



Assessment Reforms Under NEP 2020: Challenges and Strengthening Evaluation Practices

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Abstract: *The National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 presents a transformative vision for the India's Education System, targeting of establishing India as a Vishwa Guru (Global knowledge Leader) by 2047. It highlights several shortcomings of the existing evaluation practices in education like over reliance on rote memorization-based examination, psychological pressure of examination, absence of assessment mechanism for student's critical thinking, problem solving abilities, life skills, as well as students affective and psychomotor domains. This paper aims to study the new evaluation system of NEP 2020, the probable challenges to implement this new evaluation system and the ways to overcome those challenges. The researcher synthesized data from various sources including government websites, journals, and newspapers. The new evaluation system emphasizes about shifting the aims of assessment, school-based assessment (SBA), 360-degree multidimensional progress report, AI based software for student growth tracking, continuous assessment methods, formation of PARAKH and NTA. The paper also highlights the plausible challenges of successful implementation of assessment framework including funding issues, digital divide and lack of digital resources, human resource limitation, infrastructural problems, traditional feedback issue, teacher shortage and training, resistant mindset, life skills assessment model, unreliable & low-quality AI powered tracking software and ethical or data privacy concerns. Ultimately, to strengthen the existing system for better transformation, the new assessment framework focuses on improving infrastructure, using adaptive learning, continuous professional development for upskilling teachers, public private partnership in education for rural digital connectivity and abolishing digital divide, launch Digital Literacy program, training in AI tools, simplification of parental involvement in student academics. Overall, the successful implementation of assessment framework suggested by NEP 2020 requires commitment from educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders.*

Key Words: *NEP 2020, Assessment and Evaluation system, Assessment Challenges, School Based Assessment, Indian Education Reforms.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 captures Wisdom from the past, analysing current issues of education and articulates a comprehensive roadmap of India's education system. Reforms in educational policy are essential for fostering and responding to evolving global demands (Kulal et al., 2024). Approved by the Union Cabinet on 29 July 2020, NEP (2020) replaces the National Policy on Education (1986) and seeks to reform the system through enhanced access, equity, innovation, flexibility, inclusivity, and quality across all levels of teaching and learning. With the objective of positioning India as a Global Knowledge Leader (Vishwa Guru) by 2047, NEP 2020 adopts a learner-centric approach that integrates Indian values, culture, language, literature, and ethos collectively referred to as 'Indianness' while aligning with international standards of education. It adopts a comprehensive approach, proposes reforms from Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) to higher education and research (Kaurav et al., 2021). In the words of Govinda (2020), 'it is very impressive in its breadth of coverage touching every dimension of education.' A central component of this reform is the transformation of assessment and evaluation practices, which have been inadequate across both contemporary school and higher education system. The relationship between assessment practices and learning outcomes is a worldwide concern (Khunyakari & Takker, 2025) also precise meaning of assessment for learning is rarely defined (William, 2011).



Assessment plays a critical role in the learning process, as it not only measures student progress but also informs key educational decisions and educational quality (Singh & Kaur, 2023). Furthermore, assessment should be used during instructions to improve learning i.e. integrating assessment with instruction, increase student's engagement and learning outcomes (Wiliam, 2011). Assessment is a persistent challenge for government and educational organisation (Gardner, 2006). Historically, the Indian educational system has emphasized rote memorization and examination oriented practices, thereby limiting the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This system was widely viewed as sifting creatively, and emphasizing shallow learning, and falling short in addressing real life demands of the students. In contrast, NEP 2020 proposes a holistic assessment framework that focuses on competency-based learning and the development of 21st century skills through continuous and formative evaluation. This policy was designed in a way to meet the global agenda of SDG-4 by Universal and Quality Education (Kaurav et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, several challenges may hinder the effective translating the promising ideas of NEP 2020 into real practice, needs critical examining the policy (Govinda, 2020). In the context of NEP 2020, understanding assessment related challenges in Indian Education System is very crucial for both conceptual and implementation prospective where limited studies have been conducted. In this paper an attempt has made to analyse and understand the assessment reform by NEP 2020, knowing the plausible challenges and implementation practices to ensure the successful attainment of NEP 2020 objectives.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Present study has the following objectives

1. To study the new evaluation system of NEP 2020.
2. To explore the potential challenges associated with the implementation of the new evaluation system under NEP 2020.
3. To identify feasible pathways for overcoming the challenges in implementing the proposed evaluation reforms.

