



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

A study of the perceptions of teachers towards a holistic approach in teaching in CBSE board schools in the context of NEP 2020 at the foundational and preparatory stages

Alka Bansal^{1*}, Priya Rajwade²

Abstract

This study examines teachers' perceptions towards adopting a holistic approach to teaching at the foundational and preparatory stages within CBSE schools, in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. NEP 2020 marks a pivotal shift in India's educational framework, emphasizing the holistic development of students through a focus on intellectual, emotional, physical, social, and moral growth. This research investigates teachers' awareness, preparedness, and willingness to implement this pedagogical shift alongside the challenges they foresee in its adoption.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the study involved 80 CBSE teachers from Mumbai, employing survey questionnaires and structured interviews for data collection. Quantitative analysis revealed that 77.5% of the participants demonstrated substantial awareness of the NEP's, with teachers expressing positive perceptions toward holistic education. However, qualitative findings identified key challenges, including limited resources, insufficient training, parental interference, and the need for curriculum alignment. Teachers acknowledged the transformative potential of holistic teaching in fostering well-rounded student development and cited innovative classroom practices as examples.

Statistical analysis, including a one-tailed t-test, highlighted significant differences in teacher preparedness between foundational and preparatory stages. The findings underscore the need for targeted training programs, curriculum redesign, and systemic support to implement effectively.

The study concludes that while teachers are optimistic and willing to embrace change, addressing systemic barriers is critical for achieving the NEP 2020's vision. Recommendations include enhanced teacher engagement, capacity building, and resource allocation to ensure a sustainable shift toward holistic education.

Keywords: Holistic education, NEP 2020, Foundational and Preparatory Stages, CBSE Schools, Teacher perceptions, Pedagogical Shift, 21st-Century Skills, Teacher Preparedness, Curriculum Redesign, Educational Policy Implementation.

¹Academic Director, Warden Education Technologies Pvt Ltd, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.

²Principal, Podar International School, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.

***Corresponding Author:** Alka Bansal, Academic Director, Warden Education Technologies Pvt Ltd, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India., E-Mail: yoshilka@gmail.com

How to cite this article: Bansal, A., Rajwade, P. (2025). A study of the perceptions of teachers towards a holistic approach in teaching in CBSE board schools in the context of NEP 2020 at the foundational and preparatory stages. *The Scientific Temper*, **16**(spl-1):8-20.

Doi: 10.58414/SCIENTIFICTEMPER.2025.16.spl-1.02

Source of support: Nil

Conflict of interest: None.

Introduction

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change."

Charles Darwin
(Darwin, 1859)

Context of the study

We are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that haven't yet been involved to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet.- Richard Kelly. (Kelly, 2012) The goal of any country's education system is to prepare its youth for future challenges, to make them adequately competent and skilled to blend in all cultures, providing them with maps that will lead them to find solutions to complex problems of the

future world. The world is going through many challenges in the form of cultural & social shifts, political and economic crises, and man-made and natural calamities. The nature of all these challenges is extremely complex, with complex and unknown solutions. Now, the education system's responsible for preparing a future-ready generation to tackle these complex problems and create an equitable, safe, healthy, sustainable, and happier world. Can the current education system in India produce such a generation? The answer is an obvious 'No'. Hence, there is a need to revamp the education system in India. The NEP 2020 was introduced to replace the 1986 National Policy on Education, to provide high-quality education that is accessible to all and to create opportunities for lifelong learning. The focus will be to ensure that children learn and how to learn. The shift is from content to building 21st-century skills [6C's-6C'stical thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Citizenship (or cultural awareness) and **Connectivity**]. This can be done by integrating subjects at all levels to ensure learners can synergize knowledge from all disciplines while finding solutions and innovating new technologies for sustainable growth.

The objective is to develop all human capacities, that is, intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral, in an integrated manner. Thus, there is a need to create a schooling system that helps children understand their emotions and mental duress while teaching them how to build healthy and functional relationships, develop resilience, and develop team spirit. This is the true form of education.

However, to be able to create and implement such curricula and adapt this pedagogical change, the change-makers

- must be aware of the outcome that they are driving
- must be willing to adapt to these changes
- must be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement strategies
- must be able to monitor and evaluate the impact of such changes

The change-makers in the context of this study are the teachers of foundational and preparatory grades who will be at the centre of understanding the requirement of the NEP 2020 in regard to the holistic approach in teaching and will be implementing the pedagogy in the classroom. They will be evaluating the impact of the new approach.

The success or failure of this change will largely depend upon the teacher's perspective on it. The purpose of this study is to understand teachers' perceptions of a holistic approach to teaching in CBSE board schools in the context of NEP 2020 at the foundational and preparatory stages.

Theoretical Background

NEP 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and replaces the thirty-four-year-old National Policy on

Education (NPE), 1986. (National Education Policy 2020, 2020) This policy aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society, making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each student.

What does holistic mean?

With this background, it is important to understand what holistic means and how and why such transformation will help to bring out unique capabilities. *Holistic learning approach and its impact on education*

UNESCO

Holistic learning is "an approach that seeks to fully activate all aspects of the learner's personality (intellect, emotions, imagination, body) for a more effective and comprehensive learning.

Education cannot be effective unless it helps a child open up himself to life"-Mar'a Montessori.

Maria Montessori states that merely academic excellence cannot ensure that learners will be successful in achieving life's goals. (Montessori, 1995) Conventional educational and learning systems aim at the development of intellectual capabilities only. Holistic education aims to go beyond the intellectual.

Holistic development essentially means the development of intellectual, mental, physical, emotional, and social abilities in a child so that he or she is capable of facing the demands and challenges of everyday life.

Furthermore, it is necessary that, for these skills to be imbibed in the children's system, these are cultivated early on (Gandhi, 2021). Hence, the need to lead through a holistic approach to teaching-learning at an early stage is proposed (Roy M., 2022).

