

# The Study on Perceived Benefits of NEP 2020 among Students of Higher Education

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## Abstract

The research aims at studying the impact of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) awareness, perception about current education policy (CNEP) on the perceived NEP 2020 benefits among students of higher education. The questionnaire was adapted from past studies. The student respondents were contacted through electronic mode. The questionnaire was circulated through social media and email. 112 responses were received. These responses were analyzed in Smart PLS 4.0. The findings support the hypotheses of the study which say, there is significant impact of NEP 2020 awareness and perception of current national educational policy on perceived benefits of NEP 2020. Limitations and scope for future work are discussed in the last section of the paper.

**Key words:** NEP 2020, Smart PLS 4.0, Perceived benefits of NEP 2020, Higher Education.

## Introduction

In July 2020 the Government of India Published National Education Policy. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> reform in the education system since Independence. Government has targeted to implement the policy in full fledge by 2040 and its successful implementation depends on how well state and central government collaborates. It is important to understand if important stakeholders have understood the Policy and its impact on current education system. It is important for government to understand if the policy is being welcomed by mass of people. Such studies were not conducted so far in higher studies.

The government has encouraged AICTE, UGC and other allied governmental bodies/ agencies conduct various workshops, seminars and webinars to make general public aware of this policy. However how aware students are about this policy is matter of research. Very few studies were conducted to understand the awareness level of NEP and its perceived benefits for students themselves. Thus, this study aimed to study the awareness about NEP 2020 and its impact along with perception of current education policy on perceived benefit of NEP 2020.

## Literature Review

Suresh et al (2020)<sup>1</sup> conducted a research to identify the concerns and emphasis of the National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020. Qualitative data has been used and analyzed using computer software to understand the critical areas of the policy document. Data from Twitter had also been used in the study. The study recognized three vital aspect of the NEP 2020 strategy namely course, language, and students for higher education area. Sentiment analysis in relation with NEP 2020 are also discussed in the paper. The study concluded that most of the people found the Policy positive and they were open for it.

The study conducted by Kumar et al (2020)<sup>2</sup> researched various outlines of NEP 2020 and identified how it had been aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Goals. The study also found out main loopholes in the Policy and challenges that must be addressed in order to implement NEP 2020 in its true sense. The authors criticized the objective of NEP 2020 of achieving 50% Gross Enrollment Ratio in Higher education by 2035. The tenure decided for achieving the objective itself is very long. Authors believe that in today's world of Artificial Intelligence and allied computer applications it is possible that by 2035 there would be no requirement of Higher education as a separate segment. Rather the education will be imparted based on specialization and education will be driven by application outcome basis. The

other challenge that the study reported is that, to implement NEP 2020, current educational system has to be restructured and restructuring is a challenge. In India there are three types of institutions 1) Central government funded, 2) state government funded and 3) private institutions. Private institution has only mission of doing business in education sector and that is why governance in education has to be effective in order to implement NEP 2020 to the bone. The study concluded that NEP 2020 was the much needed reform in the education however its implementation will depend on how well Central and State governments synchronize with each other for its implementation.

The purpose of the research carried out by Maruthavanan (2020)<sup>3</sup> was to investigate the awareness about NEP 2020 among the secondary school teachers. The study was restricted to Madurai District. The survey method was used to collect primary data through simple random sampling technique. 200 responses were collected and analyzed. The study found that male and urban teachers had more awareness of NEP than female counterparts. Teachers with less than 10 years of experience showed more awareness than those having more than 10 years of experience. The overall awareness among secondary school teachers was not more than average level. The study suggested that government should conduct awareness programs for teachers.

The study conducted by Aithal and Aithal (2020)<sup>4</sup> analyzed the NEP 2020 thoroughly and prepared threat and opportunity analysis for all the stakeholders of education sector. The study criticized some of the provisions of the policy. The study doubts if private colleges can become autonomous multi-disciplinary college, particularly if such college do not have enough infrastructure available with them. The fact that despite UGC mandating 5 acres of land for continuing the affiliation of the public university to private institutes, many colleges managed to continue affiliation without having that much land had been discussed in the study. The study also highlights that at many decisions making positions recruitment process doesn't follow the merit-based appointments. The appointments are done by the lobbies. It is very difficult to remove these barriers due to political reasons. Therefore, reforming the education system, itself will be very challenging. However, author also believes that the policy will be beneficial in many ways if implemented in true sense.