3. METHODOLOGY:

For this study, a qualitative research methodology has been chosen. The basic data for the study comes from the NEP 2020 document, which was gathered and retrieved from the Ministry of Education's official website (www.education.gov.in). The secondary material has been obtained from various sources including books, journals, newspaper, and websites.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

4.1 New Evaluation System by NEP 2020:

Sifting Aim of Assessment in the Culture of Schools:

The present schooling system mainly focuses on summative evaluation, largely tests rote learning. NEP 2020 assessment reform aims to shift from this traditional approach to formative assessment. This makes a transition from 'assessment of learning' to 'assessment for learning'. In formative assessment, teachers continuously collect evidences of students' learning to guide instruction and help learners achieve their goals. It actively involves students in understanding their progress and identifying the next step in learning (Heritage, 2007). This approach focuses on assessing competency-based skills and development of higher-order skills such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual understanding. Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) including analysing, evaluating, and creating, are essential for 21st century learners, as these enable students to solve complex problems, think critically, and adapt to diverse situations (Arends & Kilcher, 2010). By promoting assessment for learning, NEP 2020 supports continuous monitoring and improvement of the teaching-learning process for teachers, students, and the entire schooling system. The ultimate goal of these reforms is to the development of comprehensive, well-rounded individuals with the necessary 21st century skills. In this way, NEP 2020 assessment reforms play a significant role in nurturing student talent.

School-Based Assessment (SBA):

The transformation of the evaluation process to school-based assessment (SBA) is a judicious and effective solution for easing the integration of the teaching and learning process (Rao, 2023). In SBA, assessment is conducted by school teachers and other members of the education system. SBA assigns teachers the responsibility to design assessments aligned with learning objectives and of continuously monitoring students' progress. This enables teachers to modify lessons according on students' abilities and provide targeted assistance (Brown, 2011). SBA reduces reliance on standardized tests and promotes personalized learning. This helps students by strengthening teaching strategies and more accurately reflecting their real accomplishment. However, challenges including teacher readiness and increased



workload must be addressed (Mansor et al., 2013). SBA is considered an ideal assessment system as it reduces students' pressure while allowing teachers greater initiative in assessing their students (Brown, 2011). To maximize the benefits of assessment, teachers are expected to be involved in four phases of the assessment process: (a) Planning, (b) gathering evidence, (c) interpreting evidence, (d) using results for decision making. According to the Hong Kong SBA Consultancy Team (2005), the benefits of employing SBA in language course like English include providing stable and continuous pressure free assessment, reducing reliance on standardized examination, improving test reliability, accurately, reflecting students' abilities, promoting leisure reading, and enhancing teaching practices, encouraging independent learning, supporting learner autonomy, and empowering teachers in the evaluation process.

360-Degree Multidimensional Progress Report:

A useful and productive communication between the school and parents will be held to support each student within and outside the classroom, emphasize the participation of parents in their children's learning. This will include every aspect of student's personality like self-assessment, peer-assessment, projects inquiry-based learning, quizzes, role plays, group work, portfolios, and teacher assessment So, it should be continuous and comprehensive assessment. 360-degree feedback is a process that collects feedback from various sources, including peer, teachers, supervisors, parents, and the students themselves. This holistic report card will provide a multidimensional view of a student progress across different areas: Cognitive, Affective, Socio-emotional, and Psychomotor domains. The biggest advantage of this system is that it helps reduce bias in evaluations because it relies on comprehensive feedback from multiple sources, making the assessment fairer and objective (Parveen, 2020).

AI-Based Software for Student Growth Tracking:

NEP 2020 emphasizes about development of AI based software for tracking of the growth of students to identify trends and patterns in students' progress over time. This kind of software will be helpful for continuous monitoring and capturing academic achievement, strengths of students, areas of their interest and focus, learning patterns and engagement levels of the students in their learning process.

Redesigning Board Examinations:

The major issue in current board exams is the over-emphasis on rote memorization which fails to address the student's critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. NEP 2020 aims of restructuring board exams with a few following amendments.

- Flexibility in choosing the subject of their individual interests.
- Tests primarily core capacities/competencies rather than content memorization.
- Board exam will be 'easier', basic efforts to pass without much additional efforts.
- Making board examination low stake and less stressful.
- Best of two attempts in given year: one for main examination and one for improvement.
- The mode of exams will be annual, semester, modular each reproduces pressure on students. Board exams in certain subject questions papers in two parts: one is objective with MCQ and other is descriptive type.
- Internal assessment in all subjects and given due weightage in the final examination. Regular periodic assessment through different modes subject enrichment activities, portfolios, project work and practical.
- The result of the students will be based on the achievements in the board exams/semester/ modular exams as well as the internal assessment.
- All students will take examination in grade 3, 5 and 8 which will be conducted by appropriate authority. These examinations will test basic learning outcomes through assessment of code concept, knowledge from national and local curricula, knowledge of higher order skills, applications of knowledge in real life situations. Grade 3 examination will test basic literacy, numeracy, and other foundation skills.
- Result of examination will only be used for developmental purpose of school education system, continuous monitoring and improvement of the scoring system.