Early Years (Foundational & Preparatory)

Earlier, the early years included the pre-primary grades where the focus was to build the skills of numeracy and

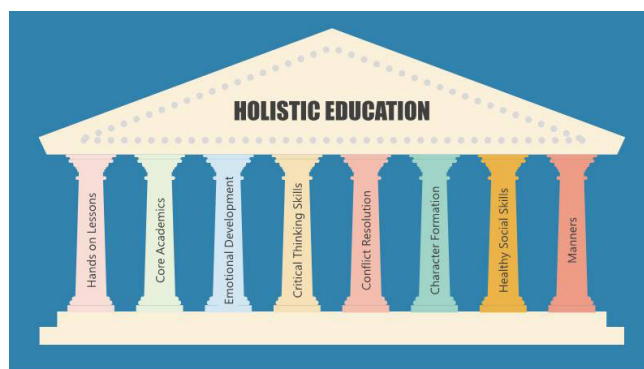


Figure 1: Integration in Holistic Approach in Education-A Multidisciplinary Perspective

literacy mostly in a play way method only. This method was largely successful in bringing the desired outcomes in building physical elements of the holistic approach but failed to develop the other three elements. Besides, in grades 1 & 2, some of these skills were reinforced. Understanding that the little learners need to be constantly given practice to make their foundations strong, it is decided that the foundational stage will now consist of children from age 3- to 8 years, constituting pre-primary up to grade 2 (Table 2). The preparatory stages will be from age 8 to 11 years (grade 3–5), where some light textbooks will be used to ensure that some formal form of learning begins. However, here too, the emphasis will be the overall development of cognitive skills, learning through experience and discovery. Thus, the change is not only in the pedagogy but also in the pedagogical structure.

The following diagram represents how a holistic approach to teaching can benefit in developing their personalities at an early age (Figure 1).

Rationale of the study

Teachers are at the heart of education. Any change or reform in the curriculum, pedagogy or policies related to the schooling system is driven by the teachers. (Murugesan, 2021) It is indeed a tall order to achieve the goals of NEP 2020 in the defined time and manner as planned. But can all this be possible without bringing the teachers into confidence? Is it possible without providing proper information, guidance and support to the teachers who will be change drivers? Will it be possible without providing the appropriate resources that will help drive this change? The answer is a «no».

This study, therefore, aims to keep teachers at the center of the implementation of NEP 2020. This study will help understand teachers

- first impressions about the policy
- awareness about the various objectives of the policy
- understanding about the holistic approach
- understanding of to what extent will they need to adapt their existing methods
- willingness/preparedness to implement the changes
- expected challenges in implementing the change

This research study will help to gauge the success of the changes implemented by the NEP 2020. It will also, provide scope to analyse the training needs of the teachers. It will help to identify the challenges that the teachers are expected to face while implementing the changes. A deeper insight into the true implications of the change will be obtained since the information will be obtained first-hand.

Table 1: Educational Stages and Corresponding Age Groups

Foundational	Preparatory
3–8 years	8–11 years
Pre-Primary- Grade 2	Grade 3–5

This is very much needed to ensure that the goals of NEP 2020 are achieved in its true spirit and sense.

Statement of the problem

NEP policy brings with it many inhibitions in the minds of the teachers who are at the center of implementing the change. The success of the NEP and its plans largely depends on the knowledge and preparedness of the teachers to implement the changes. In the absence of any of the two components, the NEP implementation is likely to cause more harm than benefit to the students at large.

Research Questions

- What is the extent to which teachers are prepared and willing to modify their teaching methods at foundational and preparatory stages?
- What are the expected challenges in implementing a holistic approach towards teaching at foundational and preparatory stages?
- What are the teachers' perceptions towards a holistic approach to teaching at foundational and preparatory stages?

Aim of the study

This study aims to understand how far the NEP goals of implementing a holistic approach in the teaching-learning process at the foundational and preparatory stage will be successful by knowing the perceptions of the teachers about NEP and their preparedness to adapt to the change.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives are formulated for the proposed study.

- To understand to what extent the teachers are prepared and willing to modify their teaching methods at foundational and preparatory stages.
- To identify the expected challenges in implementing a holistic approach in teaching at foundational and preparatory stages
- To understand the perceptions of the teachers towards a holistic approach in teaching at the foundational and preparatory stage

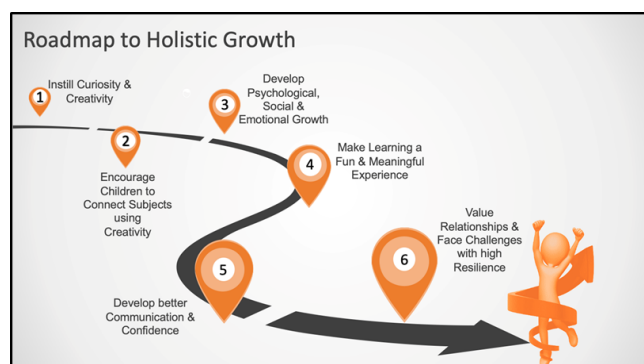


Figure 2: Roadmap to Holistic Growth

Variables of the study

Independent Variables

- NEP 2020 reform policy of Holistic approach to teaching

Dependent Variables

- Teachers' preparedness
- Teachers' readiness

The hypothesis of the study

- There is no significant difference in teachers' preparedness at the foundational stage and preparatory stage in the context of NEP 2020
- There is no significant difference in the holistic approach of teaching pedagogy at the foundational stage and preparatory stage in the context of NEP 2020

Delimitations of the study

Geographical delimitations

The present study is delimited to CBSE schools in the Mumbai region

Sample delimitations

The present study is delimited to a total of 40 teachers of only Grade 1 and Grade 2 region for the foundational stage and 40 teachers of Grade 3 and Grade 4 for the preparatory stage.

