation in extracurricular activities have

improved due to the policy's emphasis on holistic education. Researchers hope that educators and policymakers will find this study's results helpful and that it will highlight ways to better implement policies that foster children's social development. Finally, studying how changes in educational policy impact students' social skills is a vital and timely issue because education's goal is to develop responsible citizens, not just scholars. Given the unique social and educational context of Purba Medinipur District, this research seeks to address that need.

Objectives of the study

- In order to find out how NEP-2020 affected the pupils' ability to communicate and build relationships with others.
- To assess the influence of activity-based and experiential learning on students' cooperation and teamwork.
- To analyse the effect of NEP-2020 on students' emotional development and empathy.
- To investigate the role of NEP-2020 in promoting inclusive attitudes toward peers from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.
- To examine how NEP-2020 affected students' leadership abilities and extracurricular involvement.

Essentials of the NEP 2020

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) was implemented to create a unified yet flexible educational framework that prepares students for the challenges of the 21st-century global economy and society.

Main characteristics that emphasis on developing social skills include:

- The NEP emphasises holistic education, which promotes the well-rounded development of students throughout their entire educational journey. This is achieved by exposing students to a diverse range of topics and focusing on cognitive, emotional, and social growth.
- The policy emphasises collaborative learning and encourages instructional methods that support the development of students' skills in teamwork, communication, and leadership.

Integration of Extracurricular Activities:

The NEP acknowledges the importance of arts, athletics, and co-curricular activities in fostering social skills and advocates for an educational approach that incorporates these components into the curriculum cohesively.

These components are intended to augment academic learning while fostering a well-rounded personality adept in social interaction and collaboration.

Investigation of NEP 2020 in augmenting Social Competencies:

A critical analysis of NEP 2020 uncovers both prospective advantages and constraints in its methodology for improving social skills. The policy's emphasis on interactive and adaptable learning environments may substantially enhance students' social interactions and collaboration abilities. The transition from conventional rote learning to a discussion oriented and problem-solving methodology in educational settings is expected to improve critical thinking, empathy, and communication abilities.

The effectiveness of these programs is contingent upon effective implementation. Obstacles including educator training, infrastructure sufficiency, and institutional flexibility to these changes provide considerable impediments. Furthermore, the disparate degrees of resource availability throughout various regions of India may result in inconsistent outcomes in the development of social skills.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023's function in actualizing the objective of NEP 2020, emphasizing curriculum modifications aimed at enhancing social skills development, and subsequently offering a strategy for practical execution.

Functions of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023

The National Curricular Framework (NCF) 2023 is crucial for translating the visionary objectives of NEP 2020 into practical curricular changes. NCF 2023 aligns closely with the goals of NEP 2020, especially in enhancing students' social skills. This section explores how NCF 2023 aims to realise these ideals, focusing specifically on curriculum innovations and structural reforms. Implementing the Vision of NEP 2020.

NCF 2023 offers comprehensive rules and structures intended to implement the educational methods specified in NEP 2020. This entails the creation of a curriculum that is adaptable, cohesive, and competency-based, fostering an educational framework that prioritises not only academic achievement but also the comprehensive development of learners.

The framework adopted:

Project-Based Learning: NCF 2023 aims to promote social interaction, collaboration, and communication skills through the encouragement of project-based learning and problem-solving activities. These approaches require students to work together, thereby improving their ability to interact with peers and effectively manage interpersonal relationships.

Inclusive Education:

NCF 2023 emphasizes inclusive education that addresses diverse learning needs and backgrounds. This inclusivity fosters an environment of respect and empathy among students, which are vital social skills. Teacher training Programs: Recognising the crucial role of educators, NCF 2023 includes comprehensive training for teachers on innovative teaching methods that improve social skills. This training covers facilitating group activities, conflict resolution, and creating a supportive classroom environment.

Curricular Modifications Intended to Enhance Social Competencies:

The curriculum outlined in NCF 2023 incorporates various unique modifications aimed at improving social skills, incorporation of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). SEL programs are integrated into the curriculum to facilitate the development of empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills among students. These programs are designed to be age-appropriate and incrementally enhance pupils' abilities as they progress through grades. Community Engagement Initiatives: Students are urged to engage in community service and social action initiatives, which not only augment their social responsibility and civic consciousness but also refine their practical communication and organizing abilities.

