

Perceptions of Undergraduate College Teachers on National Education Policy – An Empirical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

In the present study, the authors investigate the attitudes of undergraduate college teachers in Bengaluru in relation to National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) and higher education, in particular. The research design adopted the quantitative approach, which involved gathering primary data on 51 undergraduate teachers by implementing the structured questionnaire via the online and offline methods. The method of sampling used was convenience and the statistical analysis of the data was done using ANOVA, t-test and Friedman non-parametric test on SPSS software. The secondary data collection was conducted by the way of a large-scale survey of recent literature on NEP and educational reformation. The results indicate that teachers have moderate knowledge of NEP, though, the knowledge related to the particular elements including the 88 actionable points and the implementation framework called SARTHAQ is very low. A large percentage of the respondents were not sure about accreditation, affiliation reforms, and regulatory restructuring. Testing of the hypotheses revealed that there were no significant differences in the knowledge, pros and cons perception, and ease and challenges of implementation of the programs with regard to demographic variables of age, qualification, and teaching experience. Furthermore, knowledge about NEP did not significantly influence perceptions of its advantages, disadvantages, or implementation challenges. The paper creates awareness about the necessity of policy information distribution, formal orientation, and participation of teachers in the policy implementation processes. This study by featuring the voids in awareness and participation offers a conceptual basis on which additional research would be conducted on the faculty perception of NEP and builds capacity to enhance the process of reforms in higher education in India.

Keywords: National Education Policy, Higher Education, Undergraduate Teachers, Knowledge, and Accreditation

INTRODUCTION

High-quality education is a fundamental necessity for unlocking the full potential of individuals, fostering a fair and just society, and driving national progress. The pursuit of universal, top-notch education stands as the cornerstone of India's continued rise and leadership on the global stage, encompassing economic growth, social equity, scientific and technological advancement, national unity, and the preservation of cultural heritage.

In today's swiftly evolving landscape of knowledge and employment, our education system must not only impart knowledge but also nurture character, instilling ethics, rationality, compassion, and empathy in learners, all while equipping them with the skills needed for meaningful employment. It is important to acknowledge that the existing gap between current learning outcomes and the desired ones can be closed through comprehensive educational reforms. It is in this line of thought, National Education Policy has emerged as a new paradigm and the entire educational system in India is looking forward to a great shift.

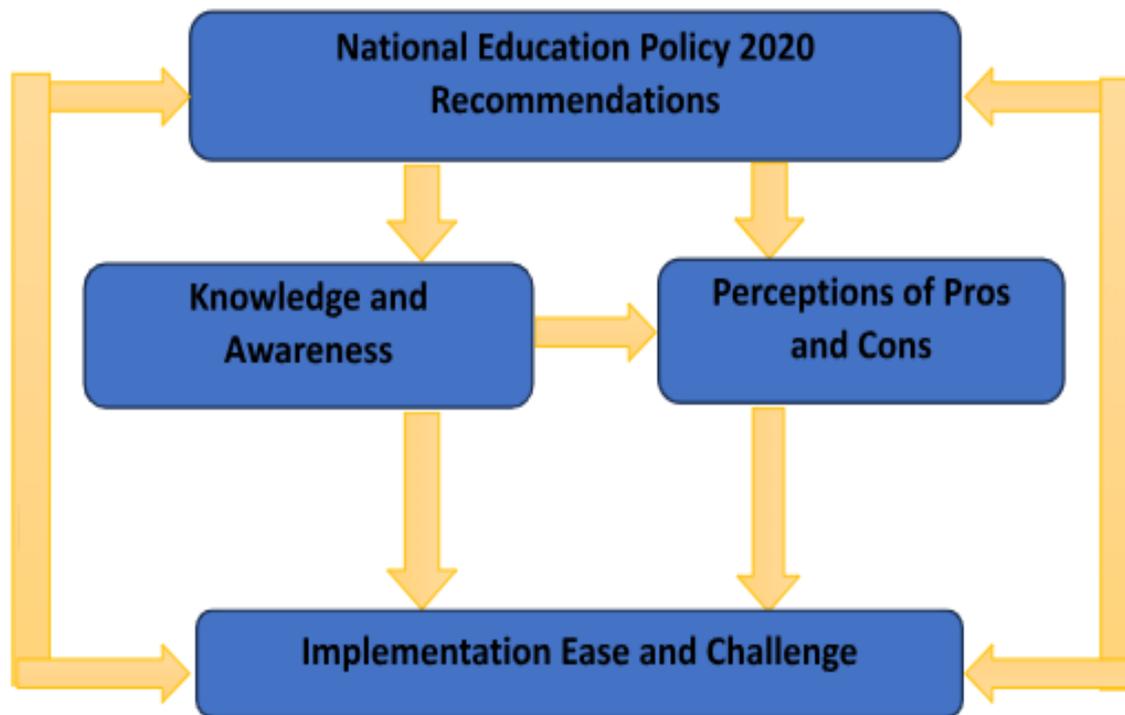
Objectives of the Research:

