

NEP 2020: Blended Learning- The Road Ahead for Higher Education in India

– Noor Aisha

Research Scholar, STRIDE, IGNOU, New Delhi, India

 noor.aisha70@gmail.com  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4306-8203>

– Amiteshwar Ratra*

Professor, Distance Education, IGNOU, New Delhi, India

 amiteshwar@ignou.ac.in  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5114-8679>



ARTICLE HISTORY

Paper Code: GJEISV1513JS2023VP1

Submission at Portal (www.gjeis.com): 08-Jul-2023

Manuscript Acknowledged: 12-Jul-2023

Originality Check: 24-Jul-2023

Originality Test (Plag) Ratio (Original): 03%

Author Revert with Rectified Copy: 28-Jul-2023

Peer Reviewers Comment (Open): 31-Jul-2023

Single Blind Reviewers Explanation: 13-Aug-2023

Double Blind Reviewers Interpretation: 18-Aug-2023

Triple Blind Reviewers Annotations: 29-Aug-2023

Author Update (w.r.t. correction, suggestion & observation): 31-Aug-2023

Camera-Ready-Copy: 15-Sep-2023

Editorial Board Excerpt & Citation: 21-Sep-2023

Published Online First: 30-Sep-2023

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 stresses majorly to promote the use of technology at all the stages and processes in the educational systems. The NEP, 2020 stresses on blended learning to be implemented in higher education. It has numerous features that suggest blended learning across disciplines as well as across the nation. It has been observed that blended learning offers transformative potential in higher education. So, the present paper intends to study the possible prospects of blended learning in the higher education system in India through the new national education policy of India.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The present paper is a document analysis to highlight the salient features of NEP 2020 with respect to blended learning in Indian higher education; to study the emerging trends of blended learning in Indian higher education and it also attempts to identify the problems and challenges that the Indian higher education system could face in the adoption of blended learning.

Findings: On critically reviewing, it is observed that blended learning has different models. So, different models of blended learning can be adopted to enhance the teaching-learning process for different subjects and disciplines by identifying the requirements and simulations for different subjects by using effective models of blended learning.

Originality/Value: The paper identified teaching-learning methods, competencies of educators, competencies of learners, ensuring learning outcomes and infrastructure or resources to be very crucial to be taken care of prudently for the successful and effective implementation of blended learning in Indian higher education. The paper thus concludes with a discussion that supports the idea of blended learning being the futuristic method of teaching-learning that holds the capacity to strengthen it.

Paper Type: View Point

KEYWORDS: National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 | Indian Higher Education | Blended Learning

*Corresponding Author (Amiteshwar)

- Present Volume & Issue (Cycle): Volume 15 | Issue-3 | Jul-Sep 2023
- International Standard Serial Number:
Online ISSN: 0975-1432 | Print ISSN: 0975-153X
- DOI (Crossref, USA) <https://doi.org/10.18311/gjeis/2023>
- Bibliographic database: OCLC Number (WorldCat): 988732114
- Impact Factor: 3.57 (2019-2020) & 1.0 (2020-2021) [CiteFactor]
- Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Subodh Kesharwani
- Frequency: Quarterly
- Published Since: 2009
- Research database: EBSCO <https://www.ebsco.com>
- Review Pedagogy: Single Blind Review/ Double Blind Review/ Triple Blind Review/ Open Review
- Copyright: ©2023 GJEIS and it's heirs
- Publishers: Scholastic Seed Inc. and KARAM Society
- Place: New Delhi, India.
- Repository (figshare): 704442/13

GJEIS is an Open access journal which access article under the Creative Commons. This CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>) promotes access and re-use of scientific and scholarly research and publishing.





Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 recommended various reforms to be implemented at all levels of education including higher education (Aisha & Ratra, 2021). NEP-2020 stresses majorly to promote the use of technology at all the stages and processes in the educational systems. NEP-2020 also proposed the use of technology all the aspects of educational activities from admission to assessment, evaluation and recruitment etc. for providing fair and equal opportunities to all (Aisha & Ratra, 2021). NEP-2020 focussed greatly to achieve a rise in the Gross ratio from 26.3% in the year 2018 to be increased to 50% by the year 2035 in the higher education that will include vocational education (PIB, 2022).

