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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
Palli Samgathana Vibhaga
Visva-Bharati
Sriniketan-731236, W.B

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JSWSD is a bi-annual refereed journal to publish original ideas that will promote issues pertinent to social justice, well being of individuals or groups or communities and social policy as well as practice from development perspectives. It will encourage young researchers to contribute and well established academics to foster a pluralistic approach in the continuous efforts of social development. JSWSD is a UGC approved journal (Category: Social Science - all, SI. No. 1112, Journal Number - 47298).

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EDITORIAL NOTE

Greetings from the Journal of Social Work and Social Development!

This issue of our journal is a collection of articles presented in the 3rd International Multidisciplinary Conference on the theme "Education Reforms and its Global Impact through National Education Policy," organised by Ganpat University- Faculty of Social Science and Humanities (GUNI-FSSH), Gujarat on March 17-18, 2023. Please allow me to this opportunity to thank Prof. Abhishek Parikh, Dean, GUNI-FSSH; Prof. Sanjay Vanani, Head, Ganpat University- Department of Social Work and Prof. Prasanta Kumar Gosh, Retired Professor of Department of Social Work, Visva-Bharati for networking and following up. In this volume, there are different articles which reflect the different areas that scholarship has explored in the conference.

The first article is by **Bhikhalal, T. S. and Meghanathi Priyanka Dineshgiri**, "*A Study on National Education Policy-2020: Awareness among the Students of Saurashtra Region*". The authors have conducted a research study based on primary data in Saurashtra and wanted to understand the factors that affect the proper functioning of National Education Policy, 2020. The study concluded that there is no significant difference between gender and the awareness level of students regarding the national policy that has been introduced in the education sector, namely NEP, 2020.

Next, **Antara Mukherjee** and **Sanjoy Bhuyan** have presented their article titled *“Awareness and Attitude of Teacher-educators towards Blended learning- in the light of NEP: 2020”*. The fact that Covid-19 has brought forward the concept of blended learning is known to all. What needs to be realised is that this system of education is here to stay and effort must be concentrated on enhancing the functioning of this mode of imparting knowledge. This paper is based on primary research and significantly aligns its conclusions with the recently launched NEP 2020 in most central educational institutions.

Usha Kaushik, Monika Singh and Rashmi Kumari have done their research titled *“Changing Role of Teachers in NEP 2020: A Study of Schools in Jharkhand.”* The central role that the teachers will play in the successful implementation of the National Education Policy, 2020 has been reiterated by the authors in this article. The fact that teachers should be awarded sovereignty and autonomy in their workplace and must be provided with necessary infrastructure for knowledge and skill development is the key to making India’s educational standards at par with the rest of the globe.

The issue of a very different area of social welfare, was appropriately dealt with in the article named *“Education of Children living in Child care Institutions in Delhi”* by **Hrishika and Binod Kumar**. The study has been done by applying a qualitative research methodology with primary data. The authors have explored the details of providing education and other related issues in children’s homes in the national capital territory of India. They suggest specific intervention practices that need to be considered regarding learning of these children as per their age and abilities.

Boominathan R, C Satheesh Kumar, C Arul Actovin and Greeshma. K, in their next article titled, ***“Socio-Economic Challenges and Perceived Stress Levels among Single Mothers”***, focuses on the need for specific strategies and interventions in the policy level to assist the disadvantages of women who raise their children single-handedly after losing their spouses. The need for a mother to have a stable mental state is an absolute necessity to bring up the future leaders of the country. The significance of this issue is heightened by the fact that most of the target beneficiaries themselves do not realise the need to take care of their mental health and remains confined to ensuring socio-economic empowerment.

The final article is titled, ***“Studying factors affecting job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst school teachers in UAE”*** is written by **Dharmesh Gadhavi, Sooraj Ramchandran, Amit Patel, Krupa Modi, and Dharmendra Thaker**. This is also a study based on primary data which tries to find out the factors affecting motivation of teachers in UAE. Apart from infrastructure and socio-cultural environment, factors like workloads and relation with administration significantly affected the job satisfaction and commitment of the teachers. The research conclusions had a great scope for policy and practice for enhancement of performance of teachers.

The following article is titled ***“Understanding menstrual hygiene management and disposal practices in Shimla City, Himachal Pradesh”*** is written by **Pooja Sharma and Rose Nembiakkim** on a sample selected from the state of Himachal Pradesh in India. Though the state has initiated, as elsewhere, policies and programmes to support the menstrual issues of women, the authors have realised that there may be a lot of scope for enhancement of the services by catering to the awareness and accessibility issues related to this. Most of the initiatives are aimed at improving the

utilisation issues. Also, there is a need to improve the practical inconveniences linked to menstrual health of women which encompasses most of the stigma and taboo related to this issue.

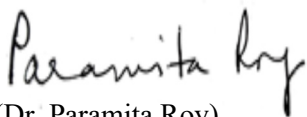
Annu Biswas has written an article on “*A Cross-sectional Survey on the Quality of Sex Education in India*”. It is based on primary data inclusive of LGBTQIA+ Community. The article emphasises the importance of quality sex-education particularly in schools because that has become very necessary for a healthy conceptual and practical understanding of sexual orientation of the self and showing of dignity of choice for others. The author’s findings present a large disparity in imparting awareness through sexual education across regions and concludes that a policy level change is necessary to initiate structural changes in this regard.

The next paper on “*National Education Policy and its Impact on Educated Unemployment in India*” by, **Maheshvari Yadav**, deals with the issue of unemployment particularly the youth who may be educated yet unemployed. The author relates this burning problem in India particularly with relation to National Education Policy, 2020. The author discusses the scope for skill-based hand-on-learning that needs to be incorporated in schools and colleges and can be very well accommodated in the NEP, 2020.

The articles have brought forward important areas in the social sector that requires a symbiotic relationship between the conclusions arrived from scientific research and the interventions in policy and practice. In publishing them the readers of this journal also become partners to the betterment of all systems that strive toward the well-being of society. I congratulate all

the authors and sincerely thank the reviewers and the entire faculty and staff from the department of Social Work, Visva-Bharati particularly Samit Dasgupta for taking pains to present to us the present form of the journal. Keep reading and the next regular issue will be coming soon!

In solidarity,



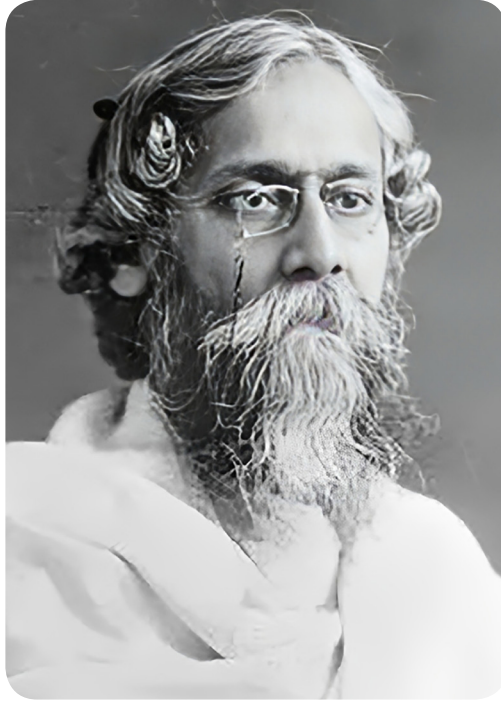
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Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)

"The highest education is that, which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence."

Rabindranath Tagore

Signature of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore

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A Study on National Education Policy-2020: Awareness among the Students of Saurashtra Region

*Thakkar Sagarkumar Bhikhalal¹
Meghanathi Priyanka Dineshgi²*

Abstract

Since education promotes social and economic advancement, a nation's school and college levels require a well-defined and futuristic education strategy. To make their educational systems efficient, various nations implement various stages at the high school and college levels throughout their life cycles, considering tradition and culture. Recently, the Indian government unveiled its new education strategy, which was developed in response to proposals made by a panel of experts led by Dr. Kasturirangan, a former chief of the Indian Space Research Agency (ISRO). The present study has been done with the aim of knowing the awareness of NEP-2020 among the students of the Saurashtra region. A sample of 108 students was selected as part of the study. Data was collected from students of the Saurashtra region using a structural questionnaire. The collected data were analysed by percentage analysis and Kruskal-Wallis test. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference between awareness about the benefits and disadvantages of NEP-2020 with education qualification and gender of respondent.

Keywords: National Education Policy-2020, Awareness, Saurashtra Region, Gender, Education Qualification

Introduction:

Education plays a significant part in the nation's growth as it affects many areas. As education is in concurrent list in constitution so both state and union can make laws on it. Before the new education policy was implemented, the education system of the nation was functioning according to the 1986's education policy. Keeping in view the changing needs of the time and to meet technical & skill-based needs; it became very necessary to reform the education policy of the country. NEP-2020 was designed to offer an excellent education required as per sustainable development goal No. 04 that India has pledged to achieve as per the United Nations by 2030. This education policy will be also helpful to India's expanding economy. The three main objectives of NEP are

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to improve quality, equity, and integrity in the learning system from schooling to university education. The NEP's fundamental tenets (NEP-2020), depends on the fundamental pillars of Equity, Quality, Access, Accountability and Affordability. These goals need physical infrastructure support and innovative learning centres to reintegrate drop outs into society, as well as track pupils and their academic progress, providing various pathways to education that involve both formal and informal education modes, and associations of advisers or qualified professionals. NEP offers an important chance to transform Indian education from "sorting and selection" to "human development," enabling each pupils to reach their full capacity. The NEP is perfectly suited to enhancing our educational system and establishing India as a center of global education.

Literature Review:

In their research researchers, (Kumar, Prakash, & Singh, 2022) have tried to analyse five pillars of NEP-2020 with United Nations sustainable development goals. This research work seeks to find out how compatible the various provisions of the NEP-2020 are with United Nations sustainable development goals. This research paper gives insight to how India should proceed cautiously to achieve the objectives. Researchers have found that there are some loopholes policy execution challenges which needs to address as soon as possible.

Present study has analysed an awareness of NEP-2020 in secondary school teachers. Data were gathered from secondary school teachers in the Mysore District utilising a questionnaire about NEP-2020 awareness. The data gathered is analysed with t-test and percentage analysis. The study's findings showed that 8.9% of teachers have a high level of awareness of NEP-2020, 90% of teachers have an average level of awareness and 0.1% of teachers have a low level of awareness of NEP-2020, indicating that secondary school teachers have a level of awareness of NEP-2020. Researcher (Sobha, 2022) has found there is no distinction between secondary school teachers who are male and female in terms of their knowledge of NEP-2020, nor is there one between public and private secondary school teachers in terms of their knowledge of NEP-2020, nor is there one between secondary school teachers who teach in rural and urban areas.

In the current study researchers (Amruta, Sharad, Nancy, & Viraj, 2022) have studied the stakeholders of several academic institutions located in Bangalore were considered as the population for the study, from them one hundred respondents were taken as sample. Primary and Secondary data were used in the

study. First-hand information was gathered using a standardised questionnaire and Secondary data was gathered from variety of online resources. Collected data have been analysed by the Chi-square test. The result found that there is a visible impact of National Education Policy-2020 on stakeholders of commerce and management discipline.

This research work has examined a study on the awareness of NEP-2020 among the school teachers in Jabalpur. The main objective of the research was to discover whether there was any significant difference between the awareness of NEP-2020 among the school educators based on the independent variable like the type of management and gender. The sample size was 50. The researcher (Roshan Lal, 2022) used a survey method to get data from the general public to study. The acquired data were evaluated by t-test to check the validity of the hypothesis and identify significant variations between the variables. The researcher found that there was a visible difference among school teachers on awareness of NEP-2020 on the basis of gender. Results from study indicate female school teachers have more awareness than male school teachers. Researcher also concludes that there was no difference among school teachers on awareness of NEP-2020 on the basis of management.

In the present study researchers have done primary data base research in which data were collected through questionnaire. Collected data were analysed through a t-test. The results of the study indicated that the government school and private school teachers have a moderate level of NEP-2020 awareness. Researchers (Sharma & Bala, 2022) have measured the level of awareness of the NEP-2020 is the same for male and female teachers. Teachers with and without experience have an equal level of knowledge of the 2020 national education policy. Teachers of both art and science are equally aware of the national educational policy 2020.

In this research, researchers (Mahendraprabu & Mookkiah, 2021), have studied the awareness of New Education Policy 2020 among the Primary School Teachers in the Dindigul. For this study researcher used a survey approach. 300 educators from primary schools were taken as samples through simple random sampling techniques. The finding of the study showed that 15% of male primary school teachers have a high level of awareness of gender, 63.1% of them have a moderate level, and 21.9% have a low level. In female primary teachers, 10% have a high level, 62.1% have a reasonable level and 27.9% have a low level of awareness and there was a significant difference between the awareness of New Education Policy-2020 primary school teachers concerning

gender and type of management.