Tool delimitations

The study will also be delimited to collect the teachers' perceptions through a survey and a structured interview.

Review of literature

After reviewing various literature related to the topic of research, it was found that most researchers, Indian as

well as international, strongly advocated that building the overall personalities of students to be able to handle the challenges of the 21st century is a need to shift towards a more holistic approach in teaching (Shah, 2021). To this effect, it is also important that the teachers are well-trained and equipped with the right mindset and tools that guide them to practice a holistic approach to teaching-learning. Some international researchers have attempted to provide a framework or guidelines to teachers to enable them to use a holistic approach in teaching. This has strengthened the thought that teachers are at the center of implementing any pedagogical approach in teaching or any change thereof (Figure 3).

While some researchers abroad were able to observe models of a holistic approach in teaching in action to profound their conclusions, the same was not possible for most researchers in India. This is primarily because, despite the ancient Indian education system completely advocating and supporting a holistic way of teaching, the same died down with the advent of colonization. As a result, the concept of a holistic approach to teaching has remained mostly in theory in India. However, the NEP 2020 has strongly recommended bringing the shift and this new pedagogy is finding its first steps in practice only through the introduction of NEP 2020 (Figure 2). Hence, it was found most relevant and appropriate to find out through careful research and analysis that the teachers of India are prepared and trained to bring about this change. Also, it was found relevant that the study limited itself to a small group/band of teachers – teachers of the foundational and preparatory stage in this case, which has not been done earlier in any studies, allowing them to contribute towards the field of study.

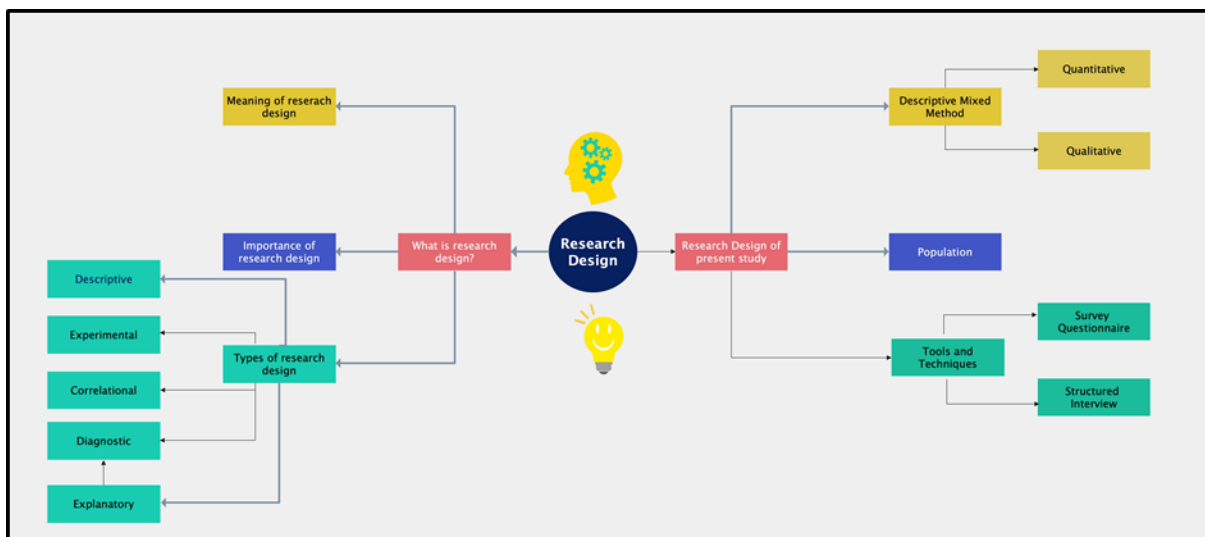


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework of Research Design Methodologies

Methodology of the Study

Research Design

The present study is based on a descriptive research design where a mixed approach of quantitative and qualitative data analysis will help to conclude the hypothesis (Kahn, 2003).

The current study survey research has been taken as the basic method of conducting the research. For the purpose of gathering qualitative data structured interview has been taken as a data collection method.

Survey Research

In this research paper, teachers are at the centre of the study. The objective of the research depends on the teacher's perceptions, teacher preparedness and teachers expectations from the NEP changes. As a result, the survey will involve the teachers as the respondents.

Population of the present Study

NEP 2020 is going to be implemented nationwide systematically in phases. All the schools that follow the CBSE curriculum and the ICSE curriculum will be required to follow the recommendations of the NEP 2020. As a result, the impact will be felt nationwide. As a result, the population for this study is all teachers of CBSE and ICSE schools who are teaching in the Foundational as well as Preparatory Stage. This will include all private as well as government schools that are required to follow the NEP 2020 plan.

State Board schools and schools of the International Board cannot be considered as populations for this study. This is because the National Education Bodies do not govern the governing body for schools under International Boards and hence is not obliged to follow the NEP 2020. The State Board schools have been asked to regulate their curriculum as per NEP 2020 but may or may not completely implement the NEP 2020 in its completeness and still, there are a lot

of discussions and decisions pending in this regard. Hence only private and public CBSE and ICSE schools have been considered as the population for this study.

For the purpose of understanding following is a table showing the description of the Foundational stage and Preparatory stage as per the NEP 2020 (Table 1).

However, for this study, only a sample population has been identified to ensure that the data collected is relevant and reliable (Table 3).

Sample Population

The following sample population was identified for this study.

- 40 teachers of CBSE schools in the Mumbai region of Grades 1 and 2 for the Foundational stage
- 40 teachers of CBSE schools in the Mumbai region of Grades 3 and 4 for the Preparatory stage

Thus the sample is restricted to CBSE schools of the Mumbai region only. Also, only a sample of 40 teachers for each category has been considered for data collection.