In India, with a huge heterogeneity among learners across a vast geographical distribution of land, and other various other factors such as socio-cultural and economic backgrounds implementation of technology will not be equally allocated among the various stakeholders (Aisha & Ratra, 2020a). The NEP, 2020 proposes blended learning to be implemented in higher education. It has numerous features that suggest to adopt blended learning across disciplines as well as across the nation. In this context, the present paper aims to study the salient features of NEP 2020 with respect to blended learning in Indian higher education with the emerging trends of blended learning in Indian higher education; also, it attempts to identify the problems and challenges that the Indian higher education system could face in the adoption of blended learning.

Objectives

The present paper aims to achieve the following objectives

- i. To highlight the salient features of NEP 2020 with respect to blended learning in Indian higher education
- ii. To study the emerging trends of blended learning in Indian higher education
- iii. To identify the problems and challenges in the adoption of blended learning in Indian higher education

Methodology

The present paper is intended to study the NEP-2020 with a motive to identify the prospects of blended learning in Indian higher education. Thus, this paper is based on the Document analysis (Bowen, 2009) to achieve its objectives that include to highlight the salient features of NEP-2020 with respect to blended learning in Indian higher education; to study the emerging trends of blended learning in Indian higher education and it also attempts to identify the problems and challenges that the Indian higher education system could face in the adoption of blended learning.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The results and major findings of the document analyses which included the salient features of NEP-2020 that supports the idea of technology integration and blended learning in Indian higher education as well as the recent and emerging trends of blended learning in higher education in India, which further attempted to observe the problems and challenges in the adoption of blended learning that the Indian higher education system could face have been presented as-

- i. NEP 2020 for Higher Education
- ii. Emerging trends of blended learning in higher education
- iii. Blended learning- Major Challenges in Indian higher education

NEP 2020 For Higher Education

The principles of National Education Policy 2020 as mentioned by the government include flexibility, allowing multiple entry and exit options in degree courses, common entrance exams, Academic Bank credit, low stakes board exams, developing conceptual understanding, critical thinking, ethical values, teachers as the heart of the learning process. Biggest highlights of the NEP-2020 include the establishment of a single regulatory body namely Higher Education Commission of India; establishment of National Testing Agency (NTA) to conduct common entrance exam for admission to HEIs, establishment of National Research Foundation (NRF), Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs); and the establishment of an autonomous body as National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), which will provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration that would be promoting appropriate integration of technology. NEP 2020 aims for expansion of open & distance learning to increase GER by 50% in higher education; and achieving 100% literacy for youth and adults. NEP 2020 intends for internationalisation in higher education and to provide exposure of vocational and professional education in higher education; a robust and transparent procedure for the recruitments and merit-based performance. NEP 2020. It has been observed that the NEP 2020 with the focus on technology integration in education will usher in bringing changes in education and enhancing opportunities of access, affordability, equity, quality and accountability.

Emerging trends of blended learning in higher education

The blended learning in Indian higher education has deeper roots (Aisha & Ratra, 2020b) and it was there in the educational contexts with the inception and integration of technology in education particularly with Open and Distance

Learning (ODL) system (Aisha & Ratra, 2020b), which needs to be studied further as the developments of online and blended learning in India has witnessed from correspondence education to online and blended learning (Dikshit, J., Garg, S. and Panda, S. 2013; Aisha & Ratra, 2020b). However, in recent times, blended learning is in common acquaintance with of course the National Education Policy, 2020, but in practical it came up during the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) was announced as a pandemic and the government of the country imposed the lockdown, a temporary closure of all public places to stop gatherings and prevent infections, which include the educational institutions (Aisha & Ratra, 2020a). It hindered the whole process of teaching-learning activities in all the educational institutions. In this situation the online learning rescued the whole educational system not only in the national contexts but globally too. With the help of online learning the educational institutions made it possible the transactions of teaching-learning, whether they were fully ready with infrastructure or not. Prior to this, the teaching-learning processes were majorly face-to-face learning with the little use of technology to aid and support the instructional processes. The face-to-face learning was considered as a normal situation but the online learning during COVID-19 was not called so. After the pandemic, the use of online learning with face-to-face learning has commonly referred as a “new normal”. This new normal situation brought about the changes in the choices, habits and the teaching-learning process. And, the current conditions of combining online learning with conventional learning has been referred to blended learning. This blended learning model has been emerged and applied in the new normal learning process in education, where the learners can learn face-to-face and can avail the opportunities of online learning as a compliment. The blended learning process of teaching learning can impart the benefits of face-to-face learning as well as the skills that are required to be instil in the learners to have in 21st century, that can prepare the learners to grow and develop for the global competitions. The blended learning approach got its strength for its implementation in the country with the National Education Policy, 2020.