Research Gap:

A research gap means there is a gap between the present and earlier research. For the current study, different literature has been analysed; most of them have been focused on the awareness of the NEP - 2020 among primary and secondary school teachers. But there is a research gap for analysing awareness among the students. So far no researcher has done study of the awareness of the new education policy in Saurashtra region.

Research Methodology:

Research Methodology provides a framework for carrying out research. The research approach listed below is used to arrive at the conclusion.

Title of the Study:

The title of the current study is as below:

“A STUDY ON NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY-2020: AWARENESS AMONG THE STUDENTS OF SAURASHTRA REGION”

Objectives of the Study:

- To identify awareness of NEP-2020 among the students of the Saurashtra region.
- To know the perception of NEP-2020 among the students of the Saurashtra region.
- To analyse the association between awareness of NEP-2020 and education level.
- To evaluate the association between awareness of NEP-2020 and the gender of respondents.

Hypotheses for the Study:

H_{01} : There is no significant difference between awareness about the benefits of NEP-2020 and educational level.

H_{02} : There is no significant difference between awareness about the disadvantages of NEP-2020 and educational level.

H_{03} : There is no significant difference between awareness about the benefits

of NEP-2020 and gender of respondents.

H_{04} : There is no significant difference between awareness about the disadvantages of NEP-2020 and gender of respondents.

Period of the Study:

Since the data was gathered in February 2023, the period is regarded as the study's research period.

Selection of Sample:

In this study, 108 respondents from the Saurashtra region have been taken as a sample. For selection of sample, the convenient sampling method has been used.

Data Collection Method:

This research work is totally based on the primary data which are collected by using structural questionnaire.

Data Analysis:

Factors Considered	Category	No. of Respondents	(%)
Age Groups	Below 20	09	8
	21-30	96	89
	Above 30	03	3
	Total	108	100
Educational Qualifications	Below HSC	02	2
	Graduate	46	43
	Post Graduate	52	48
	Other	08	7
	Total	108	100
Gender	Male	44	41
	Female	64	59
	Total	108	100
Stream	Arts	08	7
	Commerce	90	83
	Science	10	10
	Total	108	100
Residential Status	Urban Area	60	56
	Semi-urban Area	17	16
	Rural Area	31	28
	Total	108	100

Table:1 Characteristics of a Respondents			
Factors Considered	Category	No. of Respondents	(%)
Annual Family Income	Less than 1,00,000	46	43
	1,00,000 to 2,50,000	29	27
	2,50,001 to 5,00,000	23	21
	More than 5,00,000	10	9
	Total	108	100
Medium of Study	English	84	78
	Gujarati	24	22
	Hindi	00	00
	Total	108	100
Board of Study	State Board	96	89
	Central Board	12	11
	Total	108	100

(Source: Primary Data Survey)

Interpretation:

Table 1 represents the composition of various demographic variables. A total of 108 respondents were collected and examined. From the above table, we can interpret that out of the total respondents, most of the respondents are female when we see the gender of the respondents i.e., female is 59% while male is 41%. In terms of age category respondent are divided into three groups: 8% are under the age of 20.89% are between the age of 21 to 30, and 3% are over the age of 30. Respondents were classified into four categories based on their educational qualifications. Out of 108 respondents 2 are below HSC, 46 are in the Graduate group, 52 are postgraduates and 8 have other professional qualification. Out of the total respondents, 8 students are from the arts, 90 from commerce, and 10 from the science stream. Based on residential status, respondents were divided into 3 categories: 56% were from urban areas, 16% from semi-urban areas and 28% from rural areas. Out of 108 students, 84 students are from English while 24 students are from Gujarati medium. Based on the study board, 89% of students are from the state board and 11% from the central board.

The responses of the questionnaire specify the level of awareness about the new education policy among students. Out of 108 respondents, 86.1% heard about new education policy while 13.9% respondents had not heard about it at all. In addition, this study also evaluates sources from which the respondents get information about the new education policy. Out of 93 respondents 46.2% got the information from social media. 18.3% from government awareness channels, 33.3% from news channels, and the rest got the information from

newspapers or news channels.

This study also analyses the opinion of respondents about the new education policy. Out of total 93 respondents, 79.6% are in favour of the new education policy based on their opinion that it is good; the new education policy is medium in the view of 18.3% of respondents and bad in the perception of remaining 2.1%. And also indicates the perception of the new education policy. According to 93.5% of respondents, the future of students will be better because of the new education policy. While remaining 6.5% of respondents have a negative perception of the new education policy.

Table – 2: What is your opinion about the following benefits of the new education policy?

Particulars	No. of Respondents					Total	Responses in Percentage (%)					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD		SA	A	N	D	SD	
Student can set their goals at early stage	35	47	9	2	0	93	38	50	10	2	0	100
Students will have skill set necessary for the employment	32	46	14	0	1	93	34	50	15	0	1	100
Students can develop analytical skills	30	46	13	3	1	93	32	50	14	3	1	100
Students can opt creative combination of subject	31	46	13	3	0	93	33	50	14	3	0	100
NEP will create more opportunity for research work among student	36	33	16	4	4	93	39	36	17	4	4	100

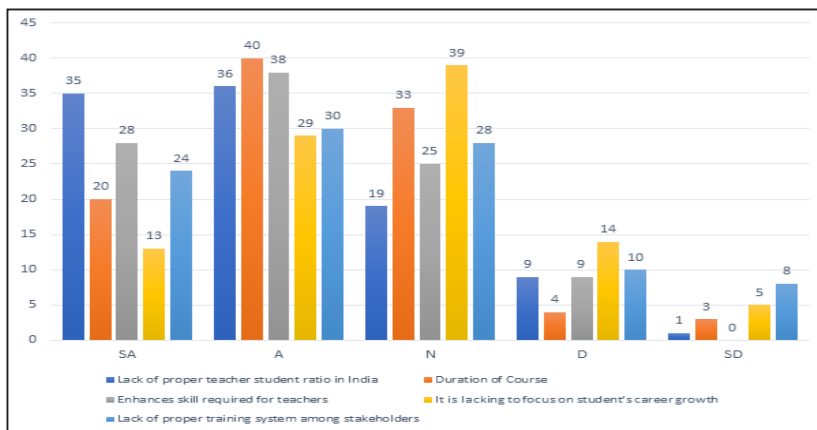
The above table indicates opinions about the benefits of the new education policy. From them, about 50% of respondents agreed that students can set their goals at an early stage under the new education policy. 46 respondents agree with the statement that the students would have the skill set required for the job, and 32 respondents strongly agree with this statement. Out of the total respondents, 50% agree with the benefits, like students can develop analytical skills and students can choose creative combinations of subjects. From the total 39% of respondents strongly believe that NEP will create more opportunity for research work among students, while 36% just agree and 17% neutral.

Table – 3: What is your opinion about the following disadvantages of the new education policy?

Particulars	No. of Respondents					Total	Responses in Percentage (%)					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD		SA	A	N	D	SD	
Lack of proper teacher student ratio in India	33	33	18	8	1	93	35	36	19	9	1	100
Duration of Course	18	37	31	4	3	93	20	40	33	4	3	100
Enhances skill required for teachers	26	35	23	9	0	93	28	38	25	9	0	100
It is lacking to focus on student's career growth	12	27	36	13	5	93	13	29	39	14	5	100
Lack of proper training system among stakeholders	23	28	26	9	7	93	24	30	28	10	8	100

(Source: Primary Data Survey)

Figure-1 Chart showing opinion about the following disadvantages of the new education policy



(Source: Primary Data Survey)

The above table and chart indicate opinions about the disadvantages of the new education policy. From the total respondents, 35% strongly believe that there is a lack of proper teacher-students ratio in India, while 36% are just agreeing

about it. In the second sentence, enhancing skills required for teachers in which 28% strongly agree while 38% just agree and 25% remains neutral. Out of 93 respondents, 23 strongly believe there is a lack of a proper training system among stakeholders, while 28 respondents just agree, 26 remain neutral and 9 are disagree about this disadvantage.

Table – 3: Rank the following objectives of the new education policy based on their effectiveness according to your opinion.

Particulars	Rank Given by Respondents					Total	Responses in Percentage (%)					Total
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	
Identifying, Recognising, and Fostering the special capabilities of each student	52	13	6	8	14	93	56	14	6	9	15	100
Develop Creativity and Critical thinking encouragement among students	16	47	9	13	8	93	17	51	9	14	9	100
Continuous evaluation of progress based on sustained research and regular evaluation	2	15	58	10	8	93	2	16	62	11	9	100
Large scaled use of technology in learning and teaching	10	13	10	44	16	93	11	14	11	47	17	100
Encouraging ethics and human & constitutional values among students	13	5	10	18	47	93	14	5	11	19	51	100

(Source: Primary Data Survey)

The above table shows the rank given by respondents on the effectiveness of the objectives of the new education policy. Out of total respondents, 56% of students give first rank to the objective of Identifying, Recognising, and Fostering the special capabilities of each student. 51% of respondent give the second rank to developing creativity and critical thinking encouragement among students, while 62% students give the third rank to the continuous evaluation of progress based on sustained research and regular examination. 47% of respondents give the fourth rank to large scaled use of technology in learning and teaching and 51% give the fifth rank to encouraging ethics and human constitutional values among students.

Hypotheses Testing:

In the present study, researchers have used Kruskal Wallis Test for the testing of hypothesis. In this study data have been collected by questionnaire or primary

data collection method, data in the present study are not normally distributed so researchers have used non-parametric Kruskal Wallis Test. This test is used to analyze significance difference in hypotheses.

Hypothesis No 1: H_0 = There is no significant difference between awareness about benefits of NEP-2020 and educational level.

Table – 4 Result of Kruskal Wallis Test

Test Statistics ^{a,b}					
	Adv1	Adv2	Adv3	Adv4	Adv5
Kruskal-Wallis H	2.477	.423	4.544	4.411	2.490
Df	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.479	.935	.208	.220	.477

Result: - There is no significant difference between awareness about benefits of NEP-2020 and educational level. Researcher failed to reject null hypothesis.

Hypothesis No 2 H_0 = There is no significant difference between awareness about disadvantages of NEP-2020 and educational level

Table – 5 Result of Kruskal Wallis Test

Test Statistics ^{a,b}					
	Disadv1	Disadv2	Disadv3	Disadv4	Disadv5
Kruskal-Wallis H	1.833	.536	2.423	1.834	1.903
Df	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.608	.911	.489	.607	.593

Result: - There is no significant difference between awareness about disadvantages of NEP-2020 and educational level. Researcher failed to reject null hypothesis.

Hypothesis No 3 H_0 = There is no significant difference between awareness about benefits of NEP-2020 and gender of respondents.

Table – 6 Result of Kruskal Wallis Test

Test Statistics ^{a,b}					
	Adv1	Adv2	Adv3	Adv4	Adv5
Kruskal-Wallis H	.065	2.063	1.473	2.428	.018
Df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.799	.151	.225	.119	.893

Result: - There is no significant difference between awareness about benefits of NEP-2020 and gender of respondents. Researcher failed to reject null hypothesis.

Hypothesis No 4 H_0 = There is no significant difference between awareness about disadvantages of NEP-2020 and gender of respondents.

Table – 7 Result of Kruskal Wallis Test

Test Statistics ^{a,b}					
	Disadv1	Disadv2	Disadv3	Disadv4	Disadv5
Chi-Square	.259	.622	.128	1.479	.325
Df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.611	.430	.721	.224	.569

Result: - There is no significant difference between awareness about disadvantages of NEP-2020 and gender of respondents. Researcher failed to reject null hypothesis.

Findings:

Out of total respondents, most of the respondents are aware of NEP-2020. Most of the respondents got information about NEP-2020 through social media. Majority of respondents have a good opinion about the NEP-2020. As per the response given by the respondents, about 88% are in favour that the students can set their goals at an early stage with the help of NEP-2020. Based on the present study, researchers found that out of 93 respondents, 61 believe that enhanced skills are required for teachers for proper implementation of NEP. In the effectiveness of objective of NEP-2020 section, majority of respondents give the first priority to objective of fostering, identifying and recognizing the unique capabilities of each student. Based on statistical tools, it was found that there is no significant difference between awareness about the benefits and disadvantages of NEP-2020 with education qualification and gender of the respondent.