The prime objective of this study is to study the perceptions of undergraduate teachers on the National Education Policy, teaching in the Undergraduate colleges in Bangalore city. The perceptions include thoughts on the pros & cons of the policy and implementation ease and challenges.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a systematic activity to achieve the truth and scientific investigation or inquiry for searching new facts in any branch of knowledge. In this study quantitative technique is used to analyse the collected data. The following is the conceptual framework for the study.

Fig: 3.1 - Conceptual Framework



Source: Author (2023)

Population and Sample Size:

This empirical study has approached Under graduate teachers in various colleges in Bengaluru. As a part of this study, 51 responses were collected from undergraduate teachers from different colleges across Bangalore city. Convenient sampling has been used to collect the data.

Types of Data

The data collected is primary in nature and has used both online and offline modes to collect data. The literature survey has been conducted using the secondary source of data through journal publications in various online websites.

Statistical tools

Statistical tools like ANOVA, T test, Friedman’s test etc were conducted to validate and analyse the data. SPSS software has been used for analysis and interpretation of the data.

Limitations and Scope of the study

This study is limited geographically to Bengaluru city. The scope of the research is to study the perceptions of undergraduate teachers only on the National Education Policy. The content is also limited to crucial factors of National Education Policy and the perceptions are based on the closed ended questionnaire.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There has been an intense literature search to understand the perceptions of NEP among the teachers and the following is a glimpse of the recent literature.

Sreeram Gopalkrishnan (2023) has published a research article titled “New education policy 2020 in India: future rewinds to the past” with an intention of understanding as well as to analyse the antecedents of historical Indian education knowledge systems along with its applicability in the contemporary landscape. In this study the authors have opined that this new education policy document will bring a big change in the future of the world’s largest demographic country’s young generation.

In the Journal of Efficiency and Responsibility in Education and Science, **Sharma Ambuj and et al., (2022)** have published a research article titled “Exploring the Teachers’ Perception towards Educational Inclusion: A Study of Teachers’ in Pune, India”. The main objective of this study is to examine university teachers’ perceptions towards inclusion of students with disability in private and public universities in India. Also in this study the authors have assessed how gender, age, teaching experience, level of education, and interaction frequency with a person having disability influences the viewpoint of instructors regarding people with disabilities and also the consideration of public and private academic institutions. For this purpose the authors collected data from private and public universities of Pune, India through digital questionnaires. In total the population for the collected data consisted of full time university teachers of undergraduate, post graduate and doctoral courses in Pune city. 309 responses were received and it was analysed by applying independent t test, descriptive statistics and ANOVA. The results of the analysed data revealed that there is no significant association found among teachers' perceptions of inclusion in regard to degree level, gender and experience. But on the other hand it was found that there was significant association among teachers’ perception of inclusion and their interaction among students with disabilities.