The method used for sampling

The cluster sampling method has been used to identify the sample population. This is because the population under study is relatively infinite, and it is nearly impossible to have a list of the entire population. This is also because the teachers who form the dependent variable element are geographically scattered. To identify the sample cluster population following points were kept in mind (Kothari, 1990) (Figure 4).

- Which teacher groups are relevant to this study?
- Which is the location where data can be gathered genuinely and systematically?

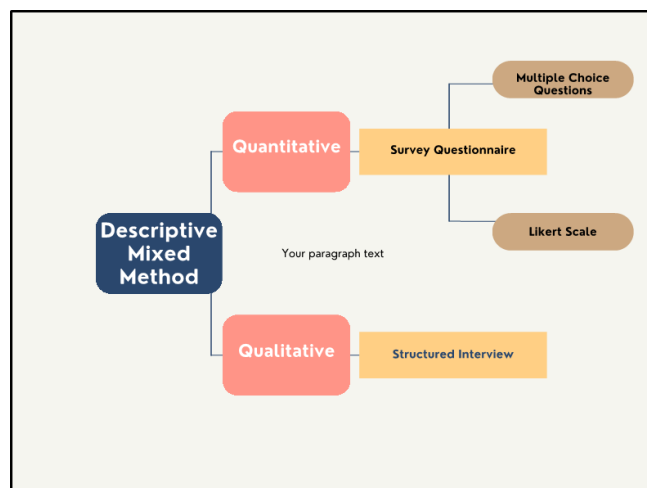


Figure 4: Descriptive Mixed MethodTable

Table 2: Educational Corresponding Age Groups

Foundational	Preparatory
3–8 years	8–11 years
Pre-Primary- Grade 2	Grade 3–5

Table 3: Distribution of Teachers in CBSE Schools in the Mumbai Region

School Names -CBSE-Mumbai Region	No of teachers
Podar International School, Powai	13
Podar International School, Ambernath	26
Podar International School, Thane	20
Bombay Scottish School, CBSE	1
Bal Mohan Vidhya Mandir	8
Arya Vidhya Mandir	1
BEHS CBSE	1
Bunt Sangha SM Shetty CBSE	1
New Horizon Public School, Airoli	9

Tools used for the study

To answer the research questions, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods were used to understand the perception of the teachers and their preparedness to handle the changes.

Two tools have been used to conduct the survey research

Survey Questionnaire-

- Multiple Choice Questions
- Likert Scale

Structured Interview

- Open Ended Questions
- Close Ended Questions

Survey Questionnaire

- The first research question viz.,

What is the extent to which teachers are prepared and willing to modify their teaching methods at foundational and preparatory stages?

This was answered using the survey questionnaire.

The self-completion questionnaire primarily tried to gauge the knowledge of the teachers on the different aspects of NEP2020. To know if the teachers are prepared to implement the new approach it is necessary that they are aware of what the NEP 2020 proposes for them to do. Only if they know what the policy states will they be able to understand and implement the changes.

The questions were asked as Multiple Choice questions. The survey was conducted online. A Google form was developed and shared with the respective teachers.

Most of the questions in the survey form were factual-knowledge-based. The central idea of the question revolved around NEP 2020 and its key takeaways.

Their willingness was also mapped using a set of questions, the responses to which were obtained using the Likert Scale.

A Likert scale is an effective tool that can help measure how people feel and identify the levels of agreement in different situations. Thus the use of the Linkert scale helped to ask questions that tried to capture information that provided to understand the willingness of the teachers to accept the changes and their preparedness to accept the change suggested through NEP 2020 (Roy A., 2020).

Structured Interview

Structured interview questions were a combination of close-ended and open-ended questions. These questions allowed us to gauge the perception of the teachers about a holistic approach to teaching as well as to learn from them what they expect are the challenges in implementing such a change (Koul, 1988).

This section tried to answer the remaining two research questions viz,

What are the expected challenges in implementing a holistic approach towards teaching at foundational and preparatory stages?

&

What are the teachers' perceptions towards a holistic approach in teaching at foundational and preparatory stages?
Structured interview was used as a tool to collect data for research because

- The researcher has derived adequate knowledge on the subject to design strong structured questions.
- There were constraints in terms of time and resources
- There was a strong parity between participants, making it the most appropriate choice for data collection
- A combination of open-ended questions and close-ended questions helped the researcher to gather insights about the teachers' perceptions of the holistic approach and the kind of challenges they were expecting in implementing the change.

It was recognised that the quality of questions asked would determine the effect of the structured interview. So, the questions were carefully formulated for this purpose. The structured interview had to determine

What is their understanding of the Holistic Approach to teaching learning?

What are the challenges they expect in implementing such a change?

Statistical Tools

Following Statistical tools were used to draw conclusions
A student's one-tailed T-test was used to prove the hypothesis. The student's one-tailed T-test is used when there is only one measurement variable (such as just grades for a set of people). The probability that your data is significant should have a $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. This can be calculated using the degrees of freedom (Df) of the data, which is $n-1 = 79$

In the case of this research, the Survey Questionnaire provided scores of teacher that helped to link their knowledge about NEP 2020 to their preparedness and willingness to implement the change.

The following formula was used for this purpose:

Student t-test:

$$t_s = \frac{(x - \mu)}{(s / \sqrt{n})}$$

where to prove the null hypothesis the hypothetical mean value μ is considered 20.

X is the actual mean calculated using the formula

$$\text{Mean: } \frac{\sum fx_i}{\sum f_i}$$

S is the standard deviation as calculated based on teachers' score

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \mu)^2}{N}}$$

N is the number of participants.

Further, the quantitative data was connected to the qualitative data collected in the form of structured interviews to triangulate that teachers who overall scored well in their survey also were able to demonstrate their understanding of the holistic approach to teaching.

This helped to conclude the teachers' preparedness and willingness.