Suggestions and Conclusion:

Government and Universities should organise seminars and conferences to raise awareness among the students and faculty members. Ministry of Education should notify to state government to add chapter on NEP-2020 in high school syllabus to create awareness during early age among students. Government should encourage NGOs and trusts working in education field to raise awareness for NEP-2020 among general masses of the country. In recent time, youth of the country is spending more time on various social media platforms so government agencies should advertise benefits and way

forward about NEP-2020 on social media platforms. Government should train teachers to enhance skills require for NEP-2020 among them. Government should recruit new teachers to decrease student-teacher ratio and to teach skill based syllabus to students.

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Awareness and Attitude of Teacher-educators towards Blended learning- in the light of NEP: 2020

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Abstract

Education is one of the arenas undergoing plethora of changes due to technological advancement, evolving needs, demand for quality education, dynamic job market, implementation of the new National Education Policy (NEP): 2020 and the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. NEP 2020 emphasizes on extensive technological interventions and innovative approaches at all levels of education and acknowledges the importance of blended learning in enhancing educational standards. Blended learning, a rapidly adopted innovation worldwide, amalgamates face-to-face traditional learning along with online technology-mediated instructions, enabling students to have flexible learning experiences, at their own pace, place, and convenience. Teacher-educators are the ones who prepares teachers, so it is essential for them to be first fully aware and have a welcoming attitude towards blended learning, only then can they equip the prospective teachers with the knowledge and the various modes of blended learning. The study aims to evaluate teacher-educators' awareness, understanding and attitude towards blended learning. A sample of 54 teacher-educators were randomly selected and data was collected through descriptive survey method. The analysis of data through descriptive and inferential statistical measures indicates that majority of teacher-educators are aware of and do possess a positive attitude towards blended learning. However, there is still a need to equip teacher-educators with additional knowledge and understanding of this learning approach. The paper recommends organizing seminars, conferences, and workshops to adorn teachers with the benefits of blended learning, which can facilitate NEP 2020's visions.

Keywords: Awareness, Attitude, Blended learning (BL), National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Teacher-educators

Introduction:

Education is the nourishment that prepares a learner for the life ahead and fosters a society's progress. India's education system, one of the oldest and most diverse in the world, is undergoing immense transmutation due to globalization, changing job structures, technological interventions, demand for

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quality education, impact of COVID-19, situational needs, and the enactment of National Education Policy (NEP)- 2020. Technological advancements have led to the emergence of web-based or e-learning, offering flexibility and broader access irrespective of location and time. Automation being the influential player now-a-days, compelled the whole education system, prompting stakeholders to embrace computer-based knowledge acquisition and transaction. While e-learning has gained prominence time and again, however it cannot entirely replace classroom learning. This raises the question: should we not advocate for the preservation of traditional classrooms alongside embracing online learning?

“The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms”, as pointed out by the National Education Commission (1964-66), accepts the importance of the classical classroom setting in preparing an ethically efficient lot of learners. In-person classroom interaction strengthens the teacher-student bond, facilitates immediate clarification of doubts, provides practical experiences, and fosters a collaborative learning community. Again, with need of time and situation, NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of integrating technology in all facets and levels of education, aiming to establish a technologically advanced society and a globally competitive Indian education system. The recent pandemic played a cupid in achieving this vision of NEP 2020. While disrupting the education system, COVID-19 played a significant role in accelerating the digitalization of education. Previously Indian schools relied entirely on face-to-face teaching, but the pandemic forced a sudden shift towards full online instructions. This transition presented numerous challenges for both students and teachers who had to reimagine their approach to a solely internet-dependent education and adapt without adequate training or preparation. There was a huge paradigm shift in the mode of acquiring knowledge. Resultantly, a blended learning approach emerged, combining the strength of offline and online modes, while mitigating their drawbacks. Drawing lessons from the pandemic, the education system advocated a world of blended learning, to arm schools against future similar situations.

Blended learning (BL) refers to the integration of face-to face offline interaction with online tech-mediated activities (Norberg et al., 2011; Graham, 2006). It is an exceptionally flexible and innovative teaching program that effectively amalgamates conventional teaching methods with e-learning, thereby creating an interactive yet advanced learning environment. Though the terms ‘Hybrid learning,’ ‘Mixed learning,’ or ‘Flipped Classroom’, are used interchangeably with blended learning, but it should be noted that there are significant differences between these learning modes. As per Owston et.al. (2008), BL involves

aggregation of traditional experiences where learners physically coexist, along with online experiences where students aren't always in the same location or at the same time. In other words, it encompasses “any formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace” (Horn & Staker, 2015, p. 34).

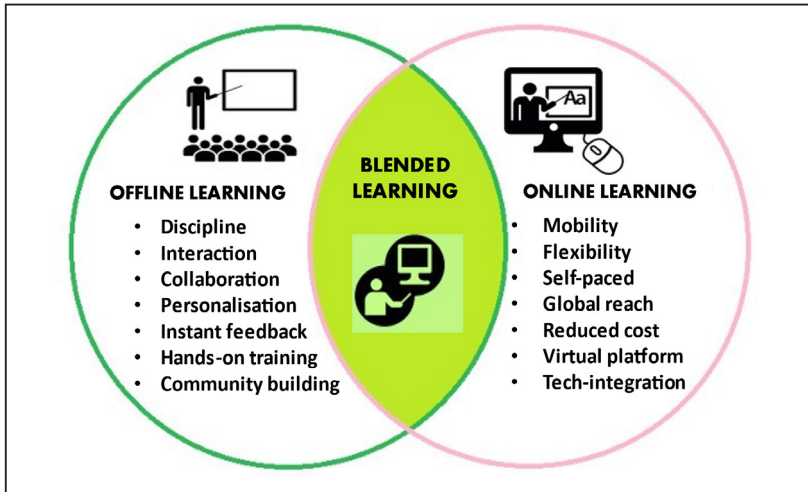


Figure 1: Blended learning amalgamates the two best methods of learning

Figure 1 illustrates the idea of blended learning, which merges the advantages of both offline and online components, and thus have emerged as the most coveted and innovative learning approach in recent times. Given its numerous advantages, blended learning is correctly considered the ‘new normal’ in the education sector (Dziuban et. Al., 2018; Megahed & Ghoneim, 2022).

In a concept brief on Blended mode of teaching and learning, released by University Grants Commission (UGC) in 2021, a comprehensive framework was given, outlining the expected roles of students and teachers, possible scenarios, models, and information and communication technology (ICT) tools to facilitate a seamless transition among the teacher led instruction and ICT-based learning. The document acknowledges that BL enhances student involvement, interaction, and accomplishments compared to other learning methods. It mandates all higher education institutions to adopt a 40:60 ratio of online and offline delivery.

NEP 2020 envisions a transformative education, with the features of being learner-centric, flexible, technologically sound, and sustainable in the long-term.

It advocates multifaceted approach to knowledge acquisition, including face-to-face, online, virtual, distance learning, as well as multi-modal methodologies like blended learning. The policy emphasizes the operation of blended learning in K-12 schools to higher educational institutions, to enhance the quality of instructions through adequate use of technology and value-endorsed human interactions. Blended learning offers customized and interactive online experiences, while the in-person-facilitated instructions promise humanistic features like real-time interaction, a sense of belonging and security, motivation, encouragement, and peer support. Teachers play a crucial role in understanding students' need, developing trust and providing individual support, which is challenging in a fully online learning environment. The policy advocates for learner autonomy in determining the timing, content, and location of their learning. While NEP 2020 blueprint placed the learners as the pivotal stakeholder, still teachers remain the masters of the classroom, being responsible for creating optimal learning ecosystems.

As stated by NCTE (1998-99) in their annual report: "Teachers contribute to the growth and development of every individual and enrich every human activity to link it with the enhancement of quality of life" (p. 5). Effective teacher support and scaffolding are essential for guiding students, promoting task effort, completion and facilitating students' achievement (van de Pol et al., 2015). Teachers are aware of each student's learning curve and so are accountable for the smooth progress of the educational process at any stage. New technologies or fancy electronic gadgets can surely complement the teachers in enhancing the learning experience but can never substitute them. To address the challenges of the current digital age and facilitate a smooth transition between the offline and online modes, educators require to be aware, competent, and well-trained to balance between the different methods used in their classroom. Teachers must strive towards self-improvement, take self-interest, be passionate about using innovative learning approaches, be knowledgeable about blended learning models and efficiently choose them according to time, situation and learner types. However, a study by Jagadeesh and Manjula (2022), highlights teacher's lack of clarity and inadequate ICT competency as major barriers towards implementing blended learning.

Teacher education encapsulates the policies, procedures, and provisions aimed at equipping (prospective) teachers with necessary content knowledge, pedagogical practices, attitude, and skills necessary for constructive teaching and learning in various educational situations. Awareness brings clarity, and in this line of thinking, it is crucial for teacher education programs to

adequately train teachers in utilizing new technologies to meet the demands and expectations of 21st-century learners. This highlights the importance of investing sufficiently in the preparation of teachers who play indirect role in building our nation.

Review of literature:

Blended learning which combines face-to-face classroom teaching with web-based technology-mediated instructions, has been extensively discussed and researched for over a decade. The percentage of online course content can vary from 30-79% depending on learner preferences and course requirements (Allen et al., 2007). Researchers on different aspects of blended learning found it more productive and effective than pure conventional or pure e-learning modes (Singh, 2003). In the 21st century Indian context, blended learning offers ultimate flexibility to students and thus is more legitimate than conventional learning (Bordoloi et al., 2021). BL also improves learning retention, completion rates, and learner satisfaction (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). Adding to it, this innovative mixed instructional methodology nurtures active participation and a robust feeling of community among students (Rovai & Jordan, 2004). A combination of virtual and in-class learning has seen to enhance student outcomes and increase access to higher education (Means et al., 2010).

Several reports indicate a high level of awareness and optimistic perception of blended learning among both the students and teachers (Aladwan et al., 2018; Ali, 2021; Huang, 2016), which is crucial for its adoption in our education system (Alharthi, 2016; Opoku & Kuranchie, 2015). While teachers' attitudes are crucial in employing technology-driven education (Krishnakumar & Rajesh, 2011), Khalid (2009) added that negative attitudes act as critical obstacles to integrating technology in the classroom. Huang (2016) found that students are generally optimistic with blended approach, and they acknowledge the interdependency of face-to-face and digital learning. Adding to that learners' perception varied significantly based on their courses and levels of achievements (Huang, 2016), with high achievers finding blended courses more satisfying, engaging, and convenient compared to low-achieving students (Owston et al., 2013). Mahato et al., (2021) confirmed average level of attitude towards blended learning among postgraduate students of Purulia, West Bengal, with no significant difference with respect to the different variables taken, except for the streams they were pursuing. Anderson et al. (2018) observed statistically significant enrichment in the teacher's transactional process, student's state level achievement scores, self-esteem, and mindset towards learning through

the adoption of blended instruction, particularly benefitting economically weaker section and female students. The teachers, being potent learners, were motivated to consider new ways of bonding with students and re-evaluate their ways of teaching to intensify the teaching learning experience.

Twigg's (2003) blended mode of scientific redesigned models achieved the aim of quality improvement and cost reduction of learning. Teacher's active engagement and the provision of technology are key factors for successful implementation of these hybrid learning programs. Twigg (2003) stressed that faculties are responsible and accountable for amplifying, redressing, and upgrading the online existing learning materials, and, along with effective feedback from stakeholders can contribute to a feasible quality improvement of the teaching learning process. Efficiently trained teachers with the right attitude, optimistic mindset, and scientific temperament are essential for this approach, while inefficient, apathetic, and uninterested teachers adversely affect learning (Lalima & Dangwal, 2017). Teachers as active resource persons and facilitators of learning must be prepared to handle technological disruption that can happen during blended learning and possess the expertise to handle such situations (Jagadeesh & Manjula, 2022). A study by Suri and Sharma (2016) affirmed the ardency of Punjab university teacher in mixing e-learning with their current teaching methods. The attitude of teachers is crucial for implementation of blended learning and achieving educational objectives (Larsen, 2012). Despite the additional time and effort required than delivering long-established courses, instructors were interested to develop and use blended techniques in their course (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002). But in another study by Brooks (2018), revealed uncertainty among academic faculties about adopting blended learning, pinnacling the need of trainings, resources, and support to effectively implement this teaching mode (Al-Saleh, 2018).

