

Impact of NEP 2020 on Online Learning and Skill Development among Higher Education Students

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has brought remarkable changes in the Indian education system by emphasizing online learning, digital education, multidisciplinary approaches, and skill-based learning. The policy aims to prepare students for the modern digital economy by integrating technology and employability skills into higher education. The present study examines the impact of NEP 2020 on online learning and skill development among higher education students. The study is descriptive in nature and is based on secondary as well as survey data collected from students of higher education institutions. Related literature on NEP 2020 and online skill-based education has been reviewed to understand recent educational transformations. Statistical techniques such as Mean and Correlation were used for data analysis. The findings reveal that NEP 2020 has positively influenced online learning participation, digital competency, and skill development among students. However, issues such as lack of digital infrastructure, internet accessibility, and inadequate practical exposure remain major challenges. The study concludes that effective implementation of NEP 2020 can significantly enhance students' employability, digital literacy, and lifelong learning skills.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Online Learning, Skill Development, Higher Education, Digital Education, Employability Skills, ICT

Introduction

Education is continuously evolving with the advancement of technology and globalization. In the 21st century, higher education institutions are increasingly adopting digital platforms and online learning methods to improve accessibility, flexibility, and quality of education. In India, the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced major reforms in higher education by promoting skill-based learning, digital education, vocational training, and multidisciplinary approaches.

NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), online courses, virtual learning platforms, and digital resources to create a learner-centered

education system. The policy encourages institutions to use technology-enabled teaching methods and focus on employability-oriented skills. Platforms such as SWAYAM, DIKSHA, e-content repositories, and virtual laboratories have strengthened digital education in India.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift toward online learning and highlighted the importance of digital skills among students and teachers. Online learning has become an important medium for continuous education and skill enhancement. Therefore, studying the relationship between NEP 2020, online learning, and skill development is essential for understanding the future of higher education in India.

Review of Related Literature

Literature Related to NEP 2020

1. Kasturirangan (2020)

In the study titled *National Education Policy 2020*, Kasturirangan (2020) emphasized holistic, flexible, and skill-oriented education in India. The study focused on Indian educational institutions and used policy analysis under a descriptive research design. The findings revealed that NEP 2020 strongly promotes online education, vocational learning, digital literacy, and employability skills among students.

2. Jena (2020)

Jena (2020), in the study *Impact of Pandemic on Education in India*, examined educational changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools and colleges were included as the sample, and secondary data analysis was used under a survey research design. The findings revealed that online learning became an essential part of education and increased the significance of NEP 2020 in promoting digital learning.

3. Mishra (2021)

In the study *Higher Education Reforms under NEP 2020*, Mishra (2021) examined reforms in higher education institutions. Universities and colleges were selected as the sample, and document analysis was used under an analytical research design. The findings indicated that NEP 2020 encourages innovation, online learning, and skill development programs in higher education.

4. Sharma (2021)

Sharma (2021), in the study *Digital Skill Development through NEP 2020*, investigated the role of digital learning in improving student skills. Teachers and students were included as the sample, and questionnaires were used under a descriptive survey design. The findings

showed that digital learning platforms enhanced communication skills, technical skills, and learning engagement.

5. Kumar (2022)

In the study *Challenges in Implementing NEP 2020*, Kumar (2022) identified barriers affecting policy implementation. Educational administrators formed the sample, and interview schedules were used under a qualitative research design. The findings revealed that inadequate infrastructure, lack of internet facilities, and low digital literacy were major barriers in implementing online education effectively.

Literature Related to Online Learning and Skill Development

1. Selwyn (2016)

In the study *Education and Technology*, Selwyn (2016) analyzed the role of technology in transforming education systems worldwide. Educational institutions globally formed the sample, and literature review was used under an analytical research design. The findings showed that technology enhanced learning accessibility, communication, and digital skills among learners.

2. Means (2014)

Means (2014), in the study *Online Learning and Student Achievement*, examined the effectiveness of online learning among students. Online learners were included as the sample, and meta-analysis was used under an experimental review design. The findings revealed that blended learning improved academic achievement and skill development.

3. Bates (2019)

In the study *Digital Learning in Higher Education*, Bates (2019) examined digital transformation in universities. Higher education institutions formed the sample, and case study methods were used under a descriptive research design. The findings revealed that digital learning improved flexibility, accessibility, and employability-oriented skills among students.