In the International Research Journal of Modernization in Engineering Technology and Science, **Dr. Ramesh D Patil (2022)** published a research article titled “NEP 2020: Quality education, quality teaching and teacher’s role in 21st Century Education”. In this study the author has focused on the qualities of an effective teacher, instructions quality as well as the delivery of the content in the classroom with effectiveness. Further the author has also discussed in this study regarding the professional and personal skills of a teacher that are required with the UN sustainable development goals as well as skills matching to the 21st century.

In the International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology, **Smita Paschal and Dr Nimisha Srivastav (2022)** have published a research article titled “NEP 2020 - Narrowing the skills Gap and Equipping New skills through job satisfaction”. Through this study the authors opine that the teacher's way of teaching concepts must be given some importance which also makes them feel their job more interesting.

Sunita Khatak, Naman Wadhwa and Rajesh Kumar (2022) have published a research article titled “NEP 2020 - A review cum survey based analysis of myths and reality of education in India” in the International Journal of Advanced in Management, Technology and Engineering sciences. Through this study the authors have analysed both teachers and students opinion on the new education policy by conducting a survey at Kurukshetra University - Biotechnology Department of university Institute of Engineering and technology. In total 101 responses were collected. The results revealed that there are both pros and cons in the new education policy but the infrastructure with regard to the department of education needs to be improved in order to avoid the obstacles in the upcoming days by the Government.

In the International Journal of Conceptions on Management and Social Sciences, **Dr H Rajeshwari and Ms Shoba N (2022)** have published a research article titled “Vuca Environment and Competencies on Management

and Social Sciences”. In this study VUCA is expanded as Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity which is the vital role as per authors in every sector of business. In this study the authors have made an attempt in investigating the role of competencies of faculties in the initiation of NEP. For this purpose the authors collected samples from 50 faculties who are working at UG colleges of Bangalore. The results of the analysed data revealed that there arises association among competencies of faculties with the NEP success.

Suresh Yenugu (2022) in his research article titled “The new National Education Policy (NEP) of India: Will it be a paradigm shift in Indian higher education?” has found that the NEP 2020 which has been introduced by the Government of India has aimed at setting goals in each phase and also prioritising the major roles as per proper planning, administration and careful implementation by making proper usage of funds at the right time.

Pratibha Bundela Gupta and Dr B L Gupta (2021) have conducted a descriptive research study with an article titled “Strategies to deal with barriers to mentoring faculty members in higher education institutions in the context of NEP 2020”. The main aim of this study was to investigate the barriers to mentoring faculty members of higher and technical education institutes of India. For this purpose a structured questionnaire and also semi structured questionnaire was used in order to understand the range and also the depth of barriers in order to mentor the faculty members. In the opinion of the authors it will be useful in the aspect of improvisation of the design of the mentoring programme if the barriers to implementation of mentoring programme is recognised.

The literature survey has resulted in identifying the research gaps with regard to the perceptions of undergraduate teachers in the colleges. A lot of literature is available, but specific stress is not found on the undergraduate teachers and their thoughts on the National Education Policy in particular.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

The following paragraphs discuss in detail the analysis of the data collected. The respondents’ demography has been depicted in Fig 5.1, where majority of the respondents i.e. 70.59% of the respondents are between the age group, 33 and 46 years. This clearly depicts the responses are from a matured group of respondents who have shared their perceptions.