Faculties worldwide accept that students learn more, excels in exams, produce better works, and engage in meaningful discussions in a blended environment rather than in a typical classroom setting (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002). Jagadeesh and Manjula (2022) endorses the importance of training teachers on the concepts, components, and strategies of blended ways of knowledge transaction. Teachers should be taught how to brew diverse learning experiences and shift from one mode to another judiciously, considering class type and individual differences and thus execute the pivotal role in determining what, when and how much to blend in a blended learning course. NEP 2020 emphasizes empowering teachers to create high-quality learning resources, authorizing and positioning them at the forefront of knowledge transaction, which can make blended learning a

success. Teachers' awareness and perception of BL is extensively investigated across various demographic variables, revealing more awareness among urban and secondary school teachers compared to rural and higher secondary teachers respectively (Vanan, 2020). However, despite possessing a high level of awareness, the learners of a teacher education institution surprisingly possess a moderate understanding of the different facets of blended learning (Olusanjo et al., 2017).

Extensive research works are already conducted on blended learning with reference to teachers and students, but limited empirical studies exist in the domain of teacher education and on teacher-educators. The esteem of blended teacher development programs is high due to their cost effectiveness, flexibility, and ability to develop a collaborative teacher learning community (Kennedy, 2021). Blended learning facilitates the formation of a symbiotic teachers' community through face-to-face meetings which are an intrinsic part of blended learning, while internet-based content provides in-service teachers with the convenience of completing courses from home or their place of occupation. Utilizing the blended model is an appropriate and effective strategy for conducting teacher development programs.

Blended learning- an enabler to accomplish NEP: 2020 goals:

Blended learning has high scope in achieving NEP 2020's visions. It has proven to not only improve exam results but also diminish dropout rates (López-Pérez et al., 2011) which employs to achieve NEP 2020's target of increasing retention at all levels of education. The policy epitomes the students as the most dominant and crucial stakeholder of education, and blended learning is hailed as the most powerful approach for achieving a personalized and competency based authentic student-centered learning (Horn & Staker, 2015). The learning cannot be given the tag of blended learning if it does not include the student control factor. By granting students flexibility to choose whether they want to learn on-campus, in a brick-and-mortar classroom or through any web-based content from home, blended learning can help to attain equality, diversity, and inclusivity, which are key priorities of NEP 2020 to ensure quality education and outcomes. All learners are equally positioned as active pursuers of knowledge at their own personalized setting, while all stakeholders of education cherish the promised flexibility or freedom as being delivered by BL. Blended learning can be a boon to physically impaired students by enabling them to attend classes virtually, along with their peers, thereby promoting inclusive education. Wide use of technology in BL strives towards achieving the NEP 2020 goal

of achieving 100 percent literacy. Increasing Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 50% at higher education level being a significant objective of NEP 2020, blended learning is a promising breakthrough in bringing maximum students from diverse backgrounds and geographical locations to the same platform along with keeping the social, communal face-to-face component of learning intact. Hybrid way of knowledge transition with its colossal benefits assures quality enhancement, provides equal treatment to all learners, affirms gender parity, and caters the needs of inclusive education. Blended learning also fosters collaborative, interactive and effectual learner communities, fulfilling NEP 2020's objective of uplifting community participation. NEP 2020 involving pedagogy objectifies discussion-based teaching along with a value-oriented education, which is assured by the face-to-face facility of the BL scheme. This integrated approach ensures enjoyable and meaningful learning experience which is already being loved by today's learners. Overall, blended learning with all its efficacy, endeavors achieving the NEP 2020's vision of a digitalized, equal, inclusive, and diverse Indian education system.

Rationale of the study:

Research indicates that both students and lecturers are conscious and appreciative of blended learning, but are our teacher-educators cognizant or possess the required attitude towards this approach? Teacher-educators, who chiefly determines the qualities of teachers, need to be first willing and be competent enough to adopt blended approach in their teaching, only then can they equip the future teachers with blended learning methods. Successful implementation of blended learning necessitates well-skilled teacher-educators with adequate awareness, open perspective, and the right attitude towards accepting change. Henceforth, assessing the awareness, attitude, and sources of awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators becomes crucial in understanding their readiness for execution of this novel approach to learning.

Objectives:

- To detect the source of awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators.
- To study the awareness and attitude of teacher-educators towards blended learning.
- To study the awareness and attitude of teacher-educators towards blended learning based on gender (male / female) and the type of college (government / private) they are working in.

Hypotheses:

1. H_{01} : Awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators would be high.
2. H_{02} : Attitude of teacher-educators towards blended learning would be positive.
3. H_{03} : There would be no significant difference in awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators based on gender (male / female) and the type of college (government / private) they are working in.
4. H_{04} : There would be no significant difference in attitude towards blended learning among teacher-educators based on gender (male / female) and the type of college (government / private) they are working in.

Methodology:

Study design:

Based on the problem, the study was descriptive in nature adopting a quantitative approach, and data was collected through survey method, to understand the perception of teacher-educators towards the new learning mode i.e., blended learning. Awareness and attitude scales were administered among participants and the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency, mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and inferential statistic like t-test. GraphPad QuickCals app was used to perform all the calculations.

Participants:

The population of the study comprised of male and female teacher-educators from government and private teacher-education colleges in Jamshedpur (Jharkhand). A sample of 54 teacher-educators were randomly selected, ensuring representation of variables, viz. gender and institution type (Table 1). The study was done in a post-COVID situation where the pandemic protocols were still being followed, so researchers prepared Google form questionnaire and circulated it through online mode among all teacher-educators in Jamshedpur, totaling 80 in number. Only 54 (67.5%) copies were returned, which is considered a good return rate (Babbie, 1990).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of teacher-educators’ demographics used in this study

Demographic variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	20	37
	Female	34	63
Type of College	Government	27	50
	Private	27	50

Tools:

The awareness and attitude scale towards blended learning were adapted from Olusanjo et al. (2017) and modified by the researchers with the help of experts. The experts comprising of professors at different universities confirmed on the content validity of the tool. The reliability was checked using SPSS version 20, where the Cronbach’s alpha value came as $\alpha=0.72$, so the internal consistency of the tool was accepted (Hair et al., 2006).

Scoring procedure:

The awareness scale on blended learning had 10 statements and were assessed on a 3-point rating scale- Yes, Maybe and No, which were scored as 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The attitude scale towards blended learning consisted of 25 statements and were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. Positive statements were scored as 5,4,3,2,1 for options from: Strongly agree to Strongly disagree, while negative statements were scored in reverse.

Analysis of data:

Table 2. Sources of Awareness of Teacher-educators on Blended learning

Source of awareness on Blended learning among teacher-educators	Teacher education course	32.1%
	Internet / Online	52.8%
	Seminar/ Conference/workshop	22.6%
	Print media	11.3%
	Colleagues	5.7%
	Others	3.8%

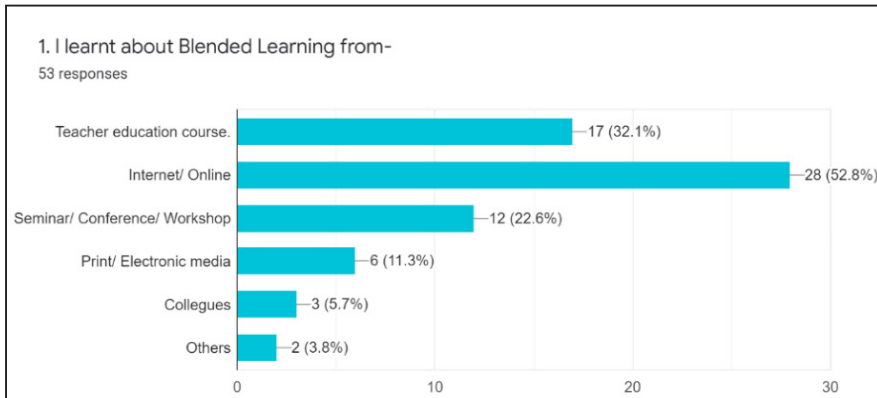


Figure 2. Bar-diagram showing sources of awareness of teacher-educators towards blended learning

Results obtained through percentage analysis (Table 2, Figure 2) illustrates Internet or online media to be effective in creating awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators, followed by the teacher education course and then by seminars and conferences.

Testing of Hypotheses:

H₀₁: Awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators would be high.

Table 3. Percentage of teacher-educators showing awareness on blended learning

Variables	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness of blended learning among teacher-educators	Yes	392	72.86%
	Unsure	69	12.82%
	No	77	14.31%

Sample size= 54, Total items= 10, Total responses received= 538

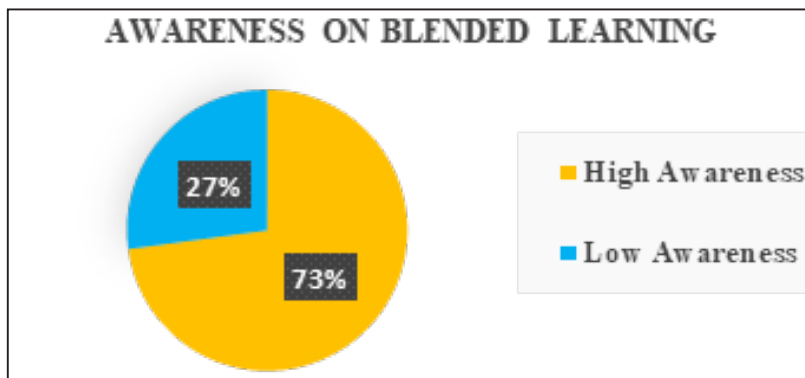


Figure 3. Pie-diagram representing Teacher-educators’ awareness on blended learning

Frequency and percentage analysis (Table 3) showed that in 72.86% cases teacher-educators were highly aware, in 27.13% cases they possessed a low degree of awareness, while in 12.82% cases respondents were not self-assured on their knowledge or understanding about blended learning. Therefore, awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators were high.

Table 4. Descriptive data of Awareness of teacher-educators towards blended learning

Category	N	Mean	SD
Teacher-educators	54	25.74	2.99

Total score = 30

Table 4 shows the Mean score and S.D of the data, so the resulting awareness score was 25.74 out of a total score of 30 (10 X 3; 10 items and 3 being the highest score for each construct as per scoring on a 3-point rating scale) which is equal to 85.8%. This indicated a relatively high awareness level towards blended learning among teacher-educators, therefore accepting H_{01} .

H_{02} : Attitude of teacher-educators towards blended learning would be positive.

Table 5. Descriptive data of Attitudes of teacher-educators towards blended learning

Category	N	Mean	SD
Teacher-educators	54	89.11	6.13

Total score = 125

Table 5 shows the Mean score and S.D of the data, so the resulting attitude score was 89.11 out of a total score of 125 (25 constructs X 5, the highest score for each construct, as per scoring on a 5-point Likert scale) which is equal to 71.3%. This indicated a relatively positive attitudes towards blended learning among teacher-educators, therefore accepting H_{02} .

H_{03} : There would be no significant difference in awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators based on gender and the type of college they are working in.

Table 6. Awareness of teacher-educators towards blended learning based on the variables gender and type of college they are working in

	Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Awareness on Blended learning	Male	20	26.55	3.32	1.24	Not significant at 0.05
	Female	34	25.53	2.67		
	Government College	27	22.11	6.29	0.14	Not significant at 0.05
	Private College	27	21.89	5.69		

At degree of freedom (df) = 52, t- table value = 2.01 (0.05)

Mean, S.D and t-value of the data were calculated (Table 6). The mean awareness of male teachers was 26.55 which was slightly higher from their female counterparts whose mean awareness was 25.53. Again, government college teacher-educators had a slightly higher mean awareness score of 22.11 compared to private college teacher-educators with a mean awareness score of 21.89. The t-value for gender and institutional type were 1.24 and 0.14, respectively, which were both below the table t-value of 2.01 at 0.05 level of significance with 52 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there exists no significance difference in the level of awareness among male, female and government, private college teacher-educators towards blended learning, thus null hypothesis (H_{03}) gets accepted.

H_{04} : There would be no significant difference in attitude towards blended learning among teacher-educators based on gender and the type of college they are working in.

Table 7. Attitude of teacher-educators towards blended learning based on gender and type of college they are working in.

	Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Attitude on Blended learning	Male	20	91.65	6.92	1.92	Not significant at 0.05
	Female	34	88.26	5.88		
	Government College	27	90.93	5.80	1.88	Not significant at 0.05
	Private College	27	87.30	8.16		

At degree of freedom (df) = 52, t-table value = 2.01 (0.05)

As per Table 7, the mean attitude score of male and female teacher-educators were 91.65 and 88.26, while of government and private teacher-educators were 90.93 and 87.30 respectively. Although the male and government teacher-educators had slightly higher mean scores compared to their counterparts, but the calculated t-values of 1.92 and 1.88 were both lower than the critical t-value of 2.01 at df 52 and at 0.05 level of significance.

So, there exists no significant difference in attitudes towards blended learning between male and female teacher-educators, as well as government and private teacher-educators. Hence the null hypothesis (H_{04}) was accepted.