4. Dhawan (2020)

Dhawan (2020), in the study *Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic*, analyzed opportunities and challenges of online learning. Students and teachers formed the sample, and secondary data analysis was used under a descriptive research design. The findings revealed that online learning ensured educational continuity but highlighted issues related to internet accessibility and digital divide.

5. Singh (2021)

In the study *Digital Literacy and Skill Development in Higher Education*, Singh (2021) examined digital competency among college students. The sample consisted of higher

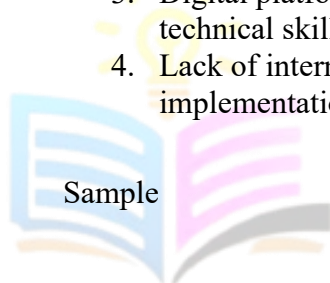
education students, and the Digital Literacy Scale was used under a survey research design. The findings showed that students with higher digital literacy demonstrated better academic performance and employability skills

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the role of NEP 2020 in promoting online and skill-based learning among higher education students.
2. To examine the impact of online learning on flexibility, accessibility, and academic achievement of students.
3. To analyze the role of digital platforms and ICT integration in enhancing students' employability, technical skills, engagement, and participation.
4. To identify the challenges related to internet access and digital infrastructure in the implementation of digital education.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant role of NEP 2020 in promoting online and skill-based learning among higher education students.
2. Online learning does not significantly improve flexibility, accessibility, and academic achievement among students.
3. Digital platforms and ICT integration do not significantly enhance employability, technical skills, student engagement, and participation.
4. Lack of internet access and digital infrastructure does not significantly affect the implementation of digital education.



Category	Description
Population	Higher education students
Sample Size	120 students
Sampling Technique	Random Sampling
Area of Study	Colleges and Universities
Level of Students	Undergraduate and Postgraduate
Nature of Sample	Male and Female students

Tools Used

S. No.	Tool Used	Purpose
1	Online Learning Attitude Scale	To assess students' attitudes toward online learning
2	Skill Development Questionnaire	To measure employability and digital skills
3	NEP 2020 Awareness Scale	To assess awareness regarding NEP 2020
4	ICT Usage Checklist	To identify technology usage among students
5	Personal Information Schedule	To collect demographic information

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1

Mean Scores of Students on Online Learning and Skill Development

Variables	Number of Students (N)	Mean Score
Online Learning	120	74.60
Skill Development	120	70.25

Interpretation

The table shows that students obtained a high mean score on online learning (74.60), indicating a positive attitude toward digital education. The mean score of skill development (70.25) indicates that online education has contributed significantly toward improving employability and digital skills among students.

Table 2

Correlation between Online Learning and Skill Development

Variables	N	Correlation (r)
Online Learning and Skill Development	120	0.69

Interpretation

The obtained correlation value ($r = 0.69$) indicates a positive relationship between online learning and skill development. This suggests that increased participation in online learning contributes positively to students' employability skills and digital competency.

Findings

- NEP 2020 strongly promotes online and skill-based learning.
- Online learning improves flexibility and accessibility in education.
- Digital platforms enhance employability and technical skills among students.
- ICT integration increases student engagement and participation.
- Lack of internet access and digital infrastructure remain major challenges.
- Online learning positively influences academic achievement and skill development.

Discussion

The findings of the study reveal that NEP 2020 has significantly influenced online learning and skill development in higher education. The high mean scores indicate that students are actively participating in online learning activities and developing digital competencies required in the modern workforce. The positive correlation between online learning and skill development suggests that digital education plays an important role in enhancing employability-oriented skills among students.

The findings are supported by studies conducted by Dhawan (2020), who emphasized the importance of online learning during the pandemic, and Bates (2019), who highlighted the role of digital education in improving flexibility and student engagement. Similarly, Kasturirangan (2020) emphasized technology integration and skill-based education under NEP 2020.

However, challenges such as poor internet connectivity, digital divide, and inadequate technical training continue to affect effective implementation. Therefore, educational institutions should focus on improving digital infrastructure, teacher training, and skill-based online programs to achieve the objectives of NEP 2020.

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