The procedure used to collect data

The survey was conducted through a Google Form. This allowed the collection of authentic data. All the participants filled out the form at their convenience without any pressure or in the absence of any influence. The participants were aware of the purpose of this survey.

A structured Interview was conducted virtually(online) using Google Meet or Zoom link. This was done to provide convenience to the participants and to ensure that the researcher and the participant's conversation was strictly confidential and free from any external pressure or influence.

To ensure that both the data i.e. qualitative as well as quantitative data helped in gathering authentic and reliable information following aspects were taken care of:

Consent

The respective heads of schools were informed and consent was taken to conduct such interactions

Confidentiality

The responses of each of the participants were kept confidential and were not shared with any other participant or heads of the school

Method

The interview was conducted on one through Zoom/Google Meet calls. The participants were briefed about the purpose of the interview and were assured that the information gathered would be used strictly for this research. The survey questionnaire was shared with the participants on their respective school email id's

id'senticity

The questions of the interview were not shared with the teachers until the time of interaction. This ensured that the responses were spontaneous and first-hand.

Reliability

The outcome of the interview can be considered reliable since the script of the responses was shared with the

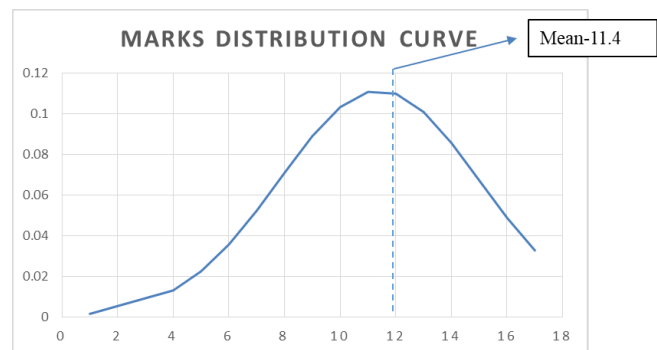


Figure 5: Marks Distribution Curve with Mean Indication

Table 4: Summary of score percentage question wise for the survey

Question No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score %	90%	57.5%	88.8%	75%	50%	83.8%	77.5%	52.5%	32%
Question No	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score %	80%	72.5%	57.5%	56.3%	46.3%	83.3%	80%	61.3%	32.5%

Table 5: Statistical Analysis of Teacher Distribution: Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, and Coefficient of Variance

Number of Teachers	Mean $\bar{x}$	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation σ	Coefficient of Variance
80	Mean: $\frac{\sum fx_i}{\sum f_i}$ Mean= 912/80 Mean= 11.4	Median: $N = \sum f_i = 80$ Median= $(N/2)^{th}$ value = $80/2 = 40^{th}$ value. Median= 11	Mode- The value that has the highest frequency Mode: 11	$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \mu)^2}{N}}$ $= \sqrt{1025.2 / 80}$ $\sigma = 3.58$	$= \sigma / \bar{x}$ $= 0.31599$

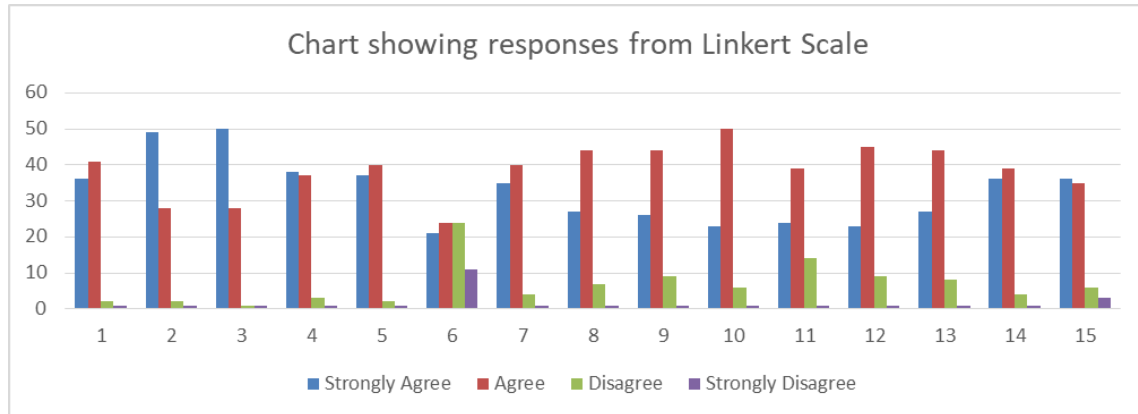


Figure 6: Graph- Analysis of the data collected through the Likert Scale to gauge the willingness of teachers to implement NEP 2020

participants before using it for the purpose of analysis and interpretation.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The researcher carefully analyzed the responses of the teachers for each question in the survey to understand their preparedness for the holistic approach to teaching. The researcher also connected the responses with previous research, as mentioned in the literature review, to understand connections, if any.

Based on the summary analysis, it is seen that in 33% of the questions, more than 80% of teachers responded correctly (Table 4). Only in 2 questions more than 60% of teachers answered incorrectly. Most questions that were answered correctly were related to understanding the pedagogy of the new approach. The answers that were answered incorrectly were related to knowing important names of agencies and organisations which are involved in the development and implementation of the NEP 2020 framework.

Awareness of NEP 2020

90% of teachers understood the foundational-preparatory structure.

57% knew about the expanded Right to Education age window (3–18 years).

Holistic Approach Readiness

84% acknowledged foundational literacy and numeracy as core focus areas.

72% recognized competency-based assessments as key to achieving holistic outcomes.

Challenges Identified

Insufficient resources and curriculum alignment.

Parental interference and limited training opportunities.

Summary of Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Coefficient of Variance

Conclusion

Since the mean, median and mode all are around the numeric value of 11, it can be concluded that the data distribution is normal (Figure 5).

Mean > Median & Mode

It can be concluded that the data is positively skewed (Table 5). This means more teachers score higher than the mean score of the sample.