Results:

1. Internet and online media are the most accessed source for awareness on blended learning among teacher educators.
2. Awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators is high.
3. Attitude of teacher-educators towards blended learning is positive.
4. There is no significant difference in awareness on blended learning among teacher-educators based on gender (male / female) and the type of college (government / private) they are working in.
5. There is no significant difference in attitude towards blended learning among teacher-educators based on gender (male / female) and the type of college (government / private) they are working in.

Discussions:

As previous research on blended learning often overlooked teacher-educators’ perception, so this study provides essential inputs that can be a deciding factor on how this learning mode will be perceived and implemented in teacher

education programs. The study's findings may be useful to policy makers and curriculum developers of teacher-education courses who intend to adopt blended teaching and assessment as a regular practice in the institutions.

- In today's technological era, it is undeniable that the internet holds immense utility in every phase of our life. So, internet or online media being the most crucial sources of awareness on BL among teacher-educators is justifiable. Given the urgency created by the pandemic and the guidelines set forth by NEP 2020, teacher-educators have surely encountered the phrase "blended learning" while browsing the internet or reading relevant articles. However, it is imperative to ensure that every teacher-educator receives comprehensive knowledge about the intricacies, methods, advantages, and disadvantages of blended learning, which can be achieved through faculty development programs.
- The results unveiled high awareness on blended learning among the teacher-educators. The finding aligns with a study by Olusanjo et al. (2017), where majority of college lecturers possessed high level of awareness towards blended learning. NEP 2020 prompted the education sector to incorporate technology at all levels and the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of blended or hybrid mode to comply with safety protocols. Given the current circumstances, where blended learning is considered the most essential and suitable approach, it is obvious that majority of teacher-educators are at least aware of BL and its pros and cons. This awareness will create opportunities for positive attitudes towards the approach, and requisite its implementation. However, knowledge gaps, misconceptions, and barriers were also identified that can hinder adoption of blended learning. To address these concerns and increase awareness among teacher-educators, targeted communication materials, workshops, or training sessions can be utilized. Understanding the theoretical foundations of blended learning, teacher-educators will identify its relevance to the educational reforms proposed in NEP 2020.
- Teacher-educators were found to possess a positive attitude towards BL. This result is supported by previous studies where teachers along with expressing positive attitude towards BL (Al-Saleh, 2018), showed favourability towards incorporating e-learning into classroom practises (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002; Suri & Sharma, 2016). After the implementation of NEP 2020 and due to the need of the pandemic situation, academic institutions adopted blended mode of teaching, keeping in mind its effectiveness in increasing the quality of education and deliver learning

irrespective of place, pace, and time. So, teacher-educators are also positive in their attitude towards this new normal of the education system and are willing to teach its features to prospective teachers. Attitude of teacher-educators is an important psychological construct that is crucial for successful implementation of BL in the classroom.

- No significant difference exists in the awareness of teacher-educators towards BL based on their gender and type of college they are working in. This result is supported by Vanan's (2020) findings where government and self-financed schoolteachers of Madurai district had similar level of awareness on blended learning. Teacher-educators irrespective of their gender or of their workplace, receive similar education and training in their teacher-education course and are equally qualified. Moreover, in the world of competition, both genders are motivated to update themselves with the latest teaching approaches and technologies, aligning with the NEP 2020 recommendations, and to address the needs of the current situation.
- The findings showed no significant difference in the attitude level of teacher-educators towards BL based on their gender and type of college they are working in, which is consistent with other empirical studies showing teacher-educators irrespective of their genders having same kind of attitude towards e-learning (Suri & Sharma, 2016) as well as blended learning (Ayasrah et al., 2022). A positive attitude towards BL will help teachers address challenges easily that may rise during its implementation. Teacher-educators are dedicated towards improving the quality of education and are enthusiastic about incorporating diverse learning styles and approaches according to the needs of learners and situations. So, regardless of gender or college type, they are positive towards the unification of face-to-face interaction with technology-mediated instructions.
- Understanding the current state of teacher-educators' knowledge and perceptions, the article highlights concerned areas that require attention and improvement. There is need for training in using blended learning strategy, as a significant percentage (57%) of teacher-educators admitted to lacking training in this area. Despite a high level of awareness and positive attitude, they confessed lacking detailed knowledge on this approach. To bridge these gaps, teacher-educators need to be equipped with the knowledge about various facets of blended learning and given hands-on training on running a class through blended mode.

Recommendations:

The investigators recommend future research in different contexts to investigate more about the potential of blended learning, for its rapid ratification and implementation in all academic courses. The NEP 2020 recommends the use of blended mode in teacher education and in higher education but lacks detailed information on its implementation. To address this gap, the policy should be reformed, emphasizing on the strategies and ways to implement this novel approach at all stages of education. The new National Curriculum Framework should also include provisions for comprehensive blended learning, enabling educators to utilize innovative pedagogical practices and cater to diverse learner needs, promoting active engagement and holistic skill development. It is suggested that the curriculum for teacher education should be revised to include module and courses that specifically addresses blended learning pedagogies. Integrating blended learning concepts into the curriculum will help teacher-educators understand the theoretical foundations and practical aspects of this approach. Various initiatives like discussion forums, awareness programs, conferences and seminars should be organized in all higher learning institutions, to raise awareness and encourage a favorable attitude among all stakeholders towards blended learning. Furthermore, educational institutions should ensure they have sufficient resources, technology, and ICT facilities as they are the foremost requirements to support the implementation of blended learning. Lastly, adequate budget allocation is necessary for making the institutions NEP ready.

Conclusion:

With the pandemic's uncertainty and the fast growth of technology, blended mode has gained more significance, from business to schools, and in all spheres of life. Blended learning has the potential to address the challenges faced by the current education system in India, offering numerous benefits. It is the predominant learning style, aligning with the 21st century needs, which can help achieve NEP 2020's vision of establishing a digitalized Indian education system while upholding value-based education. Blended learning is also efficacious in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity, which are important goals of NEP 2020, and thus can be considered a sustainable learning model for the long term. To successfully implement blended learning and revolutionize the education system, it is crucial to cultivate a positive attitude and raise awareness among teacher-educators, teachers, students, and other stakeholders of the education system. This study is a way forward

towards empowering teacher-educators with necessary knowledge and tools to incorporate blended approaches in their teaching, aligning their practices with the goals and aspirations of NEP 2020.

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Changing Role of Teachers in NEP 2020: A Study of Schools in Jharkhand

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Abstract

Education prepares society to foster and unleash the brainpower for a fresher, more expansive perspective. Changes present difficulties and open up opportunities for improvement. To create insight, innovation strongly depends on creative modification. The Indian Education Ministry has introduced the National Education Policy 2020 to replace the antiquated and previous National Policy on Education that was drafted in 1986 and transform the current educational system. This is the only significant transformation of the educational framework since independence, after the educational policies of 1968 and 1986.

To bridge the educational achievement gap between the present state of education and the eminent learning that must have the qualities of being research-oriented, flexible, yet enjoyable, which work for the holistic growth of an individual with critical thinking, NEP 2020 has laid out several reforms in polar opposite areas, from school to university level. NEP 2020 highlights the value of teachers in the current educational environment. To implement the revolutionized educational policy, the main role is played by the teachers. The impact of the policy change has made it extremely difficult for this area of the educational system to bring about the anticipated adjustments. Through a case study of schools in Jharkhand to achieve the designated goals per NEP 2020, this research attempts to examine the evolving role of teachers in India. To learn about the teacher's dynamic involvement with the most recent National Education Policy, exploratory, descriptive, and analytical methodologies have been applied. The survey approach has been used to gather primary data. The samples were obtained through the non-probability convenience sampling method. Teachers from a variety of Jharkhand-based CBSE and ICSE schools have been included in the study's sampling components.

Keywords: National Education Policy, reforms, teachers; changes, role, teacher-student relationship, impact, global development

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Introduction:

A teacher connotes a person who enlightens and trains an individual to become a knowledgeable person. A teacher can influence young people for the benefit of future generations. Their responsibilities do not only stick to a confined classroom or school; they're much more than that. A teacher has played so many roles in the learning world since ancient times. Children's moral and spiritual development, as well as scholastic improvement, were part of their responsibilities. Throughout the past few decades, teachers' roles have undergone a significant transformation. The demands of students, families, and communities vary as the world develops, and teachers' roles must adapt to fulfill those requirements. The purpose of this article is to look into how teachers' roles are changing to fit the needs of students and society at large.

Ever since the ancient period, our country has been known for its prosperous heritage. During the ancient age, teachers played a significant role in Indian society. Teachers were called Gurus. A guru had an eminent place in society and was treated as God. In India, teachers are considered supreme. There is a shloka that has been taken from the Vishnu Sahasranama; it is a prayer to the ultimate teachers that is used to express respect and reverence for the supremacy of knowledge and to the teachers who impart it—

*Gurur Brahma gurur Vishnu,
Gurur Devo Maheshwaraha,
Guru Saakshaat Para Brahma,
Tasmai Shri Guruve Namaha.*

Education in ancient India was teacher-centered. Pupils used to follow the orders of their Guru and live at Gurukul, or the Guru's Ashram, to get an education. Education was not limited to the four walls of classrooms; it was imparted in a natural environment. If we take the instance of the Mahagrantha Mahabharata, Guru Dronacharya was the Guru of Kauravas and Pandavas, and all of them were getting an education in Guru Ashram, where they did all the work of their Guru and blindly followed their Guru's instructions.

In ancient times, the teacher was not only a subject expert, but he used to be an inspirational person who brought about changes in the behavior of students and taught them according to their ability to learn. There are many examples of such teachers. Kautilya and Chandragupta were two of them, where Guru understood the potential of his disciple and trained him to become a king. That's why it was said that a guru is someone who brings us out of darkness towards

enlightenment. The teacher’s role in ancient times was full of responsibilities. They were expected to make the learners have a well-developed and well-rounded personality who is capable of thinking of solutions to problems with empathy. The endeavor was not only to impart education but to ethically and spiritually enlighten them. The teachers used to impart the sanctimonious way of living life in temples and gurukuls.

The roles and functions of a teacher are still the same but have taken on a different shape. It has become child-centered due to the change in the education system. The education system in India has undergone several transformations but has always aimed to boost the knowledge and discipline of the students. The education system has not only changed quite a few times but has also been off the cuff according to the change in time and has involved digitization into it to enhance the teaching culture, which has been distinct in a blog by Priti Bhatnagar by defining the role of a teacher in respect of their role in the modern age—

A teacher deals with the living entities full of emotions, possessing uniqueness in their learning, working, and expressions. Due to digitization and computer technology world is shrinking in terms of time, space, and information dissemination. Information is available with a click, and knowledge is served as a delicious cuisine to be grabbed and consumed according to the taste, appetite, time, place, pace; it is pretty evident that the archaic role to only transmit knowledge has just become rudimentary.

The following image from a blog on Medium by Imran Topu Sardar carries the contrast between the role of the traditional teacher and the 21st century teacher, which clearly describes the change in the role of teachers from the ancient age to the current age—

	Traditional Teacher / Learner	21st Century Teacher / Learner
1	Sit and Get	Move and Experiment
2	Learner as receptor	Learner as initiator
3	Expectation save for all	Students Movigates Choices
4	Teachers Tell	Students Construct Meaning
5	Product Oriented	Process and Product Oriented
6	Poper/ Pencil Driven	Technology Enhanced Learning and Multimedia Driven
7	Explicit Directions	No Limits
8	Isolated Learning Private	Shared Globally Collaborators
9	Complaint	Problem Solver

	Traditional Teacher / Learner	21st Century Teacher / Learner
10	Answers are primary	Questions are primary
11	Closed System	Open System
12	Stayed the same	Changes Constant ly
13	Knows facts	Inquirer
14	There is a right way	No right way
15	Wait for results	Immediate Gratification

Source: www.edu.in

Literature Review:

Teacher Quality: National Education Policy 2020 (2021) compares NEP 2020 to teacher standards and education.

Kalyani, P. has rightly quoted in an article named An Empirical Study on NEP 2020 [National Education Policy] with Special Reference to the Future of Indian Education System and Its Effects on the Stakeholders (2020) about several questions currently trending on social media and analyzed them to raise awareness about NEP 2020 and its potential effects in the future.

In the paper Inventive Teaching in Smart Classrooms with Special Reference to NEP 2019 (2020), Mathur, A., discussed the vital inventive teaching abilities that teachers must possess to realize the ideal classroom arrangement offered by NEP 2019.

The article, "NEP 2019: Features of NEP and Role of Teacher", (2020) by Sakhare, S.J. explores the relationship between instructors and National Education Policies. Also, it analyzes the function of instructors and some NEP 2019 observations.