Fig 5.1 - Demographic representation of Age of the Respondents

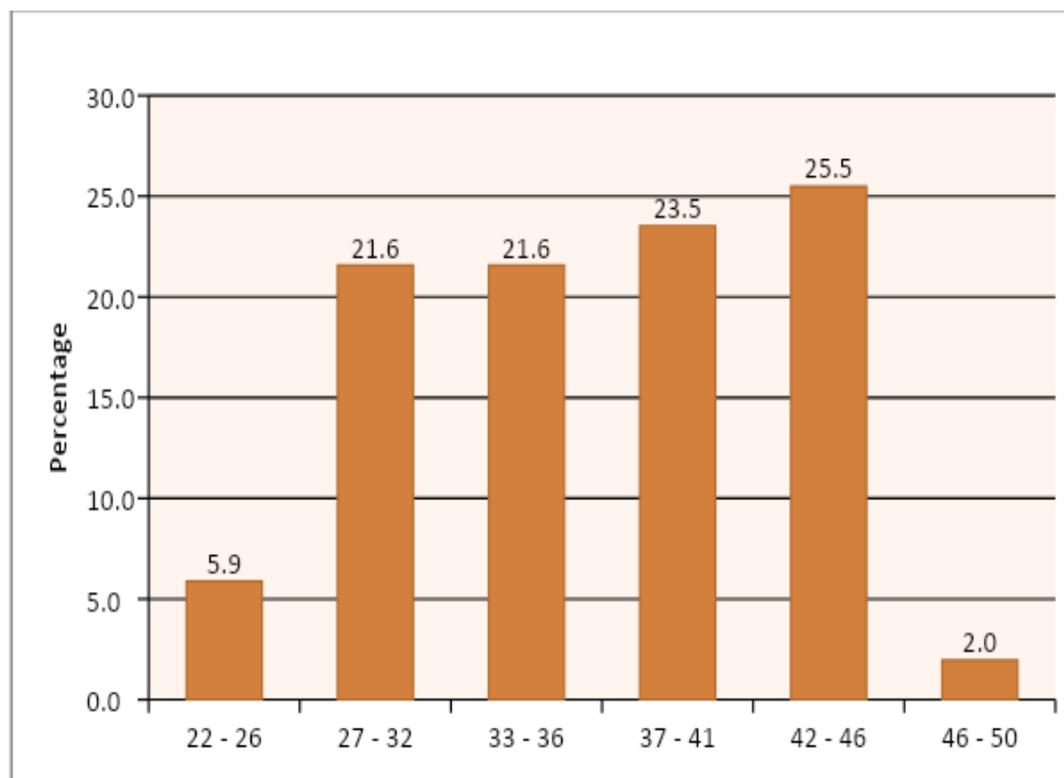
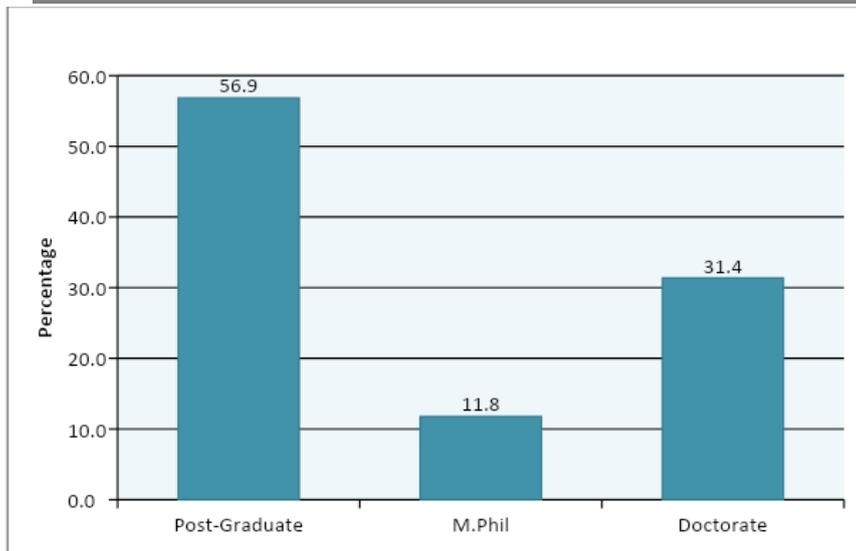
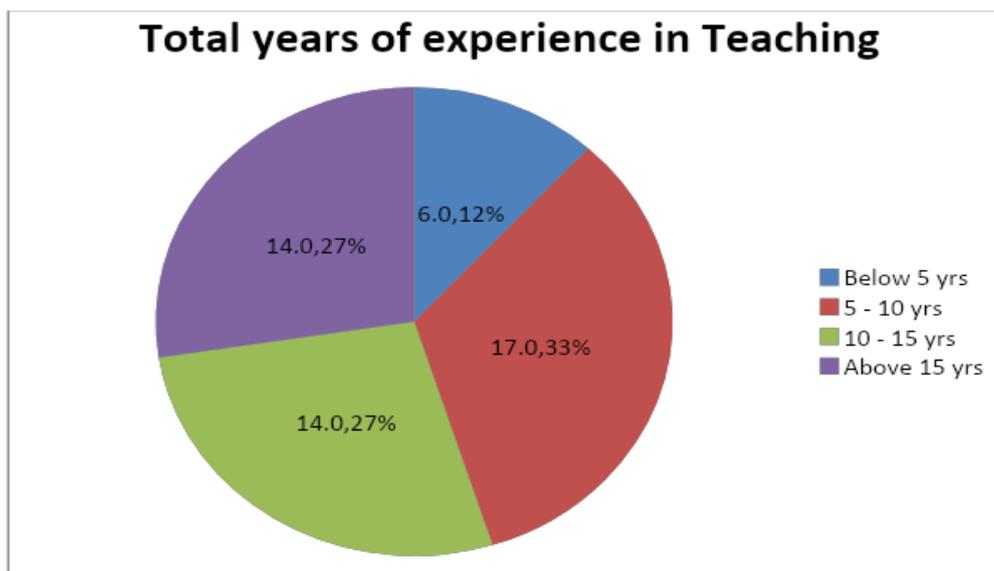