The research paper authored by Pathak (2021)<sup>5</sup> agrees that the NEP 2020 focuses on motivated faculty members, however author also criticizes the lack of roadmap to enhance the motivation amongst faculty members. The objective of attaining agile and sensitive structure and regulations will not be attainable without motivated faculty members. Backing Faculty led- start-ups, faculty share in revenue from certificate courses are few of the ways suggested by authors to motivate faculty and thus in turn, attain NEP 2020 objectives.

Kumar (2021)<sup>6</sup> studied the NEP 2020 to understand the objectives of the policy and to study the education transformation towards meeting the challenges of the new century. The study was based on secondary data. Author agrees that NEP 2020 can bring in positive reforms in higher education in India. Author believes that the policy has considered the current socio-economic environment very effectively and if the policy is implemented it will surely make India a Global hub in education. The study suggested that future studies may be carried out to understand the impact of the policy its implementation.

### **Conceptual Model and Hypotheses Development**

Many research studies focused NEP 2020 from various perspectives. However, till date there is scarcity of the research to understand the perspective of very important stakeholder of the education system-students. Studies were conducted to study the awareness among teachers and other stakeholders except students. Further the impact of awareness about NEP 2020 on its perceived benefits is not studied so far. Based on own understanding and the above discussed gap following conceptual model is prepared.

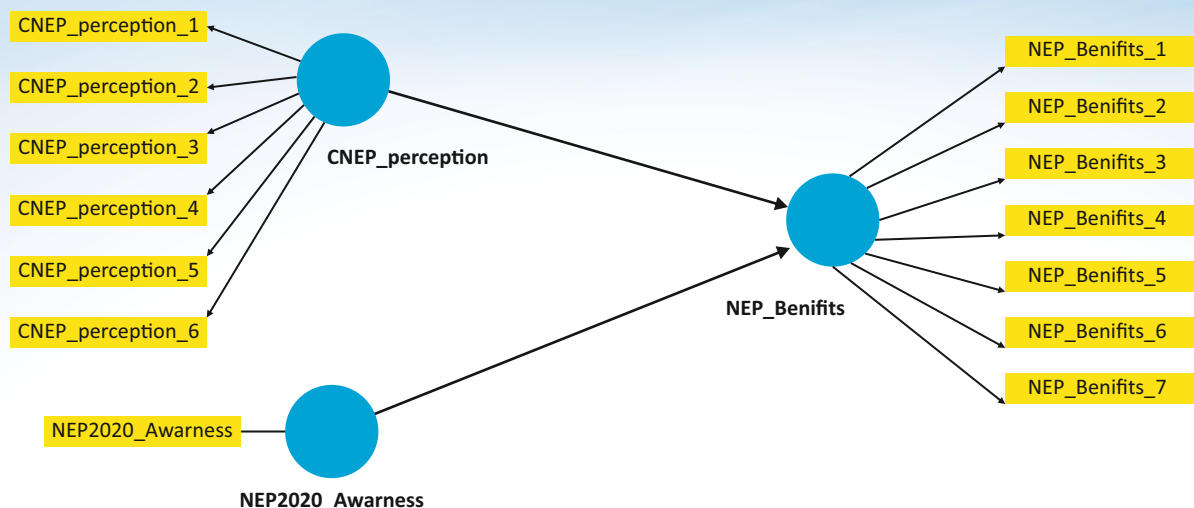


Fig 1 - Conceptual model (own work)

The hypotheses developed and to be tested in this study are-

H1- There is significant positive impact of Students' awareness of NEP 2020 on their perceived benefits of NEP 2020

H2- There is significant negative impact of students' perception of current National Educational Policy on their perceived benefits of NEP 2020.

**Research Methods**

To check the awareness about NEP 2020 among students of higher education a quiz was prepared based on the policy document. The difficulty level of the quiz was kept appropriate for students of UG to answer it. Composite score of this quiz formed the variable NEP 2020 Awareness. The constructs- 'Perception of current National educational policy' and 'Perceived benefits of NEP 2020' were adapted from Devi and Cheluvvaraju (2020)7.

The questionnaire was circulated electronically among the students of higher education in Pune region in Maharashtra, India. Total 112 students responded to the questionnaire. The data so collected was analysed using Smart PLS 4.0.