The article The Changing Role of the Teacher (2020), written by Finley, S.J., examines how instructors are putting reform ideas into practice, which depends on their learning. Through their own, others, and their own efforts, teachers make meaning of the policies and practices that are supported. It aids in enhancing the processes of teaching and learning. It consists of a project that aids teachers in developing an all-encompassing teaching and learning strategy.

Another article "NEP 2020 AND ICT in Teacher Education," (2020) by Usou, R., & Joseph, S. involves the usage of ICT in teacher training in B.Ed. colleges in Nagaland, with some suggestions and challenges in putting forward the execution of ICT in teacher education in Nagaland.

Gupta, B.L., & Patel, T. in their article Faculty Capacity Building for Effective Implementation of NEP 2020, present ways to prepare Indian educators to deliver education as per the new NEP 2020 and also highlight the needs of the policy.

Bhadawkar, H., and Banerjee, M., in Pre-Service Teachers' Views on the National Education Policy 2020 (2022), discuss the pre-service teachers' belief that the policy will result in significant educational change that requires careful execution in light of India's diverse socioeconomic and political landscape. It increases instructors' awareness of the various modifications and revisions the policy proposes.

Mukherjee, M., in NEP-2020: Perspective of Professional Standard & Professional Development of School Teacher (2021), provides the background context of such advocacy of professional standards from the perception of continuous professional development and argues that this policy still has several limitations despite positive intentions.

Pathak, R., in his paper, National Education Policy 2020: Can it Improve Faculty Motivation and Academic Outcomes in India? (2021) discusses the educational policies in India. It also studies the National Education Policy concerning motivation among teachers and improvement in academic outcomes in the country.

Debnath, P., described the contemporary status of the online education system in his paper, STATUS OF ONLINE EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK AND PROSPECTS OF NEP-2020: TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ANALYSIS (2022). He also discusses teachers' status during the outbreak of COVID-19. The study highlights teachers' opinions on NEP-2020 implementation and the upbeat approach to the role of the online education system.

The responsibilities include developing the moral and spiritual well-being of pupils as well as their academic performance. The role of instructors has significantly changed throughout the course over the past few decades. The demands of students, families, and communities vary as the world develops; consequently, the job of teachers must alter to suit these requirements. The wide-ranging study of the literature has facilitated an indulgence in the breach and has applied adequate thoughts to study the ***Changing Role of Teachers in NEP 2020: A Case Study of Schools in Jharkhand.***

The Objectives of the Study:

- To find factors that influence instructors' performance.
- To study the changing role of teachers in India with a study of schools in Jharkhand to accomplish the allotted outcomes as per the new National Education Policy 2020.
- To understand the status of teachers of Jharkhand and to find out their upbeat or downbeat perspective toward NEP 2020 along with the changes in the qualification and upgradation of teachers in terms of education and resources.
- To evaluate the extent of teachers' knowledge of the new NEP and to investigate various issues that new NEP teachers confront.
- To research how instructors' roles have changed as a result of the introduction of the new NEP in students' lives.

Methodology:

The explorative, descriptive, and analytical methods have been used to come across the teachers' active role in the new National Education Policy. Primary data has been collected with the help of the survey method through Google Forms. A non-probability convenience sampling method has been used to collect the samples. The sampling components of the study included teachers from various CBSE and ICSE schools in Jharkhand.

NEP 2020: A Brief Introduction:

India is a rapidly growing economy that is making great strides in the field of national education policy. The government of India released the National Education Policy 2020 in July 2020. It has received a great deal of attention due to the various changes it has proposed in the field of education. Of particular interest is the proposed role of teachers in the new policy. As such, here, the researcher aims to explore the teacher's role in the National Education Policy 2020 in India and to critically analyze how their role has changed from previous policies. The National Education Policy seeks to empower educators to become facilitators and mentors rather than just deliverers of content. It emphasizes the need to transform the role of teachers to ensure quality education for all.

It also aims to ensure that teachers are given the essential resources, autonomy, and support to enable them to become effective facilitators. After a considerable period of 34 years since the last education policy was proposed, the Government

of India has brought up reforms in the National Education Policy 2020 and changed it with the stakeholders of the preschool stage to university strata in mind. The National Education Policy 2020 is a major reform for the Indian educational system. It seeks to re-imagine education in India and make it more equitable and accessible, while also equipping learners with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in the 21st century. The policy focuses on universal access to quality education through several initiatives, including the provision of free and mandatory education to all kids up to the age of 18, increased investment in education and teacher training, a new curriculum based on multiple intelligences and skills, and the establishment of a National Research Foundation. The new Indian National Education Policy 2020 focuses on expanding access to higher education through a range of initiatives, such as the introduction of new universities and new courses. It also focuses on creating a vibrant, research-oriented higher education ecosystem and promoting the internationalization of higher education.

It focuses on the expansion of multilingualism by introducing a three-language formula. This formula encourages students to learn their mother tongue, the regional language, and an additional language from another division of the country. It also encourages schools to introduce language- and cultural-enrichment programs. By fostering an enabling environment for all learners, the policy aims to promote inclusivity, gender equality, and evenhandedness in the Indian educational system. The New National Policy of Education has amended several principles and policies to make learners skilled and future-ready for the progression of the educational system in India. It has revised the old school system of 10+2 by placing a 5+3+3+4 structure. Several other changes have been brought into existence in this policy, like the stream system of choosing particular branches of science, commerce, and the arts, which have been eliminated. Students are liberated to choose the mishmash of different subjects to be had.

Teacher's Qualification in NEP 2020:

As time changed, the teachers' qualifications upgraded from the knowledge of Vedas and Shastras to a Bachelor's Degree in Education (B.Ed.) with training. The teachers are required to be qualified for the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) and must have sound knowledge of their specific subjects. Moreover, technology has equipped teachers with many tools to support students in developing a better teaching-learning process. The upgrade or change in the educational system has also brought a change in the student-teacher relationship.

Teachers and educationalists have to implement the norms of NEP 2020 to become problem solvers. Otherwise, the essence of NEP 2020 will become limited to the workshops or the documents. Educators play a significant role in changing the life structure of students by improving their talents, abilities, and character. It has been asserted in an article in Edugraph ‘*Teachers are responsible for the implementation of NEP 2020, says Nagaland Officials*’—

“The teaching community must coordinate, work well together, and be driven by a desire to change students’ lives via the development of their skills and character, as the NEP is implemented on the ground.”

It further added about the implementation of policy and the role of a teacher in making it a success—

“the success of much of the policy depends on the competence of the teachers who will be taking the reforms forward.”

The Kothari Commission framed the National Education Policy in 1966. According to the Kothari commission whatever has been stated 56 years ago is still the same. All the factors related to education indeed depend upon the shoulders of teachers—

“Of all the factors that influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence, and character of our teachers are undoubtedly the most significant.”

NEP 2020 emphasizes the education and quality of teachers. It also aims at increasing the number of youth taking up teaching as a profession. NEP 2020 works toward the introduction of the Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) for young minds with outstanding performance to enter the profession of teaching. This program has been mainly framed for school teachers.

Role of Teachers in NEP 2020:

Teachers have long been at the center of school education in India. The new National Education Policy 2020 aims to develop this rule by including teachers in its newly proposed reforms which has been briefed in an article National Education Policy (NEP 2020) of BYJU’S—

“NEP aims to increase the focus on strengthening teacher training, reforming the existing exam system, early childhood care and restructuring the regulatory framework of education.”

The new National Education Policy 2020 has changed the role of teachers in

several ways. To begin with, it seeks to ensure that teachers are recognized and respected as important contributors to the learning process. It also places more emphasis on the need for teachers to be able to work with students, parents, and the community to bring about improved learning outcomes. The National Education Policy 2020 also puts greater emphasis on the professional growth of teachers. It proposes that teachers should receive continuous professional development to stay up-to-date with the changing requirements of learners. Moreover, it seeks to provide teachers with the necessary resources and support to deliver high-quality teaching. This includes the provision of essays on digital learning tools and platforms, as well as the promotion of cooperative and collaborative learning amongst teachers.

The National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN) Bharat Programme is a part of National Education Policy 2020 that aims at analyzing the learning requirements of children, which would lead India to new heights. The teachers have to play a vital role by upgrading them through various trainings, which have been briefed in an article on the NIPUN Bharat Programme on BYJU's—

“The success of NIPUN Bharat will primarily depend on teachers, so, there will be a special emphasis on capacity building of teachers. With this in mind, a special package for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) is being developed by NCERT under NISHTHA Scheme, the National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement. Around 25 lakh teachers teaching at pre-primary to primary grade will be trained on FLN in 2021.”

The National Education Policy 2020 seeks to ensure that teachers are provided with adequate remuneration and job security. It also puts forward the idea of reward systems for teachers who have demonstrated excellence in teaching. This includes financial rewards as well as professional recognition.

Qualification of Teachers in the New National Education Policy 2020:

The New Education Policy introduced by the government of India is an extensive policy document that envisions transforming India into a “vibrant knowledge society.” The policy places an emphasis on quality, transcends traditional boundaries of teaching, learning, and assessment, and acknowledges the importance of teachers. As part of the national education policy, the qualification of teachers has been identified as one of the essential components of the policy and aims to improve the eminence of teaching, learning, and assessment within the Indian school system.

Review of the Qualification of Teachers' Policy:

The success of National Education Policy 2020 is in providing us each teacher with the abilities, information, materials, and tools they need to successfully instruct students and the approach to increasing the qualification of teachers. To do this, the policy seeks to ensure that all teachers, regardless of their area of specialization, have access to quality training and professional development. The policy states that all teachers must have an undergraduate degree and must obtain an appropriate qualification or certification from recognized institutions before taking up teaching positions. Furthermore, teachers must possess a master's degree in either their subject area or in the area of education. In addition, the policy stipulates that teachers must have an additional year of 'on-the-job training' before they can be appointed to teaching positions. The training will be provided by the state governments and they may appoint trainers if required.

It is also suggested in the policy that each state should have a state teacher eligibility test (STET), which will assess each teacher's competency in their subject at the secondary level. This test is proposed to function similarly to the teacher eligibility test (TET) for teachers in primary education. The policy also mandates the creation of a national testing agency (NTA) to administer such tests and conduct research in the fields of education and teacher effectiveness.

Analysis of the Implications of National Education Policy 2020 for Teachers:

The New Education Policy of India 2020's qualification of teachers policy offers a chance to close the existing gap between teaching and learning in India's education system. As the policy seeks to ensure that each teacher is equipped with the necessary qualifications and expertise to effectively teach their students, it has the potential to improve the quality of teaching across all stages of education. In turn, this could lead to better-quality student outcomes, as it is well established that the quality of teachers is linked to improving student achievement and engagement. The policy also has the potential to reduce attrition among teachers, as it requires them to be adequately trained and qualified to teach.

This could result in lower costs for schools and teachers, as well as an increased sense of job security for teachers. Furthermore, the policy seeks to provide teachers with extensive professional development and training opportunities; this could potentially lead to greater job satisfaction among teachers and,

consequently, enhance the quality of teaching.

The proposed STET also presents an opportunity for states to assess teachers on an ongoing basis and measure their subject competency. This good potential allowed states to determine their educational system's strengths and weaknesses and refine their teachers' selection and training processes. The greater focus on student performance and accountability for student learning has been among the biggest changes.

Causes of the Changing Role of Teachers:

There are several causes for the changing role of teachers. The greater focus on student performance and accountability for student learning have been among the biggest changes. This has led to a shift in the role of teachers from a traditional instructor to a more active role in assessing student learning, providing feedback, and creating learning experiences that are tailored to the individual student. Due to digitalization in the field of education, the role of a teacher seemed to be shrinking concerning gaining knowledge. Students can easily get an explanation of any topic with a single click, but an individual can lead an effective life only by gaining good values and skills, which can only be achieved by an efficient teacher. It has been rightly stated about a teacher's character by Priti Bhatnagar in a blog, CHANGING ROLE OF TEACHERS—

“Five essential core values, which will make a successful person when put into practice with skill, These are truth (Satya), Dharma, love (Prem), nonviolence (Ahimsa), peace (Shanti). These values underpin all other values and are reflected in the attitude and work of a teacher.”

Another major cause of the changing role of teachers is the increased emphasis on technology in the classroom. Technology has changed the way that teachers teach and the way that students learn. Teachers must now be adept at using technology and capable of incorporating it into their lessons.