The corrected sample standard deviation is 3.60

Also, a standard deviation of 3.58 indicates that the marks are spread far apart from the mean

Graph – Marks Distribution Curve

However, since the data is positively skewed it can also be inferred that a high deviation of 3.58 is in the positive direction. This means that more teachers score better than the mean score on the test on NEP 2020.

Statistical Test for Grade Derived from Survey:

The null hypothesis claims that the mean for the teachers' grade (μ) = 20/20

Actual mean for teachteachers'e (x) = 11.4

The standard deviation of the actual data (s) = 3.58

Sample size (n) = 80

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, } t_s &= \frac{(x - \mu)}{(s / \sqrt{n})} = \frac{(11.4 - 20)}{(3.58 / \sqrt{80})} = \frac{-8.6}{\left(\frac{3.58}{8.94427}\right)} \\ &= \frac{-8.6}{\left(\frac{3.58}{8.94427}\right)} = \frac{-8.6}{0.40025625} = -21.4862 \end{aligned}$$

The probability that the data is significant should have a p-value < 0.05. This can be calculated using the degrees of freedom (Df) of the data which is = n-1 = 79 (Figure 6).

The p-value < 0.00001 which is less than 0.05, implying that the data is significant and, hence reliable.

Inference

It can be easily inferred from the data analysis that there is a significant difference in teachers' preparedness and willingness to implement holistic education in the context of NEP 2020 at the foundational and preparatory stages. Their awareness of the various recommendations itself is a sign of their willingness.

Most teachers either agree or strongly agree with all the questions asked. This indicates that the teachers are prepared and are willing to accept the changes proposed by NEP 2020

The t-test showed a significant difference in preparedness between foundational and preparatory teachers ($p < 0.05$). This underscores the need for targeted training.

Interview Insights

Most teachers perceived holistic teaching as fostering comprehensive personality development and integrating intellectual, social, and emotional growth. Challenges highlighted include:

- Time constraints and vast curriculum demands.
- Lack of clarity in implementation timelines.

A further correlation of data collected from Structured Interviews (Qualitative Data) and Data collected from Survey Questionnaires (Quantitative Data) helped to provide some conclusions.

- Out of 19 teachers who scored 15 or more in the survey, 13 teachers confirmed that the holistic approach is related to all-round development and includes social, emotional, spiritual and mental well-being.
- Out of 43 teachers who scored between 10-15, 31 teachers were able to confirm that the holistic approach is related to all-round development and includes social, emotional, spiritual and mental well-being.
- Out of the remaining 18 teachers who scored less than 10, 9 teachers confirmed that the holistic approach is related to all-round development and includes social, emotional, spiritual and mental well-being.

This correlation can safely help to conclude that teachers' knowledge and understanding of holistic education have significance in ensuring that the NEP 2020 is implemented as per requirement.

It was also interesting to observe that teachers despite having a positive perception about the holistic approach in teaching could identify the challenges that they might experience while driving the new pedagogies. The teachers laid a lot of emphasis on Teacher Training as a main requirement to ensure the success. The teachers were concerned that too much interference from parents often makes them work against the said policies. There is also a limitation of time and resources that sometimes does not allow them to perform their duties to the best of their understanding. They also were seeking guidance

from the school heads to provide clarity as to how they should go about implementing the change. They required clarity of time and space. The teachers were not certain in some cases that the change was to be implemented within the immediate academic year or they must wait for further instructions from their respective school heads.

One aspect that was highlighted is that the Curriculum be redesigned to help them adapt to the changes. The suggestions included creating content that ensures that content drives the social, emotional, spiritual, physical and mental well-being of students. Teachers were able to cite examples from their in-class experiences where activities were done which has holistic outcomes.

Examples from teachers' interviews

- Using Dance and Drama to explain the concept of the Solar System
- Using Role play to explain the concept of Divisions
- Field trip to explain the types of plants
- Meditation as a method of classroom management
- Inviting Parents and Grandparents as subject matter experts to explain the importance of health and hygiene (Dentist parent came to school to show how to brush and why it is important to brush teeth)

Analysis of Data & Inferences

It can be concluded from the analysis that teachers have read and understood the NEP 2020. They have taken the changes positively. They are aware of the expectations in most cases and look forward to receiving more training and guidance to help them implement the change. Their overall awareness about the NEP and their understanding of the same has helped in making them prepared for the change. It can hence be concluded that the first hypothesis of this research is false. It is evident that 'there is a significant difference in their preparedness towards NEP'. Their overall awareness as a result has changed their apprehension about the new policy into more informed decision-making. Teachers are now willing to understand more and see reason in bringing about the change. Teachers are also keen on ensuring that these elements are successfully implemented. This can come about through systematic training.

Also, it is clearly evident that there is going to be substantial change in the way teachers of the foundational and preparatory stages will need to deliver the content with a holistic approach. Hence the second hypothesis also is invalidated. There is a significant difference in the holistic approach of teaching pedagogy at the foundational stage and preparatory stage in the context of NEP 2020.

Teachers will need to adapt themselves, train themselves, adapt the content and curriculum, change the assessment methods as well as change the marking and reporting system to fall in line with the new pedagogy. (NCERT, 2021)

The research also concludes with their perception that a holistic approach in teaching will lead to an all-round development of students' personalities which will incorporate social, emotional, spiritual, physical and mental skills as well. This will allow equal weightage to sports, co-curricular activities and academic subjects. The focus will be on building competencies and not growth in marks. (Channawar, 2023)

The teachers have indeed listed some challenges like lack of training, lack of resources and time, lack of clarity, and parental. Pressure, restricted curriculum and content. However, they have also indicated these are teething problems which shall be soon streamlined as they begin implementing the changes.