Data Analysis and Result

Table no. 1 Respondents' Profile

Demographic Characteristic	Parameter	Frequency
Age	18	6
	19	35
	20	37
	21	25
	22	4
	23	4
Gender	Male	48
	Female	64
Program	UG	107
	PG	5
Current Location	Pune	95
	PCMC	8
	Other than Pune / PCMC	9

Most of the students were from UG program and only 5 responses received from PG students. Most of the respondents were from Pune.

1. Measurement Model Analysis

The process given by Hair et al (2019)<sup>8</sup> was followed to assess the measurement model. At first the construct reliability and validity were checked. For this the factor loadings were observed, and it was found that the factor loadings for all the question items were above the threshold value of 0.708, except for Current NEP perception 3. The composite reliability for Current NEP perception was satisfactory (above 0.7) (Saari, et al 2021)<sup>9</sup>, hence CNEP perception 3 item was retained. With reference to Jöreskog (1971)<sup>10</sup> the range of composite reliability values were found to be in the satisfactory (between 0.7 and 0.95). The convergent validity of the model was measured by Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The AVE values for both the constructs were above the threshold value of 0.5. It meant that the constructs explained at least 50% of the variance of its items (Hair et al 2019)<sup>8</sup>.

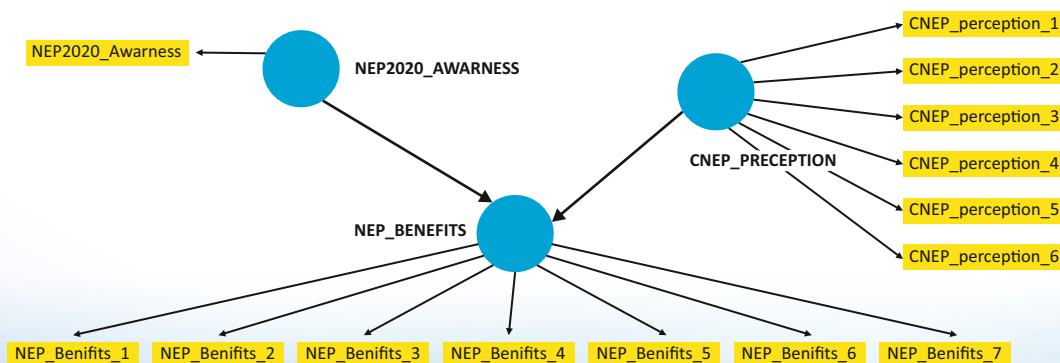


Fig 2 - Model (own work)

**Table no. 1 Construct Reliability and Validity**

	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_a)</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_c)</b>	<b>Average variance extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>CNEP perception_</b>	0.857	0.864	0.894	0.586
<b>NEP Benefits</b>	0.805	0.824	0.832	0.532

In last step discriminant validity was assessed using Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2015)<sup>11</sup>. The threshold value of HTMT as per Henseler et al (2019) is less than 0.90. AVE values for both the constructs in this study are less than 0.90. Therefore, the model was considered valid.

**Table no. 2 Discriminant Validity**

	<b>CNEP perception</b>	<b>NEP2020 Awareness</b>	<b>NEP Benefits</b>
<b>CNEP perception_</b>			
<b>NEP2020 Awareness</b>	0.434		
<b>NEP Benefits</b>	0.815	0.53	

Cross loadings of the construct indicators are also observed and reproduced below in table No. 3

**Table no. 3 Cross loadings**

	<b>CNEP_perception</b>	<b>NEP2020_Awareness</b>	<b>NEP_Benefits</b>
CNEP_perception_1	<b>0.724</b>	-0.225	-0.489
CNEP_perception_2	<b>0.837</b>	-0.258	-0.53
CNEP_perception_3	<b>0.644</b>	-0.263	-0.593
CNEP_perception_4	<b>0.823</b>	-0.416	-0.701
CNEP_perception_5	<b>0.81</b>	-0.379	-0.588
CNEP_perception_6	<b>0.737</b>	-0.3	-0.522
NEP2020_Awareness	-0.41	<b>1</b>	0.522
NEP_Benefits1	-0.549	0.56	<b>0.876</b>
NEP_Benefits2	-0.593	0.325	<b>0.867</b>
NEP_Benefits3	-0.688	0.501	<b>0.947</b>
NEP_Benefits4	-0.747	0.509	<b>0.948</b>
NEP_Benefits5	-0.741	0.504	<b>0.869</b>
NEP_Benefits6	-0.737	0.475	<b>0.945</b>
NEP_Benefits7	-0.715	0.435	<b>0.906</b>