The changing needs of students and society have also had an impact on the role of teachers. Sir Aurobindo has been correctly quoted by Priti Bhatnagar in her blog, CHANGING ROLE OF TEACHERS, and highlights the teacher's role—

“The teacher is not an instructor or task master; he is a helper and a guide. His business is to suggest and not impose. He does not actually train the pupil's mind. He only shows him how to perfect his instruments of knowledge and helps and encourages him in the process.”

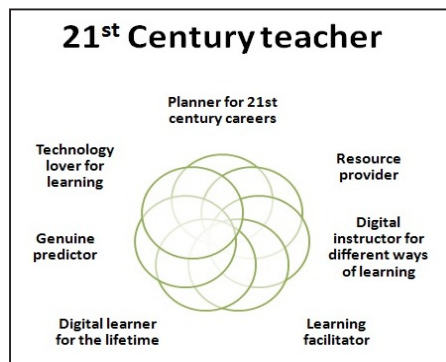
As students become more diverse and the needs of society become more complex,

teachers must also become more diverse in their skills and knowledge. They must become more proficient in working with diverse students, understanding different cultures, and addressing the needs of their community, which have been aptly stated in ‘Changing role of teachers in the 21st century in India’—

In this digital age, the internet is full of supportive resources. When a teacher teaches the students from a collaborative perspective, the students will learn more deeply if they get resources. It can be YouTube video tutorials, digital content, ebooks or even printing documents. If students receive the supporting material on how to enrich critical thinking, communication skills, collaboration and creativity, they can lead their future. A teacher can show the resources according to their interest. It will ensure better learning environments and the students will be engaged with the lesson.

Impact of the Changing Role of Teachers:

Positive effects of teachers’ evolving roles have been seen in children, families, and communities. Teachers are now more actively involved in assessing students’ learning and providing feedback. This has allowed students to receive more individualized instruction and feedback, which has improved student performance and learning. In addition, the increased use of technology in the classroom has provided students with more access to information and knowledge. Technology has also allowed teachers to create a learning experience that is tailored to the individual student, which has improved student engagement and increased student motivation. More teachers are adept at working with diverse children and comprehending various cultures as a result of the greater emphasis on diversity and meeting community needs. This has improved the quality of education for all students, allowed teachers to better meet the needs of their community, and made teachers future-ready, as per a blog on Medium by Imran Topu Sardar, which depicts several roles of a teacher in this century—



The Teacher-Student Relationship in NEP 2020:

The teacher-student relationship in the contemporary Indian educational system has undergone significant changes over the years. The traditional teacher-student relationship is being replaced by a more progressive, student-centered approach that emphasizes collaboration and communication. The modern Indian education system has evolved to accommodate the changing needs of both teachers and students and has impacted the relationship between them. The development of a more collaborative learning environment, the introduction of technology, and changing student needs are just a few of the factors that have contributed to this shift. Due to this, the relationship between teachers and students has also changed, with teachers now taking on a more supportive role and students taking on more responsibility for their learning. This paper examines how the modern Indian education system has evolved to meet the changing needs of both teachers and students and how this evolution has impacted the relationship between them.

The changing needs of students have also had an impact on the teacher-student relationship. With the introduction of new technologies, students now expect teachers to be more responsive to their needs and to be more open to their ideas. This has led to an increased emphasis on communication and collaboration between teachers and students, as well as a greater focus on student-centered learning.

The emergence of a more competitive education system has also had an impact on the teacher-student relationship. As students strive to achieve higher grades and better results, there is an increased focus on performance and accountability. This has led to a greater emphasis on assessment and feedback, with teachers satisfactorily expected to provide students with regular advice on their progress.

The New Education Policy of India 2020 seeks to strengthen the teacher-student relationship and make it more meaningful. This policy has several objectives, including improving the quality of education, increasing access to education, and providing equitable opportunities for all students. The policy document states that teachers should have greater autonomy in the classroom and should be allowed to develop their teaching methods and curricula. This will make it possible for teachers to develop environments that are more meaningful and engaging for the students. The policy also encourages collaboration between teachers and students by allowing students to partake in the policy-making process and providing opportunities for them to engage in research and other

pursuits. This will facilitate the development of a climate in which teachers and students may collaborate to achieve their objectives.

The policy statement also specifies that chances for professional development should be made available to instructors so they can enhance their teaching abilities. This will make it easier for instructors to stay current with the most effective teaching strategies and practices, enabling them to give their kids the finest education possible.

The Economic Status of Teachers:

Since the days of low salaries, long working hours, and low job security, the economic condition of teachers in India has drastically changed in the past few decades. The economic condition of teachers in India has improved significantly due to several factors, such as the expansion of the education sector, increased public investment in education, and the introduction of various government schemes and policies.

In addition, the Indian government has increased its investment in education and has introduced various schemes and policies to improve the economic condition of teachers. These include the 6th Pay Commission, which recommended a significant hike in salaries for teachers, and the National Education Policy, which provides access to free and mandatory education to all children in India.

The new Education Policy of India 2020 is an inclusive and aspiring plan that aims to renovate India's educational system from its current state to a globally competitive one. This policy focuses on improving the value of education and strengthening the governance of the educational system. One of the key components of the policy is the changes it proposes for the economic condition of teachers in India.

The new Education Policy of India 2020 proposes that the salaries of teachers should be increased to be on par with those of other professions. This would help to enhance teachers' overall standard of living and make this profession more attractive. This would help attract more talented individuals to the teaching profession and also provide better incentives for existing teachers. It also proposes that teachers should be provided with various allowances and benefits, such as housing, medical, and transport allowances. The policy also discusses that the government should provide teachers with pension and health insurance benefits. This would help to ensure that teachers can enjoy a secure and comfortable retirement.

The changes projected in the new Education Policy of India 2020 for the financially viable condition of teachers in India will have an optimistic impact on the teaching profession. The increase in salaries and other benefits would make the profession look more attractive, advance the overall worth of education in India, and make its education system more competitive by attracting more talented individuals to this profession.

Statistical Analysis of the Teacher's Role in the New NEP 2020:

The analysis has been done to analyze teachers' changing roles with the new National Education Policy in four areas. A questionnaire was prepared, and answers have been collected through Google Forms. Face-to-face interviews have also been conducted with a few teachers. The sample collection has been collected from four districts of Jharkhand, namely East Singhbhum, Seraikela-Kharsawan, Dumka, and Ramgarh. The researchers have taken several CBSE and ICSE schools located in these districts for the study. The study has been done in five areas. These five areas can be categorized in the following ways—

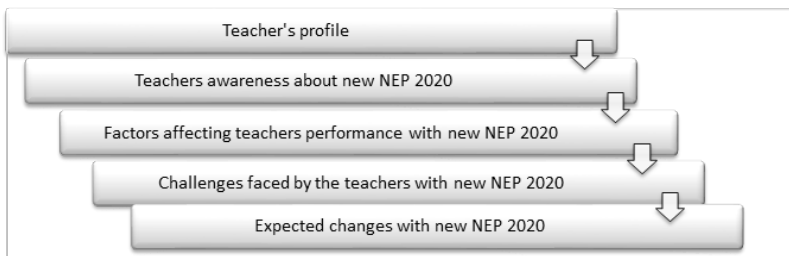


Figure 1: Areas of observation

(Note- Figure 1 is showing the areas in which the survey has been conducted)

Figure 1 shows several areas of study, in which the researchers have collected data with a structured questionnaire.

Teachers' Profile:

In the first step, the researchers collected teachers' profiles to keep track of the authentication of information. To collect the teacher's profile, a questionnaire has been prepared. For collecting teachers' profiles, a few basic pieces of information have been collected related to the name, email address, gender, and qualification. The email addresses have been collected only for authentication, and the data has not been revealed as per the teachers' request. Section 1 below is representing the teacher's profile and Figure 2 is the graphical presentation of the same—

TEACHER'S PROFILE (TOTAL=156)				
SL. NO.	VARIABLES	CATEGORY	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
1	GENDER	MALE	55	35.26%
		FEMALE	101	64.74%
		TOTAL	156	100%
2	AGE	20-30	27	17.31%
		31-40	63	40.38%
		41-50	42	26.93%
		51-60	24	15.38%
		TOTAL	156	100%
3	QUALIFICATION	DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION	15	9.62%
		B.A. B.Ed.	79	50.64%
		M.A. B.Ed.	62	39.74%
		TOTAL	156	100%
4	DISTRICT	EAST SINGHBHUM	63	40.38%
		SERAIKELA KHARSAWAN	17	10.90%
		RAMGARH	23	14.74%
		DUMKA	53	33.97%
		TOTAL	156	100%

Section 1: Teacher's profile

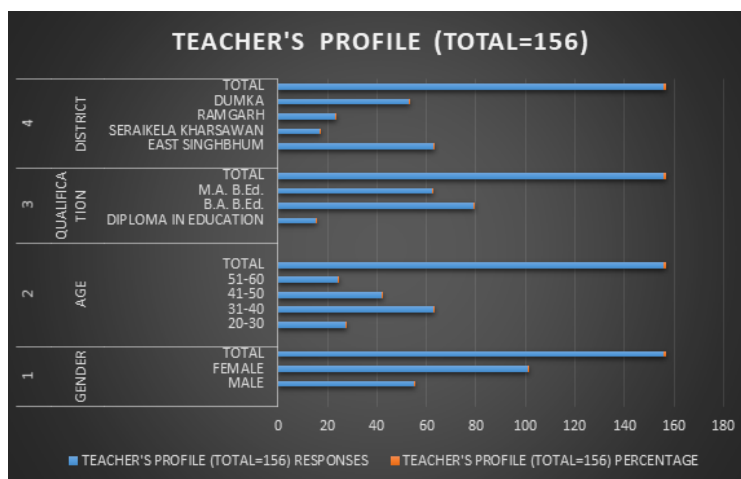


Figure 2: Graphical Presentation of Teacher's Profile
(Note: Graphical presentation of teacher's profile based on Section 1)

After analyzing the above data and section it is clear that the percentage of male teachers (35.36%) is less than that of female teachers (64.74%), and the maximum number of teachers lies between the age of 31-40 years (40.38%). Another important point to be focused that all the teachers are trained who have accomplished their B.Ed. or Diploma in Education. This particular information depicts that all schools are recruiting trained teachers as per the norms even before the implementation of the new NEP.

Teacher’s Awareness of New NEP 2020:

In the second step, teachers were given a few questions to check their awareness regarding the new NEP. The questions and their responses are shown in the tabular form in section 2 and *Figure 3* is the graphical presentation of section 2:

TEACHERS AWARENESS OF NEP		
	YES	NOT AWARE
Have you heard about the new National Education Policy 2020?	94.20%	5.80%
Are you aware of the rules, policies, and guidelines of NEP 2020?	88.50%	11.50%
Do you feel NEP 2020 bring a positive change in the education system?	82.10%	17.90%
Does NEP 2020 help in enhancing professionalism among teachers?	77.80%	22.20%
Does NEP 2020 help in the economic growth of teachers?	51.40%	48.60%
Do you find National Education Policy 2020 useful for teachers?	77.60%	22.40%

Section 2: Data Representing Teacher’s Awareness of New NEP

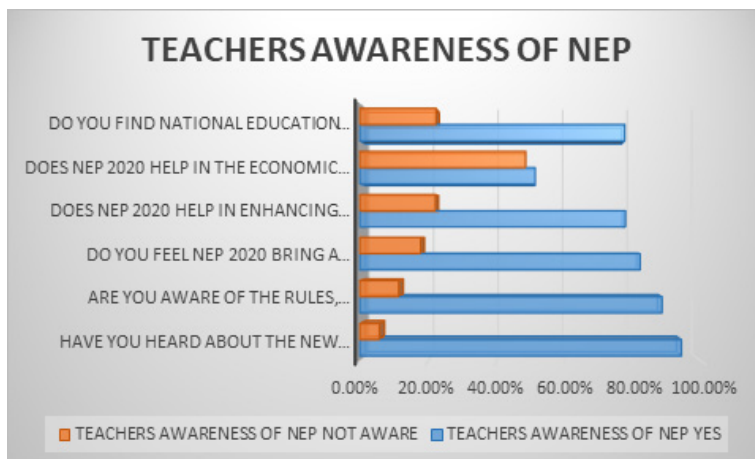


Figure 3: Graphical presentation of teacher’s responses regarding their awareness of new NEP based on data in section 2

Most of the teachers are aware of the new NEP and how it is being implemented. Whereas 94.20% of teachers are aware of the new NEP, 88.50% of instructors are aware of the new NEP's rules and regulations. When asked how many agreed that the new NEP brought positive changes, 82.10% responded in the affirmative. Only 77.60% of instructors were in support of the new NEP when asked about its usefulness. And just 51.40% of instructors responded positively to the question about their economic growth under the new NEP, indicating that they are not happy with their pay scale at many private schools.