Major Findings of the study

- The study clearly concluded that 62 out of 80 participants, i.e. 77.5% of the teachers from the sample scored 50% and above in the survey questionnaire. This indicated that their knowledge about NEP 2020 is good which is a great parameter to identify their preparedness towards change.
- This understanding was further validated when it was identified that out of these teachers who scored 50% and above 43 participants were able to clearly explain what they understand as the meaning of holistic education.
- The discussions also highlighted that effective training will help teachers deepen their understanding of the concept and help them implement the holistic approach in a more structured and effective way.
- The teachers were keen on deepening their knowledge of NEP and its implications, especially the holistic approach to teaching.
- The teachers recognised some challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that the change is effectively implemented and the desired outcomes are achieved.

The challenges include but are not limited to

- Limitations of teaching resources
- Too much interference from parents
- Lack of time
- Vast content to be thought
- Curriculum not aligned with the new approach

Implications and Conclusions of the study

Teachers are at the forefront of the Education system in India. Their willingness and preparedness are of utmost importance when it comes to implementing a change. The study gave a positive outcome indicating that the teachers are highly aware and prepared to implement the holistic approach in teaching at the foundational and preparatory stages. Overall the study further validated this idea that for implementing the holistic approach in teaching the teacher buy-in is important. The study revealed that teachers are

aware of the expectations that lie ahead of them due to the NEW EDUCATION POLICY. They have been educating themselves about the new structure as well as new pedagogies that have been proposed. However, the road ahead is not short nor simple. The teachers will require a lot of handholding and support from all the stakeholders to ensure that the pedagogical change is implemented in its true sense and form. The teachers will be required to not only be motivated but will need to be trained to adapt to the change. The implications are not limited to teachers but the implications extend to the content and curriculum too. To ensure that the holistic approach in teaching penetrates the foundational and preparatory stages the content needs revamping too. The content needs to provide scope to include social, emotional, spiritual, physical and mental well-being. These are areas which are at the heart of holistic education. The planning of the assessments, and report cards must be holistic as well. The parents also need to be educated about the change. So, that they understand the value of this change and support the teachers in driving this pedagogical change. (Siddharth, 2022)

It can be concluded from the study that while teachers are prepared and willing to adopt the holistic approach in teaching at foundational and preparatory stages, several areas of concern need to be addressed to support them in driving this change. Further, it may also be concluded that the pace at which this revamp will happen will depend upon not only the teachers but all the other stakeholders who form a part of the education system. School needs to adapt to the change by giving time and resources to the teachers, parents need to understand the benefit of driving this change and thus be cooperative with the teachers and educational systems should recognise the efforts that go into driving these changes. (Mishra, 2023)

Recommendations

To ensure that the change in approach expected to shift towards a more holistic way of teaching at foundational and preparatory stages is implemented to its full potential there is a need to address the challenges that were identified as an outcome of the study. The following recommendations may be considered :

Teacher engagement

Involve all teachers of these stages, in the implementation process by allowing them the power to review the change and provide suggestions at appropriate stages. Seeking their input, feedback, and active participation will ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach which will go a long way in the successful implementation of the change.

Capacity building

Provide comprehensive training and professional development opportunities to teachers and educators to familiarize them with the new pedagogical approaches,

teaching methodologies, and assessment practices suggested by NEP 2020. This will help them adapt to the changes effectively. (Parizek, 2021)

Infrastructure development

Invest in the development of infrastructure and resources required to support the implementation of NEP 2020. This includes ensuring access to digital technology, educational materials, libraries, laboratories, and other necessary facilities. The resources also include adequate time to deliver content. The planning should be well managed concerning time and space.

Curriculum redesign

Review and revise the existing curriculum to align it with the multidisciplinary and holistic approach advocated by NEP 2020. Incorporate elements such as critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and life skills development. Integrate vocational education and practical learning opportunities into the curriculum. Support the curriculum with descriptive case studies and examples that can be used as samples to understand the expectations.

Assessment and evaluation

Rethink assessment practices to move beyond rote memorization and encourage comprehensive evaluation of students' knowledge, skills, and competencies. Explore alternative assessment methods, including project-based assessments, portfolios, and continuous evaluation. Provide clear guidelines as to how to monitor student progress and grade students. Create a system of standardisation which promotes inclusivity and frees the system of any bias or prejudices. The reporting system should be holistic. (CBSE, 2021)

Research and monitoring

Establish a robust research and monitoring mechanism to evaluate the progress and effectiveness of the changes implemented under NEP 2020. This will help identify challenges, gather feedback, and make evidence-based improvements.

Collaboration and partnerships

Foster collaborations between educational institutions, industry, and research organizations to enhance the quality of education and provide teachers with first-hand understanding through experiential and collaborative learning opportunities.

Policy dissemination and communication

Create awareness about NEP 2020 among all teachers through effective communication strategies. Clearly communicate the objectives, benefits, and changes introduced by the policy to ensure a shared understanding and active participation.

Link with growth

Use a sophisticated tracking and monitoring system that will help check the progress of the program. Use the data to identify training needs as well as high-performing reward teachers. This will act as a motivator to bring about the change.

It's important to note that the successful implementation of NEP 2020 requires a sustained commitment from teachers. Unless the teachers are leading the change there will be yet another policy which will grow stale on paper without reaping any positive outcomes.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no financial, personal, or professional conflicts of interest that could have influenced the research, findings, or conclusions presented in this study. The authors declare no competing interests related to the title of the Paper. «The «tudy was conducted independently, with no external funding or influence from organizations or institutions that could bias the results.

Acknowledgement

The authors express their sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to this research. We extend our thanks to the participating teachers and school administrators for their valuable time and insights, which were integral to this study.

We are deeply appreciative of the guidance and encouragement provided by our respective institutions, namely Warden Education Technologies Pvt. Ltd. & Podar International School, Their support played a pivotal role in enabling us to undertake this research. A special thanks to Prof Hema Ramesh Bhadawkar for being the guide to support the entire research work.