Fig 5.2 - Demographic Representation of Educational Qualification



There is a decent group of Doctorate holders in the respondents sample who form an expertise team with 56.5% post graduates. This sample has given us critical insights into the perceptions about National Education Policy.

Fig 5.3: Total years of teaching experience



The present sample consists of a mix of both fresh and experienced teachers working in undergraduate colleges, who have given us their perceptions about the National Education Policy, making the study more valid with considerably equal representation with regard to teaching experience.

Table 5.1 - Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher Education

Statements	No Knowledge		Slightly Knowledgeable		Somewhat Knowledgeable		Moderately Knowledgeable		Extremely Knowledgeable		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Are you aware of the entire National Education Policy 2020?	0	0.0	7.0	13.7	9	17.6	31	60.8	4	7.8	51
Do you know the names of the four pillars that NEP is based on?	5	9.8	7.0	13.7	9	17.6	25	49.0	5	9.8	51

Did you know that there are 88 actionable points in NEP published on mygov.in website?	13	25.5	12.0	23.5	14	27.5	11	21.6	1	2.0	51
What is your level of knowledge on NEP with reference to Higher Education?	2	3.9	12.0	23.5	9	17.6	26	51.0	2	3.9	51
Are you aware of the 22 points laid out for higher education in NEP	11	21.6	8.0	15.7	14	27.5	15	29.4	3	5.9	51
Are you aware of the “Light but tight” regulation in NEP?	15	29.4	14.0	27.5	5	9.8	15	29.4	2	3.9	51
Have you heard of the system “Academic Bank of Credit” under NEP 2020?	11	21.6	16.0	31.4	9	17.6	10	19.6	5	9.8	51
Have you heard about the document “SARTHAQ” describing the implementation framework, available in mygov.in website?	18	35.3	16.0	31.4	8	15.7	6	11.8	3	5.9	51

It is found from the study that around 35.3% of the teachers are not aware of the “SARTHAQ” document available in the mygov.in website explaining the implementation framework details. On the other hand, only 2% of the teachers are extremely knowledgeable about the 88 action points laid out in the NEP document.