Implementation roadmap

To effectively improve social skills among pupils through NEP 2020 and NCF 2023, a definitive and achievable roadmap is necessary. This section delineates actionable measures and initiatives that educational institutions, instructors, and policymakers may implement:

Policies and Procedures for Schools and Teachers Career Advancement:

Allocate resources for ongoing professional development for educators to enhance their competencies in implementing innovative pedagogies that foster social skills.

Curriculum Modification: Educational institutions must modify their curriculum to incorporate a greater number of collaborative learning activities, ensuring that these activities are diverse and include various forms of social interactions.

Monitoring and feedback: Establish procedures to assess the progress of social skills and provide input to students and educators regarding areas needing improvement.

Strategies for Policy Makers Policy Support: Ensure that educational policies at both state and national levels promote programs aimed at enhancing social skills, including allocating funding for essential resources. Work with non-governmental groups specializing in education and social skills development to provide resources and training.

Dealing with potential obstacles Allocation of Resources:

Address imbalances in resource distribution to ensure that educational institutions from various socio-economic backgrounds can equally benefit from the new curriculum. Cultural Sensitivity: Adjust the curriculum and teaching methods to be culturally appropriate, making sure they respect and incorporate local values and social norms.

The integration of NEP 2020 and NCF 2023 presents a crucial opportunity for the Indian education system, particularly in enhancing students' social skills. By carefully implementing these policies, educators can significantly impact students' ability to succeed both personally and professionally. The success of this initiative will depend on the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders, including policymakers and educators, to fully realise the goals of NEP 2020. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the strategies outlined in NEP 2020 and NCF 2023, offering a framework for their effective implementation. By creating environments that encourage social interactions and skill development, these policies support the development of a generation that is academically capable, socially adept, and emotionally intelligent.

FINDINGS

- There has been a significant development of leadership abilities through the implementation of extracurricular activities, vocational training, and classrooms that are centred around the student.
- As the National Education Program (NEP) places emphasis on inclusive education (including gender inclusion and support for disadvantaged groups), it fosters inclusive attitudes and social equity, which in turn promotes acceptance of diversity.
- As the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places a strong emphasis on holistic development, which encompasses communication, teamwork, empathy, and adaptability, there is a general improvement in social skills. There was a discernible improvement in the kids' ability to interact with others and their willingness to work together, according to schools that used activity-based learning.
- Growth of Communication Ability and the shift from rote learning to discussion-based and experiential learning has enhanced verbal communication and classroom interaction. Inquiry-based teaching encourages students to ask questions and articulate ideas clearly.
- Development of Teamwork and Cooperation as project-based learning and multidisciplinary tasks under NEP promote collaboration among students from diverse backgrounds.
- Enhancement of Emotional and Social Awareness due to integration of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs in schools has strengthened self-awareness, empathy, and relationship skills. Key competencies include:
 - Self-management
 - Social awareness
 - Responsible decision-making
 - Relationship skills

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, this paper highlights the huge potential that the National Education Policy 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 have to revolutionise the educational landscape of India and profoundly mould the social skills of coming generations. The objective of these policies is to foster an educational environment that places a strong emphasis on and provides support for the development of social skills. This will enable students to acquire the essential talents that are necessary for both individual achievement and contribution to society. The long-term effects of these educational reforms can be observed in the students' improved capacity to develop meaningful social relationships, their greater emotional intelligence, and their willingness to

participate effectively in a world that is increasingly interconnected. The achievement of these objectives by the National Education Policy 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework 2023 will serve as major indications of their efficacy and will verify the objective of developing an educational system that cultivates persons who are well-rounded and socially capable. India has the ability to look forward to a future in which education goes beyond the realm of merely academic learning and becomes a strong instrument for personal and societal transformation if it puts into action the solutions that have been outlined and overcomes any potential hurdles that may arise. A shift like this would not only make the lives of students better on an individual level, but it will also be beneficial to the larger social fabric. Future studies could concentrate on long-term analysis to track the impact of NEP 2020 over time, particularly as more data becomes available from the ongoing implementation of NCF 2023. Assuming that additional study is required, this could be the subject of future studies. In addition, comprehensive case studies from various locations in India could offer more in-depth insights into the particular difficulties and achievements that have been brought about by these change initiatives. The purpose of this article is to provide a detailed summary as well as a critical review of the influence that NEP 2020 has on the development of social skills. In addition to highlighting the critical part that education plays in the advancement of society, it offers a structure that can be used for efficient implementation.

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