Assessment Methods Under NEP 2020:

The assessment method suggested by NEP 2020, will nurture student's overall development and encourages them to think critically and prepare them for 21st century challenges. The various innovative methods giving here:

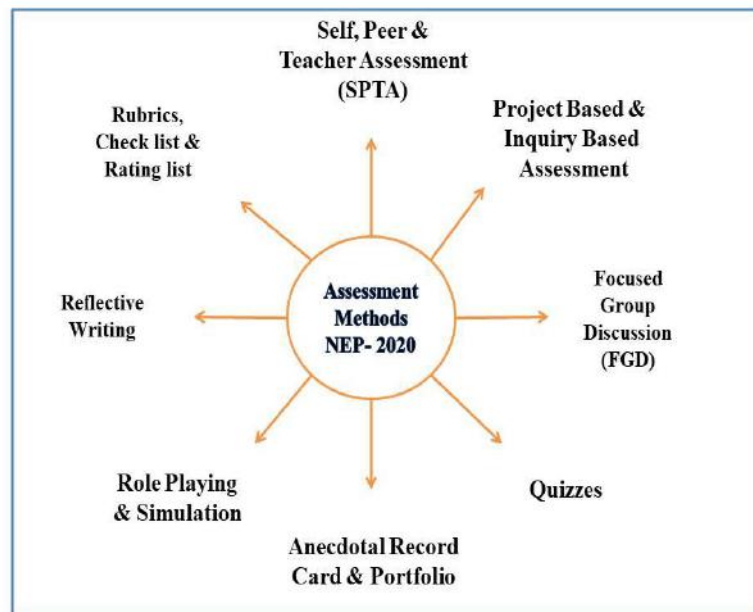


Figure 1: *Assessment Methods Under NEP 2020*

Formation of National Assessment Centre PARAKH:

NEP 2020 is proposed to set up many versatile areas and their evaluation process. PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) is one of the new concepts. PARAKH is established to fulfil the objectives by setting uniform norms, standards and guidelines for student assessment across all recognized central and state school boards. PARAKH aims to reduce significant disparities in evaluation among different boards and bring a collaborative measure among the school boards with updating new assessment patterns and research. Beyond standardizing the rules, it is responsible for guiding the State Achievement Survey (SAS), conducting the National Achievement Survey (NAS), monitoring learning outcomes nationwide, shifting assessment from rote learning to 21st century skills requirement, making evaluation process more consistent, transparent and aligned with holistic development goal.

University Entrance Examination by NTA:

National Testing Agency (NTA) will conduct one common entrance examination twice a year for every university and college student (undergraduate, graduate admission and fellowships in higher education institutions), will offer a high-quality common aptitude test, as well as specialized common subject exams in science, humanities, language, art, and vocational. This agency will create customized subject portfolios for each student by which each university can check and admit students into their programs based to student's interest and talents.

Benefits of the Assessment Reforms:

From the above suggested assessment system by NEP 2020, we can summarize some benefits for the teachers, schools, parents, and also entire education system.

- Continuous comprehensive evaluation.
- Focuses on holistic development of the students with equipping them with 21st century skills.
- A big shift from traditional rote learning or memorization-based evaluation (summative assessment) to assessment for learning (formative assessment).
- Focuses on low stake and low pressure, happy and joyful learning.
- Continuously monitoring and improving teaching-learning process for better learning.
- Helps schools to improve the quality of education delivered.
- Communication between teacher and parents, parents' participations in students learning process.
- One report consisting every aspect of students' personality, their cognitive, affective, psychomotor domains, self, peer and teacher assessment (SPTA), other side like arts, role play and all.



4.2 Challenges in Implementation of New Assessment System of NEP-2020:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to transform the Indian educational system by shifting the focus from rote learning to a more comprehensive and continuous assessment system. As stated in NEP 2020, "Assessment should be based on higher-order, such as critical thinking and analysis" (NEP, 2020). However, implementing this new evaluation framework faces numerous challenges.

Revising Assessment Criteria:

To align with NEP 2020, focus on higher-order skills like analyses and critical thinking, exam boards must revise their assessment criteria. Schools will need to develop new textbooks and resources that match updated teaching content (Mishra, 2022). This process demands significant time, expertise, and collaboration among educators. Shifting to competency-based assessments requires major changes in curriculum, restructuring teaching methods, and on-going teacher training (Das, 2024).