Blended learning- Major Challenges in Indian higher education

Some major challenges of blended learning models include the expenses of technology, inadequate training, technological issues, the need to adapt the content for blended learning, decreased motivation and weaken relationships between students and teachers; low retention capacity among learners, insufficient infrastructure, lack of digital devices, poor internet services, higher internet cost, incapability to afford and handle digital gadgets, hesitation for online presence, incapability of managing and keeping the track the workload in blended learning, scarcity of relevant technical resources and anxiety, etc. (Aisha & Panda, 2020). The challenges also include the learners’ diverse backgrounds

and their learning needs, the time required for learning and keeping pace, learners’ availability and their flexibility and adaptability to the course content and the innovative use of technology (Aisha & Panda, 2020).

Discussion

The world is developing very fast and all the other aspects are influenced by this development and the educational processes are not exempted from it, rather the educational processes play an important role in this development of the world. These days, the learning processes are greatly influenced by technology. The traditional methods of instruction are also augmented with technological elements to make them more attractive, effective and long-lasting which would help in achieving the desired learning outcomes.

Keeping in view the emergence of digital technologies and their importance in leveraging the teaching-learning process, the NEP 2020 recommends the use of blended learning. The NEP 2020 identifies that blended learning has the potential to offer courses or training. The NEP-2020 foresees the new developments in the curriculum that would be capable of bringing about reforms in India higher education with such courses that will be designed in a manner to judiciously integrate technology (Aithal and Aithal, 2020a) to offer programmes in blended learning that would be helpful to achieve sustainability in the education system (Aithal and Aithal, 2020b). Blended learning can also be helpful in catering many loop holes and various other aspects to enhance our higher education, through the wise choice of the blend. But the blended learning can be effectively implemented when several factors are considered and well-integrated in an instruction. Some of the such factors may include the teaching-learning methods, competencies of educators, competencies of learners, sufficient infrastructure or resources and ensuring the desired learning outcomes. It all can have result that would be better than the sum of the parts. The NEP-2020 stated that the significance of the face-to-face learning should not be overlooked while recognising the importance of the digital technologies that suggested for the appropriate and judicious blends and combinations. Blended learning has various models that could be picked up according to the subject or content requirement and could be modified appropriately as per the need. This may require effort on the part of not only the policy makers but the educational experts, course designers and developers to work out various modalities of blended learning for enhancing teaching-learning across the nations taking due care of subject requirements as well as the learners’ learning requirement and the socio-cultural factors and economical aspects. The courses with the judicious and well-planned and well-designed blend of modalities with the appropriate application would be helpful in achieving learning outcomes with great learner satisfaction. Also blended learning has been observed to improve the outreach and reduce the dropout rates (Ginns and Ellis, 2007).



Conclusion

Blended learning in higher education is commonly understood as the combination of in-person activities and digital tools and resources designed to deliver the best possible learning experience. The blended learning has the potential of offering courses or training that would cater many loop holes and various other aspects to enhance our higher education, through the wise choice of the blend. The use of blended learning can occur in a variety of pedagogic purposes and can be applied in various models across the disciplines. It would require the efforts on the part of the educational experts, course designers and developers to identify the best modalities of blended learning that would be applied for enhancing learning across the nation. The blended learning courses to be designed would then enjoy credibility of learners across the nation.