## 2. Structural Model Assessments

The analysis showed that the Current NEP perception and NEP 2020 awareness both have significant effects on perception of NEP 2020 benefits ( $\beta_{CNEP} = -0.651$ ,  $p < 0.5$  and  $\beta_{NEP2020\ awareness} = 0.256$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Table no. 4 Structural Model Assessment

	Predicting Variable	Original sample (O) $\beta$	P values
CNEP perception -> NEP Benefits	CNEP Perception	-0.651	0.00
NEP2020_Awareness -> NEP Benefits	NEP2020 Perception	0.256	0.00

Thus, the Structural model considered to be valid.  
To test the hypotheses Regression analysis is done in SMART PLS.

### 5.3 Hypotheses testing through Regression analysis

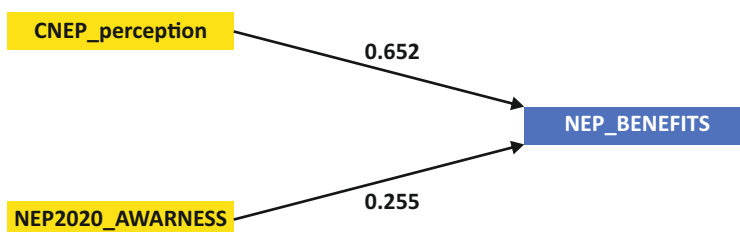


Fig 3 - Regression Analysis (own work)

The  $R^2$  is 0.627 which indicated that 62.7% variance in Perceived benefits of NEP are explained by Current NEP perception and NEP 2020 awareness together. This also indicated that the explanatory power of the structural model is high. It can be said by observing the coefficients that as one unit of Current NEP perception increase it decreases the perceived benefits of NEP 2020 by 0.652 unit and as one unit of NEP 2020 awareness increases it causes 0.255-unit increase in perceived benefit of NEP 2020.

Table no. 5 Summary Coefficient

Dependent Variable: Perceived benefits of NEP 2020

	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	SE	T value	P value	2.50 %	97.50 %
CNEP perception	-0.652	-0.652	0.064	10.167	0.000	-0.779	-0.525
NEP2020 Awareness	0.255	0.255	0.064	3.971	0.000	0.128	0.382
Intercept	0	0	0.059	0	1	-0.116	0.116

From summary coefficient table the p values were observed and found to be less than 0.05 ( $p < .05$ ). It indicated that CNEP perception and NEP 2020 awareness both have significant impact on perceived benefits of NEP 2020. Unstandardized coefficient for CNEP was negative indicating that CNEP had negative impact on Perceived NEP 2020 benefits. It means as Current NEP perception becomes more positive the perceived benefits of NEP 2020 tend to decrease.

Thus, we accept both the hypotheses of this study.

### Conclusion

The study revealed that if student's perception of current Education policy is positive then perceived benefits of National Education Policy 2020 tend to become negative. In simple words it means that students who perceive the current education system to be effective perceive that the new policy is not beneficial or less beneficial for them as compared to that of those who perceive that current education system has loopholes in it.

It was also found that students with high awareness about NEP 2020 have positive perception of benefits of NEP 2020.

This indicates that Government should further try to increase the awareness of NEP 2020 among students of higher education. This will in turn increase their perception about the benefits of NEP 2020 for them as important stakeholders. As NEP 2020 awareness will increase, it is possible that students will realize the issues with the current education system and thus in turn their perception of current education policy will tend to decrease to some extent. This will result in increased perceived benefits of NEP 2020 among students. Increased awareness and increased perceived benefits of the NEP 2020 shall result in welcoming of the policy by the students with their open mind. If they feel that the NEP 2020 will be beneficial for them then the effective implementation of the policy will be much easier and efficient. The samples included in this study were not true representation of students taking higher education. The samples in this study are the students of UG and PG program of technical education. Future studies may include students from other education system and may also study the moderating effect of demography of the students such as gender, education level, family income and location etc.

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