Table 5.2 Table showing Pros and Cons of National Education Policy with special reference to Higher Education

Statements	Can't Say		Pros		Cons		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
The same list of accreditation and regulation rules will be used for guiding both the public and private academic bodies	23	45.1	23.0	45.1	5	9.8	51
College affiliation and autonomy will be granted to colleges in a phased-out manner	20	39.2	19.0	37.3	12	23.5	51
By the Year 2030, it will be mandatory to have at least a four-year B.Ed degree for joining the occupation of teaching	11	21.6	25.0	49.0	15	29.4	51
Online academics will be promoted on a larger scale	10	19.6	15.0	29.4	26	51.0	51
All study materials will be provided in regional languages	9	17.6	26.0	51.0	16	31.4	51
The Graduation will be four years of study with an Internship	4	7.8	37.0	72.5	10	19.6	51
The holistic Multidisciplinary program will have multiple entry and exit options	12	23.5	23.0	45.1	16	31.4	51
No hard separations between arts and sciences	8	15.7	23.0	45.1	20	39.2	51
No hard separations between curricular and extra-curricular	6	11.8	27.0	52.9	18	35.3	51

No hard separations between vocational and academic streams	8	15.7	21.0	41.2	22	43.1	51
Common entrance exam for admission to Higher Educational Institutions	3	5.9	35.0	68.6	13	25.5	51
Internationalisation of Education by student exchange programmes	6	11.8	37.0	72.5	8	15.7	51
Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities are being set up for introducing multidisciplinary academic	2	3.9	42.0	82.4	7	13.7	51
A compulsory social engagement programme for every student in HE	2	3.9	45.0	88.2	4	7.8	51
Private HEIs will be provided full autonomy for curriculum design	15	29.4	28.0	54.9	8	15.7	51
Private HEIs will be provided full autonomy for teacher's appointment	14	27.5	26.0	51.0	11	21.6	51
Encouraging Higher Education Institutions to twin with foreign universities for programmes and Research collaborations	5	9.8	37.0	72.5	9	17.6	51
Multiple regulatory bodies are merged into a single regulatory body	11	21.6	29.0	56.9	11	21.6	51
All Private Higher Educational Institutions are treated at par with Public Institutions for Research Funding	9	17.6	38.0	74.5	4	7.8	51
All the courses at Undergraduate, Postgraduate and PhD levels will be made interdisciplinary	12	23.5	32.0	62.7	7	13.7	51

It is very disheartening to see that the majority of the respondents have opted for “Can’t say” in the statements relating to Accreditation and College Affiliation, which means either they are not confident or they do not have the exposure to the administration side of the higher education sphere.

Table 5.3: Table showing the results of Friedman Non-parametric Test - Age

Statements	Age	N	Mean	SD	SE	ANOVA	p
Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher Education	22 - 26	3	14.00	4.58	2.65	1.66	0.164
	27 - 32	11	18.91	5.82	1.76		
	33 - 36	11	19.82	5.46	1.64		
	37 - 41	12	23.33	7.50	2.16		
	42 - 46	13	19.54	4.37	1.21		
	46 - 50	1	25.00				
	Total	51	20.14	6.01	0.84		

Pros and Cons of NEP with regard to Higher Education	22 - 26	3	32.33	1.15	0.67	2.09	0.084
	27 - 32	11	39.27	4.08	1.23		
	33 - 36	11	40.91	4.68	1.41		
	37 - 41	12	38.67	3.94	1.14		
	42 - 46	13	38.31	4.64	1.29		
	46 - 50	1	42.00				
	Total	51	38.88	4.49	0.63		
Implementation Ease and Challenge with regard to Higher Education	22 - 26	3	75.67	1.15	0.67	1.15	0.347
	27 - 32	11	82.00	8.66	2.61		
	33 - 36	11	83.45	9.90	2.99		
	37 - 41	12	79.33	20.21	5.83		
	42 - 46	13	70.23	18.62	5.17		
	46 - 50	1	81.00				
	Total	51	78.29	15.31	2.14		

It is evident from Friedman's test that the factors “ Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher education” has no relation to the Age of the respondents. Also, the factors, “Pros and Cons of NEP with regard to Higher Education” and “Implementation ease and challenge with regard to Higher Education,” have no association with the Age of the respondents.