Finally, we thank our families and colleagues for their unwavering support and understanding throughout the process of this study.

References

- , (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. . Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- CBSE. (2021). *Cbseacademic.nic.in*. Retrieved from https://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/Manuals/HPC_TeacherGuide.pdf
- Channawar, S. (2023). *Reasearch Gate*. Retrieved from [www.researchgate.net: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368662624_Conceptual_Framework_for_Holistic_Development](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/368662624_Conceptual_Framework_for_Holistic_Development)
- Darwin, C. (1859). *On the origin of species using natural selection*, John Murray.
- Gandhi, R. (2021). Review of the Key Features of the National Education Policy 2020 in the Context of Preschool Education and its Expected Impact. *International Journal of Management, Technology, and Social Sciences*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/thethoughts/the-change-education-system-needs-48986/>. (20203). *The Times of India*.
- Kahn, B. a. (2003). *Research in Education*.

- Kelly. (2012). *Education of the Future*.
- Kothari, C. R. (1990). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*.
- Koul, L. (1988). *Methodology of Educational Research*. Vikas Publication House Pvt Ltd.
- Mishra, H. (2023). The Change Education System Needs. *The Times of India*.
- Montessori, M. (1995). *The absorbent mind*. Holt Paperbacks.
- Murugesan, V. (2021). Opinion of Teachers on National Education Policy 2020 in India. *Research Gate*. NCERT. (2021). www.ncert.nic.in. Retrieved from <https://www.ncert.nic.in/guidelines-holistic-education.html>
- Parizek, M. (2021). Principles of holistic education applied to the Teacher Education Model for the 21st Century in Singapore. *Social Education*.
- Roy, A. (2020). *BOOK: A Comprehensive Guide for Design, Collection, Analysis and Presentation of Likert and other Rating Scale Data*.
- Roy, M. (2022). A Critical Study on the Holistic and Multidisciplinary Approach of National Educational Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in India. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*.
- Shah, D. S. (2021). Holistic Multidisciplinary, Inclusive & Futuristic Education in Context of NEP 2020. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR)*.
- Siddharth, G. (2022). *Research Gate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/-publication/361925630_NEP_2020_Exploring_The_Possibilities_For_Revamping_Education_In_India
- Subjects, C. I. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sb9CxKk6AH>
- Unesco. (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/holistic-learning>.
- Unesco. (n.d.). www.researchgate.com. (n.d.).

Annexure 1: Questions Used in the Survey

- What is the new schooling system breakup proposed under NEP 2020?
- What is the new Right to Education window as per NEP 2020?
- What will be the minimum age requirement for students to step into Grade 1 as per the NEP 2020?
- Up to which grade level does the NEP propose to use regional language or mother tongue as a medium of instruction?
- One of the primary goals of NEP is to provide universal access to equitable education to all. In this contest one of the biggest challenges that has been identified by NEP is..
- Which are the two core skills that are being targeted by the NEP 2020 in the foundational and preparatory stages?
- Key stage assessments to track the achievement of the students are set at*
- Report Cards will be replaced by _____ that will provide a descriptive detailed record of the student's overall achievement.
- What is the name of the framework that will be developed to guide both parents and students towards an enhanced ECCE curriculum which incorporates the best of both national and international standards?
- Which are the two programmes that are currently available only in Anganwadi(pre-primary) but will now

- be extended to Preparatory Class students as per the NEP 2020? (You may select more than one option)
- As per the NEP 2020, the focus of assessments to test the achievement of learning outcomes will be on.
- At which stage of education the textbooks of core subjects like Mathematics, Science and Languages will be introduced as per NEP 2020?
- What framework will guide all teachers in implementing the NEP?
- How many hours of compulsory CPD course is a teacher expected to take each year to stay abreast with the changing requirements of teaching-learning?
- Some of the teacher training modules for in-service teachers are available on.
- What is the name of the agency that will be promoting formative assessment, peer assessment and holistic progress reports to measure ongoing performance of students?
- Which of the following need not be done in the resources/ textbook to ensure the appropriate implementation of the NEP?

Match the following

	Foundational Stage	Middle Stage	Preparatory Stage
Discovery Play and Activity			
Multilevel Play and Activity			
Experiential Learning			

Annexure 2: Category wise a breakup of the questions asked in the structured interview

S.no	Question	Category
1	What according to you is the meaning of a 'holistic approach' in teaching learning?	Meaning
2	Which areas of development must be covered to ensure that teaching is holistic?	Meaning
3	Based on your understanding can you state an example from your current academic year where you have conducted a session using the holistic approach?	Meaning
4	What challenges did you face in delivering the content?	Challenge
5	Which group do you think (teachers, parents, students, management) will be the most impacted/ resistant to changing the pedagogy of teaching-learning at the foundational stage/preparatory stage?	Challenge
6	What can be the reason for such resistance?	Challenge
7	Which group will be most welcoming of the changing pedagogy of teaching-learning at the foundational stage/ preparatory stage?	Challenge
8	What are the advantages of taking a holistic approach (multimultidisciplinary approach) in teaching?	Meaning
9	Who according to you will be responsible for adapting the curriculum to make it holistic in approach?	Meaning
10	What additional skills need to be developed in teachers to ensure the success of NEP implementation?	Challenge
11	Will there be a shift in teachers' role in implementing the holistic approach to teaching? What major changes do you expect in this regard?-	Challenge
12	How can you explain the importance of integrating co-curricular activities like arts, music, physical education, drama etc. into mainstream academics to understand the actual calibre of the student?	Meaning
13	What are the key skills that will be required to be developed in teachers to be able to use the holistic approach in teaching? Do you think teachers have those skills?	Challenge
14	What age/stage is best suited to initiate a holistic approach in education? Do you think it is possible to integrate all areas of competencies at the foundational stage preparatory stage to ensure holistic development?	Meaning