Funding Challenges:

Implementing NEP 2020 requires substantial financial resources. The policy aims to increase education spending from 4.6% to 6% of GDP, equating to around INR 2.5 lakh crore annually. However, historical data shows that India has only spent amount 3% of GDP on education, and the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has further strained financial resources (Nandi, 2023). Without adequate funding, achieving the goals of NEP 2020, including hiring teachers and expanding school infrastructure, remains a formidable challenge.

Digital Divide and Insufficient Digital Resources:

A significant challenge in implementing technology-driven assessment is the digital divide. Many students in rural areas do not have access to reliable internet and digital device, which are essential for engaging with e-learning platforms and online assessments (Banwari, 2025). This gap in digital literacy and access can widen educational inequalities, undermining the NEP's objectives of inclusive education. Lack of technology, internet access, and software makes it hard to implement assessments that cover various skills and learning styles (Das, 2024).

Human Resource Constraints:

Many schools in India face a shortage of skilled and trained teachers, which complicates the effective execution of the new evaluation policies. By 2030, India will need a huge number of new skilled teachers to accommodate the increasing student population. This creates a pressing need for teacher training programs aligned with NEP objectives.

Infrastructure Issues:

Many schools, particularly in rural areas, lack the necessary infrastructure and resources to support innovative assessment practices. A significant number of these schools operate under tight budgets, making it difficult to invest in new technologies or training programs required for effective implementation (Mishra, 2022). The weak infrastructure complicates the delivery of digital assessments and continuous evolutions, especially where internet connectivity is poor. There is need for technology driven assessments to help students develop 21st century skills, but there are still obstacles to fully achieving this (Singh & Kaur, 2023).

Continuous Assessment Framework:

The NEP emphasizes a shift towards formative evaluation, moving away from traditional high stock exams. However, with 75% of schools being government run and a significant proportion of private schools categorized as budget institutions, establishing a continuous assessment framework poses a significant challenge (Sardar & Das, 2024).

Lack of Teachers and Training:

Currently, many schools struggle with shortage of qualified teachers who are capable of adopting the new pedagogical approaches outlined in the NEP. Additionally, existing teachers will need significant retraining to transition from traditional rote learning to the new experiential and competency-based methods. This issue is compounded by the low salaries in the teaching professions, which fails to attract quality educators (Nandi, 2023). Teachers need training in new assessment methods, digital skills, and ways to support diverse student abilities for successful holistic assessments (Das, 2024). Teachers will be expected to contact continuous assessments, analyse growth trends, and engage with parents. Balancing these new responsibilities with their existing workload may lead to stress and burnout.

**Resistance to Change:**

The transition from a marks-based system to one emphasizing continuous assessment may face resistance from both educators and students. Traditional assessment methods are deeply ingrained in the educational culture, making it difficult for stakeholders to adapt to new practices. As highlighted by Joshi (2020), the no-detection policy previously ensured that all students progressed regardless of their performance, which could conflict with the new emphasis on accountability and higher standards.

Assessment Reliability and Effectiveness:

The introduction of peer assessment and self-assessment, as proposed by NEP 2020, poses challenges regarding reliability and effectiveness. Students may lack the objectivity and critical skills necessary to evaluate their peer or themselves accurately (Banwari, 2025). This may lead to skewed assessment results and undermine the credibility of the evaluation process.

Challenges in Life Skill Assessment:

Measuring life skills like empathy and integrity is difficult because it is subjective and depends on culture and personal factors, making the development of effective tools challenging (Das, 2024).

AI-Based Tracking Software:

Schools struggle with using AI software to track student progress accurately, facing issues like technology availability, privacy concerns, funding, and system integration (Das, 2024). Many schools lack the digital infrastructure needed to implement them, especially those in rural area. The use of AI for tracking students' growth and personal data raises concerns about data privacy and security. In this matter, strong AI based software is needed and teachers need to be well-versed in using this software.

Constraints in 360-degree Multidimensional Progress Report:

Though 360-degree approach is a holistic in nature, yet it is very complex to implement. The successful implementation requires coordination among teachers, students, parents, and peer reviewers. Active engagement from parental part is obligatory. In those areas where parents may not be fully literate or involved in student's academics, might pose tough challenges. Also, 360-degree report card has its own challenges like potentiality for not fully capture all strength students, which may demotivate high achievers, and increased the burden on colleges and universities for student admissions, which are already strained. Successful adoption requires addressing issues related to openness to feedback, infrastructure needs, funding, and ensuring fair selection processes to avoid overlooking deserving candidates (Parveen, 2020).