References

- Aisha, N. and Panda, S. (2020): "A Review on the Potential Problems and Challenges in the Implementation of Blended Learning Programmes"; In Eds. Ahrar Husain and R.P. Bahuguna, Distance Education and Educational Technology. Maktaba Jamia Ltd, New Delhi. - ISBN 788194314776, pp. 235-245.
- Aisha, N. and Ratra, A. (2020a). Technology Integration as Disruptive Innovation in Education: Implications for Teaching-Learning in Post Pandemic Era. In Ed. Mehmet Tekerek, EDUCON 2020-Empower Teaching Studies, pp. 25-33, ISBN: 978-625-409-178-0, available at Google Books- <https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=VXsREAAAQBAJ>
- Aisha, N. and Ratra, A. (2020b). Changing Paradigms of Open and Distance Learning Systems with Blended Learning: Indian National Education Policy, 2020. *Learning Community- An international peer review journal on Educational and Social Development*. 11(2). 91-100. Online ISSN: 2231-458X. print ISSN: 0976-3201. DOI: 10.30954/2231-458X.02.2020.4
- Aisha, N. and Ratra, A. (2021). Technology Integration through National Education Policy 2020: Implementation of Blended learning for Equitable Quality Education. *Aarhat Multidisciplinary International Education Research Journal*. Vol. 10 (1). Pp. 262-272. ISSN: 2278-5655. Impact Factor: 7.372
- Aithal, S. and Aithal, S. (2020a). Analysis of the Indian National Education Policy 2020 towards Achieving its Objectives. *International Journal of Management, Technology, and Social Sciences (IJMITS)*, 5(2): 19-41.
- Aithal, S. and Aithal, S. (2020b). Implementation Strategies of Higher Education Part of National Education Policy 2020 of India towards Achieving its Objectives. *International Journal of Management, Technology, and Social Sciences (IJMITS)*, 5(2): 283-325.
- Bowen, Glenn. (2009). *Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method*. *Qualitative Research Journal*. 9. 27-40. 10.3316/QRJ0902027. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240807798_Document_Analysis_as_a_Qualitative_Research_Method
- Dikshit, J., Garg, S. and Panda, S. (2013). Pedagogic Effectiveness of Print, Interactive Multimedia, and Online Resources: A Case Study of IGNOU. *International Journal of Instruction*, 6(2): 193-210.
- Ginns, P. and Ellis, R. (2007). Quality in blended learning: Exploring the relationships between on-line and face-to-face teaching and learning. *Internet and Higher Education*, 10: 53-64.
- Kumar, K., Prakash, A. & Singh, K. (2020). *How National Education Policy 2020 can be a lodestar to transform future generation in India*. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/pa.2500>
- National Education Policy. (2020). *Ministry of Human Resource & development. Government of India*. Retrieved from https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
- Press Information Bureau (PIB), (2022). *Salient Features of NEP, 2020*. Ministry of Education. 01 August 2022. PIB Delhi. Retrieved from <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1847066>

GJEIS Prevent Plagiarism in Publication

The Editorial Board had used the Ouriginal – a Swedish anti-plagiarism software tool which is a fully-automatic machine learning text-recognition system made for detecting, preventing and handling plagiarism and trusted by thousands of institutions across worldwide. Ouriginal by Turnitin is an award-winning software that helps detect and prevent plagiarism regardless of language. Combining text-matching with writing-style analysis to promote academic integrity and prevent plagiarism, Ouriginal is simple, reliable and easy to use. Ouriginal was acquired by Turnitin in 2021. As part of a larger global organization GJEIS and Turnitin better equipped to anticipate the foster an environment of academic integrity for educators and students around the globe. Ouriginal is GDPR compliant with privacy by design and an uptime of 99.9% and have trust to be the partner in academic integrity (<https://www.ouriginal.com/>) tool to check the originality and further affixed the similarity index which is {03%} in this case (See below Annexure-I). Thus, the reviewers and editors are of view to find it suitable to publish in this Volume-15, Issue-3, Jul - Sep 2023.

Annexure 15.3.5

Submission Date	Submission Id	Word Count	Character Count
24-July-2023	D153997343 (Ouriginal)	2188	15178

Analyzed Document	Submitter email	Submitted by	Similarity
4.1 VP1_Noor_GJEIS Jul to Sep 2023.docx	noor.aisha70@gmail.com	Noor Aisha	03%

Original**Sources included in the report**

W	URL: https://mddtimes.com/key-features-of-national-education-policy-nep-2020/ Fetched: 2022-11-29 05:20:36		1
W	URL: https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseframePage.aspx?PRID=1847066 Fetched: 2022-12-19 21:15:00		1
W	URL: https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/blended-learning-in-higher-education Fetched: 2021-01-24 13:55:48		1

Reviewers**Memorandum**

Reviewer's Comment 1: The article "NEP 2020: Blended Learning- The Road Ahead for Higher Education in India" is comprehensive and thoughtful and explores possible prospects of blended learning in the higher education system in India through the new national education policy 2020. The author employs a clear and concise writing style, making the paper easy to follow. The paper highlights the relevance of technology in education and the NEP 2020's emphasis on integrating technology and blended learning. The objectives of the study, which include highlighting the salient features of NEP 2020, studying emerging trends in blended learning, and identifying challenges in its adoption, are well-defined.