Table 5.4: Table showing the results of Friedman Non-parametric Test - Qualification

Statements	Qualification	N	Mean	SD	SE	ANOVA	p
Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher Education	Post-Graduate	29	19.55	6.24	1.16	0.44	0.646
	M.Phil.	6	19.83	4.71	1.92		
	Doctorate	16	21.31	6.18	1.55		
	Total	51	20.14	6.01	0.84		
Pros and Cons of NEP with regard to Higher Education	Post-Graduate	29	39.10	4.57	0.85	0.15	0.863
	M.Phil.	6	38.00	5.25	2.14		
	Doctorate	16	38.81	4.31	1.08		
	Total	51	38.88	4.49	0.63		
Implementation Ease and Challenge	Post-Graduate	29	80.86	12.15	2.26	1.08	0.347

with regard to Higher Education	M.Phil.	6	72.17	7.73	3.16		
	Doctorate	16	75.94	21.26	5.32		
	Total	51	78.29	15.31	2.14		

Table 5.5: Table showing the results of Friedman Non-parametric Test - Experience

Statements	Experience	N	Mean	SD	SE	ANOVA	p
Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher Education	Below 5 yrs.	6	17.17	4.40	1.80	1.40	0.254
	5 - 10 yrs.	17	18.76	6.03	1.46		
	10 - 15 yrs	14	21.29	5.90	1.58		
	Above 15 yrs	14	21.93	6.38	1.70		
	Total	51	20.14	6.01	0.84		
Pros and Cons of NEP with regard to Higher Education	Below 5 yrs	6	38.00	4.86	1.98	0.10	0.959
	5 - 10 yrs	17	38.82	5.00	1.21		
	10 - 15 yrs	14	39.00	4.19	1.12		
	Above 15 yrs	14	39.21	4.42	1.18		
	Total	51	38.88	4.49	0.63		
Implementation Ease and Challenge with regard to Higher Education	Below 5 yrs	6	75.67	7.23	2.95	0.27	0.845
	5 - 10 yrs	17	80.18	11.38	2.76		
	10 - 15 yrs	14	79.50	13.69	3.66		
	Above 15 yrs	14	75.93	22.78	6.09		
	Total	51	78.29	15.31	2.14		

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Numerous hypotheses were framed while performing the analysis and the following paragraphs highlight the results.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher Education with respect to selected demographic variable

The above hypothesis was accepted and it was found that there is no difference with regard to the NEP knowledge among the selected demography. This also means that there was no change/relation in the knowledge irrespective of the age, gender and educational qualification.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in Knowledge about pros and cons of implementation of recommendations of the Policy regarding Higher Education in Karnataka with respect to selected demographic variable

This hypothesis was accepted and with the selected demography of respondents, there was no difference or change about the knowledge of pros and cons of the implementation of recommendations of the Policy.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in Implementation Ease and Challenge of NEP regarding Higher Education with respect to selected demographic variable

This hypothesis was accepted and found that there is no difference in the perception regarding the implementation ease and challenge of NEP among the selected demography.

Hypothesis 4 : There is no significant influence of Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher Education towards perception of Pros and cons

This hypothesis was accepted and the analysis has revealed that with regard to the perception of pros and cons, there is no significant influence of knowledge about NEP with regard to Higher Education towards their perception.