The NEP 2020 envisions a comprehensive assessment system that can better prepare students for future challenges. However, addressing the challenges of resources constraints, teacher training, resistance to change, and the digital divide will be crucial for successful implementation. As highlighted by Nandi (2023), the innovative solutions and substantial investment in educational infrastructure are imperative to realize the goals of NEP 2020.

4.3 Pathways to Overcome the Challenges:

To make formative assessment effective, some of the key skills need to be focused including supportive classroom environment, teaching self-assessment, interpreting of student's responses to identify learning gaps and adjusting instructions to meet diverse student needs through differentiation (Heritage, 2007). The fast and foremost duty of a teacher is to create a supportive classroom culture where students feel safe to assess themselves and others. Secondly, teachers should guide students in self-assessment by helping them reflect on their learning, setting their goals, and provide constructive peer feedback. Thirdly, teachers need to interpret evidence by analysing student responses to identify learning gaps and provide clear feedback. Finally, teachers must align their instruction with these gaps by adjusting lessons to meet individual student needs and providing appropriate challenges and support through differentiated instruction. Widiawati et al., (2018) compared the effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Think-Pair-Share (TPS) in developing students' higher-order thinking skill (HOTS). Both methods, when integrated with a scientific approach and 4C skills (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity), positively influence HOTS. However, PBL is more effective than TPS. PBL encourages collaborative problem-solving using real life issues, while TPS involves individual thinking followed by pair discussions. Research shows that PBL leads to higher student engagement and better HOTS outcomes than TPS. Therefore, in a classroom or school learning environment, a teacher needs to focus on problem-based learning.



Simultaneously, teachers must shift their mind-set to prioritize meaningful learning and higher-order thinking skills, encouraging creativity and innovation among students (Das, 2024). This also involves fostering inclusive learning environments and setting clear goals for holistic student development through appropriate assessment rubrics and training. School management should implement flexible assessment systems that focus on core concepts, higher-order thinking, and soft skills. The use of AI tools can help track student progress and support career guidance (Das, 2024). Improving infrastructure through smart classrooms can integrate traditional teaching with digital learning, creating an engaging and effective learning environment (Banwari, 2025). The use of adaptive learning through Learning Management System (LMS) can help identify students' learning gaps and enable real-time performance evaluation (Almusfar, 2025). In addition, building a large pool of well-trained teachers is essential for implementing the redesigned curriculum and promoting a cultural shift in higher education over the next 15-20 years (Nandi, 2023). Investigating in teacher training and technology will help the education system better support student learning and adapt to changing pedagogical needs.

Furthermore, to overcome challenges in implementing the NEP 2020 evaluation system, there are other some measures necessary. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of teachers should be strengthened, and government investment in education should be increased. To strengthen the education system, private partnerships can supplement funding, while internet connectivity in rural areas must be expanded. Affordable digital devices and digital literacy programs should be provided to bridge the digital divide. Intensive teacher requirement should be increased in the schools and school infrastructures especially in rural areas should be upgraded with digital tools and resources. The stressed should be given to the simplification of continuous assessment models and teachers should be trained to use them effectively. Attractive salaries, incentives, and on-going propositional development are needed to retain and up-skill the teachers. Mental health support and stress management programs should be introduced to reduce students' pressure in this competitive age. Clear rubrics for assessing life skills should be developed, and teachers should be trained to use them. The stakeholders, students must be provided training in AI tools, secure digital infrastructure and strong data privacy measures. Finally, role a parental involvement should be simplified, especially in low-literary areas, to ensure fair and inclusive evaluation.

5. CONCLUSION:

The above discussion concludes that the successful implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 depends on addressing key challenges related to assessment and evaluation in the Indian Education System. These multiple challenges are like revising assessment criteria, ensuring adequate funding, bridging the digital divide, and addressing human resource constraints, especially the shortage of trained teachers. To effectively overcome these issues, a multifaceted approach is required, which includes creating supportive classroom environments that encourage self-assessment and peer feedback, adopting innovative teaching methods such as problem-based learning, and improving infrastructure through smart classrooms and adaptive learning technologies. By focusing on higher-order thinking skills, embracing technology, and investing in continuous teacher training, the education system can evolve to meet the demands of the 21st century. The ideal scenario of our country- unavailability of unlimited financial resources, less highly motivated human resources, lack of highly efficient administrative system, no free access to frontline technological and artificial intelligence algorithms, must be keep into the mind and prime concern list of implementations (Govinda, 2020). Ultimately, the shared commitment of educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders is essential to realize the transformative vision of NEP 2020 and to ensure that all students are prepared to succeed in an increasing complex and dynamic world.

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