Reviewer's Comment 2: The methodology section is appropriately chosen for this research, as document analysis aligns well with the objectives of the study. This choice allows the author to delve deep into policy documents and trends related to blended learning. However, the author could have done more literature review to gain more insight into this topic. Also, the Author could have done some qualitative interviews with experts to have some more knowledge on this topic and some useful insight.

Reviewer's Comment 3: One of the strengths of the Article is that it effectively synthesizes and analyses secondary data to highlight the potential advantages and challenges of implementing blended learning in the Indian higher education landscape. The discussion around NEP 2020 and its alignment with blended learning strategies is particularly insightful, shedding light on the policy's potential impact on the education sector. One of the limitations of the paper is that it focuses on policy and trends but does not incorporate the perspectives and experiences of key stakeholders, such as educators, students, and administrators. A more comprehensive understanding of blended learning would involve gathering input from these groups



Noor Aisha and Amiteshwar Ratra
"NEP 2020: Blended Learning-
The Road Ahead for Higher Education in India"
Volume-15, Issue-3, Jul-Sep 2023. (www.gjeis.com)

<https://doi.org/10.18311/gjeis/2023>
Volume-15, Issue-3, Jul-Sep 2023

Online iSSN : 0975-1432, **Print iSSN :** 0975-153X
Frequency : Quarterly, Published Since : 2009

Google Citations: Since 2009

H-Index = 96

i10-Index: 964

Source: <https://scholar.google.co.in/citations?user=S47TtNkAAAAJ&hl=en>



Conflict of Interest: Author of a Paper had no conflict neither financially nor academically.

Editorial Excerpt

The article has 03% of plagiarism which is the accepted percentage as per the norms and standards of the journal for publication. As per the editorial board's observations and blind reviewers' remarks the paper had some minor revisions which were communicated on a timely basis to the authors (Noor & Amiteshwar), and accordingly, all the corrections had been incorporated as and when directed and required to do so. The comments related to this manuscript are noticeably related to the theme "NEP 2020: Blended Learning- The Road Ahead for Higher Education in India" both subject-wise and research-wise. The paper recommended various reforms to be implemented at all levels of education including higher education" provides a comprehensive overview of the National Education Policy of 2020 (NEP 2020) and its implications for higher education in India, with a specific focus on blended learning. The author employs a clear and concise writing style, making the paper easy to follow. The paper concludes by emphasizing the potential of blended learning to enhance higher education in India and the importance of thoughtful design and integration. Overall, this paper contributes significantly to the understanding of the evolving landscape of higher education in India in the context of NEP 2020 and blended learning. After comprehensive reviews and the editorial board's remarks, the manuscript has been categorized and decided to publish under the "View Point" category.

Acknowledgement

The acknowledgment section is an essential part of all academic research papers. It provides appropriate recognition to all contributors for their hard work and effort taken while writing a paper. The data presented and analyzed in this paper by the authors (Noor & Amiteshwar) is collected first handily and wherever secondary data is used the proper acknowledgment and endorsement are depicted. The authors are highly indebted to all who facilitated accomplishing the research. Last but not least, I/we endorse all reviewers and editors of GJEIS in publishing in the present issue.

Disclaimer

All views expressed in this paper are my/our own. Some of the content is taken from open-source websites & some are copyright free for the purpose of disseminating knowledge. Those some I/we have mentioned above in the references section and acknowledged/cited as when and where required. Tables or data presented from other referenced sources in this particular paper have been presented within quotes and references at the bottom accordingly and appropriately. Opinions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of the GJEIS. The authors have made every effort to ensure that the information in this paper is correct, any remaining errors and deficiencies are solely their responsibility.