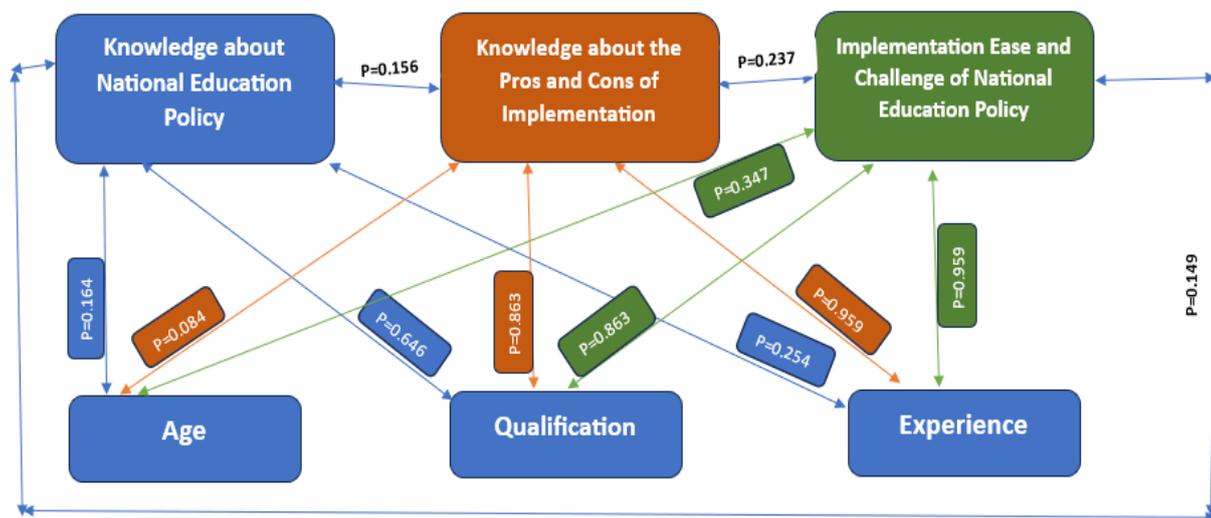
Hypothesis 5: There is no significant influence of Knowledge about NEP regarding Higher Education towards Implementation Ease and Challenge of Higher Education

This hypothesis was accepted and found that there was no significant influence of knowledge about NEP towards the implementation ease and challenge of Higher Education

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant influence of Pros and Cons of National Education Policy towards Implementation Ease and Challenge of Higher Education

This hypothesis was accepted and found that there was no relation/difference between the influence of Pros and cons of the Policy and the implementation ease and challenge of Higher Education.

Fig 6.1: Model based on Hypotheses results



FINDINGS

The study basically aimed at understanding the perceptions of the National Education Policy among the undergraduate college teachers. However, before knowing the perceptions, statements relating to the knowledge of teachers were posed in order to understand the level of the teachers’ knowledge about NEP. The results have revealed that a mere 7.8% of the respondents are aware of the entire National Education Policy and only 3.9% percent of the respondents are aware of the National Education policies' higher education perspective. This is very saddening as the percentage is very low and not many have studied the policy in detail.

When the respondents were asked about “SARTHAQ,” many respondents had never heard of the concept and it is the very basic reason why any policy become unimplementable as many scholars and teachers are ignorant of the nuances of the policy.

Suggestions:

The following are suggested based on the study -

- Teachers, scholars and faculty should be constantly updated about the policy recommendations and updates as and when it is published by the Government departments.
- Encourage teachers to attend the NEP workshops and orientation sessions to make them aware of the nuances of the Policy.
- Involve the teachers in the administration and management matters involving the National Education Policy requirements so that teachers will feel the inclusiveness.
- “SARTHAQ” document available in the mygov.in website has to be circulated among the teachers and their perceptions have to be sought in order to understand the implementation challenges.
- Teachers can conduct case studies/interviews with the help of students as a part of dissertation or small research to spread the word on National Education Policy pros and cons.
- The Government websites especially relating to education are often neglected and undermined by the teachers, instead they need to encourage the efforts of the Government and give timely suggestions.
- Participate in “Pariksha pe Charcha” and give valid inputs to the Government in enhancing the quality of Higher Education.

CONCLUSION

This study has fulfilled the objective set about the National Education Policy perspectives. Varied dimensions of responses were received from the teachers working in Higher Education institutions about the implementation ease and challenges and the pros and cons of the Policy. This paper acts as a foundation for researchers who wish to build on an in-depth framework about the NEP nuances and perceptions. In the light of Higher Education in our country, we all definitely need reforms and National Education Policy is one such platform to contribute.

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