Factors affecting teacher's performance:

Teachers working in an institution require lots of motivation as well as a healthy job environment to improve their performance. Various factors affect teachers' performance in various ways. These factors can be categorized in the following ways—



Figure 4: Factors Affecting Teacher's Performance

Figure 3 summarises various factors affecting the Teacher's performance. Teachers were given several choices to select in given factors in the form of a given questionnaire. Few teachers were asked questions in the face-to-face interview method also. One teacher has selected more than one option. Based on interaction with the teachers, the researchers have collected data based on factors given in section 2 and the same data has been presented in the form of a pie chart in Figure 4:

Factors Affecting Teacher's Performance (Total= 156)			
S.no.	Factors	Responses	Percentage
1	Working Environment	51	32.69%
2	Lengthy Curriculum	27	17.31%
3	Peer Pressure	14	8.97%
4	Parent's & Students' Behaviour	55	35.26%
5	Salary Structure	29	18.59%
6	All The Factors	57	36.54%

Section 3: Statistical data representing teacher's responses toward factors affecting their performance

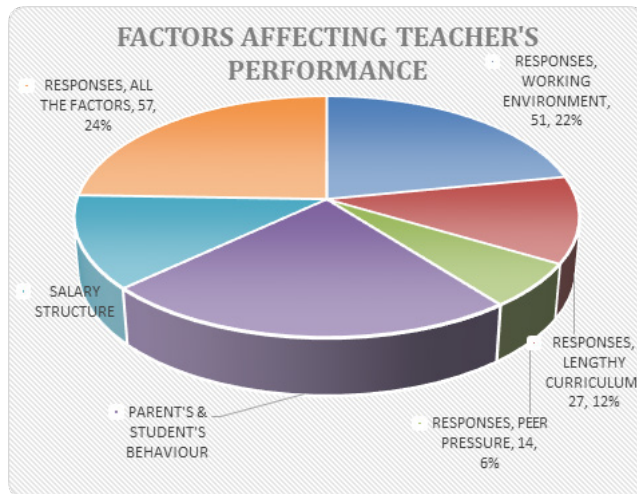


Figure 5: Pie chart showing factors affecting teacher performance

By examining the above data and section, it has been discovered that the majority of teachers (36.54%) believe that all factors are equally responsible for influencing teachers' performance. Other than this, the performance of teachers is impacted by parents' and students' behavior (35.26%). In a conversation, a teacher quoted that after putting so much effort behind students, many times we have to face adverse behavior from students as well as parents. The working environment (32.69%) also affects teachers' performance to a large extent. Other than these factors, few teachers agreed that peer pressure (8.97%), salary structure (18.59%), and lengthy curriculum (17.31%) also affect their performance.

Challenges Faced by the Teachers with the New NEP:

In this dynamic world, nothing remains the same; everything keeps changing to accommodate the surroundings. We must overcome several obstacles to keep up with the rapid changes. During the survey, the researchers encountered several challenges that teachers are facing in the implementation of the new NEP. The questions that were interrogated and the teachers' responses are shown in Section 4 and Figure 6.

Challenges Faced By The Teacher With New Nep					
Sl.no.	Variables	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
1	Difficulty In Inclusion Of Multilingualism	63	40.38%	93	59.62%
2	Difficulty In Carrying Interdisciplinary Activities And Academics	42	26.92%	114	73.08%
3	Increasing Teacher's Workload	30	19.23%	126	80.77%
4	Continuous Training	21	13.46%	135	86.54%

Section 4: Data showing responses of teachers regarding the challenges faced by them with the new NEP

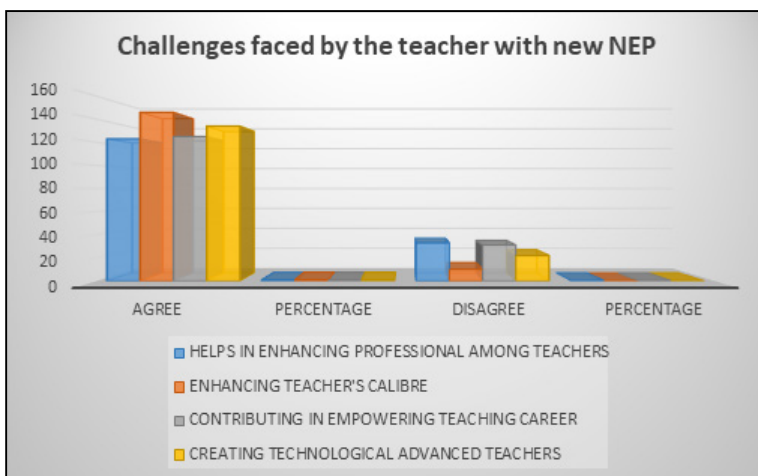


Figure 6: Graphical presentation of Section 4

It has been revealed during the study that most of the teachers find the new NEP a good system to enhance their skills. The major challenge that teachers feel is the inclusion of multilingualism (40.38%). However, the remaining

59.62% of teachers believe it is a beneficial approach for boosting students' interest in and knowledge of various cultures and abilities.

Similarly, 73.08% of teachers do not agree about the difficulties in carrying interdisciplinary activities and academics together. They feel that interdisciplinary activities help enhance students' intellectual levels. During the investigation, it has been noticed that 80.77% of teachers do not feel that their workload has increased, and 86.54% do not agree that continuous training has made them exhausted. Instead, they agree that the pieces of training are helpful for them to update themselves with the new ways of learning to keep pace with the young generation.

Expected Changes with the New NEP in the Teacher's Role:

The Government of India implemented the new Education Policy with the thought of bringing Indian education policy to the global level. The new NEP has also brought lots of opportunities for teachers and helped enhance their role in several areas.

During the research process, teachers responded about the expected changes with the new NEP and their changing roles with it. Section 5 and Figure 7 represent the expected changes with the new NEP and the teacher's role in it.

Expected Changes With New Nep In Teacher's School					
Sl.no.	Factors	Agree	Percentage	Disagree	Percentage
1	Helps In Enhancing Professional Among Teachers	123	78.85%	33	21.15%
2	Enhancing Teacher's Calibre	146	93.59%	10	6.14%
3	Contributing In Empowering Teaching Career	125	80.13%	31	19.87%
4	Creating Technological Advanced Teachers	134	85.90%	22	14.10%

Section 5: Statistical presentation of the information about the expected

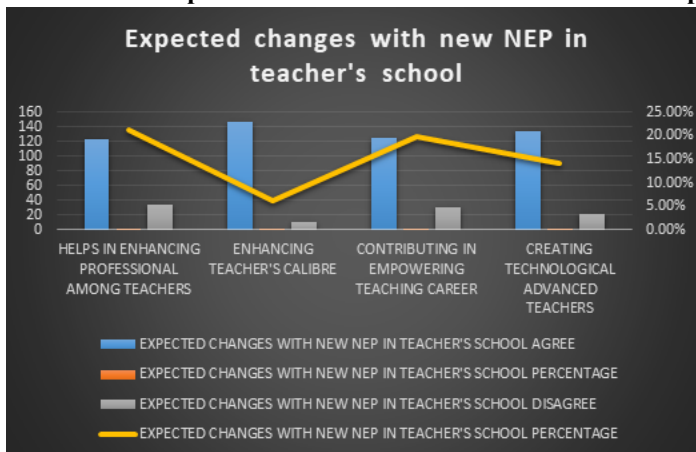


Figure 7: Graphical presentation of Section 5

The above data and graph clearly show that the majority of teachers agree that the new NEP is going to enhance their skills in several areas, wherein 78.85% of teachers said the new NEP would increase professionalism among them, and 93.59% believed it would increase teachers' caliber.

Similarly, 80.13% of teachers felt that the new NEP would help them feel more empowered in their careers as teachers, and 85.90% thought that it would be beneficial to develop technologically sophisticated teachers.

The Changed Role of Teachers in the New NEP 2020:

The teacher's role has also changed with the change in India's Education Policy in 2020. A teacher is no longer a facilitator but has enhanced their role in several areas. Section 6 and Figure 8 show teachers' changing roles with the new NEP 2020.

Changing Role of Teachers With new NEP In Student's Life			
Sl. No.	Variable	Responses	Percentage
1	Guide	7	4.49%
2	Facilitator	5	3.21%
3	Role Model	7	4.49%
4	Helping Hand	1	0.64%
5	Motivator	5	3.21%
6	Counsellor	3	1.92%
7	All In One	128	82.05%

Section 6: Data presenting the role of teachers in student's life

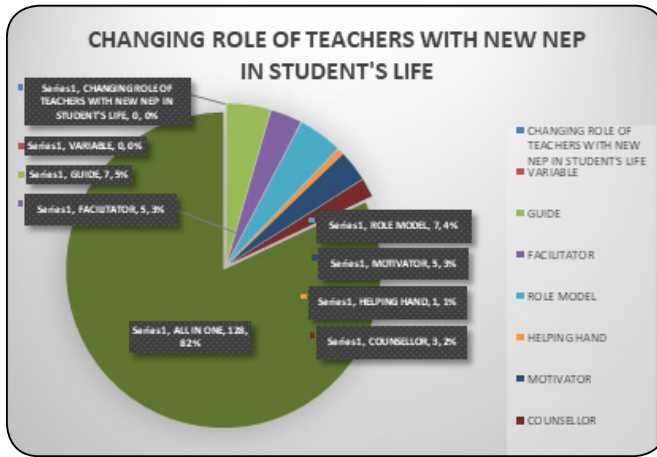


Figure 8: Graphical presentation of Section 6

By the above data and graph, it is clear that 82% of teachers agree that the teacher’s role is not limited to only one or two areas, but they play versatile roles in shaping a student’s life.

Data Availability Account:

The respective authors are happy to provide all the study’s data upon request. The research paper includes the original contribution that was shown in the study.

Ethics Statement:

The study involves human participants, which include the teachers and educators of several CBSE and ICSE schools in some districts of Jharkhand. To analyze their experiences and opinions on the related topic, the participants responded to the questions using a Google form that the researchers had created. Permission has been obtained from the concerned heads of institutions.

Research Limitations and Further Implications:

Several limitations should be acknowledged, including the study’s narrow emphasis on a selected district within the state of Jharkhand and its use of information only from a small number of institutions connected to the CBSE and ICSE boards. These limitations consist of:

- The findings of the study may not be representative of the entire Jharkhand state.

- The chosen schools may not be representative of all schools within the district.
- The findings of the study cannot be generalized.

In order to provide a thorough grasp of the subject, new studies should be encouraged that encompass a wider variety of districts, schools, and educational boards.

Implications and Recommendations:

The study illuminates the approach and teaching methodology of numerous Jharkhand ICSE and CBSE schools. According to the data, teachers at various educational institutions are aware of the New NEP 2020 and have consented to school changes like teacher-training programs, student-centered learning environments, and others. Teachers have profited from many skill-enhancement programs, but the pay scale has stayed the same. Many private school instructors admit they cannot survive on this income level. The study also examines factors that affect teacher performance. The investigation shows that working conditions, remuneration, student and parent behavior, and other factors affected teachers' performance. The study shows that teachers are multitasking and supporting students. For better outcomes, it is suggested that educational institutions should create healthy and stress-free working environments for teachers and modify the salaries they receive for their better performance.

Conclusion:

The study highlights the issues and opportunities for teachers in the New Education Policy of India 2020. The present research analyzes the changes in the roles of teachers with the execution of the New Education Policy of India 2020. The survey asserts the manifold change in the role of teachers with the implementation of the New Education Policy of India 2020, which has been formulated to transform India's education system and bring it in line with global standards. The present paper brings out the status of teachers in Jharkhand and finds out their optimistic or subdued perspective toward NEP 2020, along with the changes in the prerequisites and upgradation of teachers in expressions of education and resources, with the help of the views of teachers themselves. The success of the policy depends largely on the efforts of teachers, and it is hoped that they will rise to the challenge and make a positive contribution to the global reform process. The policy has the potential to transform India's education system and generate a more equitable and inclusive system. This policy inquires about empowering teachers to be

at the forefront of the transformation, take ownership of their teaching, lead the transformation of the education system, and bring an optimistic approach to the world of teaching. The policy also seeks to promote a culture of teacher autonomy and sovereignty in the teaching profession. It seems to create an environment where teachers can access resources and information to further their knowledge and skills. Ultimately, the National Education Policy 2020 seeks to create an incentivized environment for teachers to perform better and to prop up a culture of collaboration among teachers and other stakeholders in the education system. This policy has been formulated to transform India's education system and bring it in line with global standards, as stated by **Shrivastava** in a blog in *Macmillan Education*.

“If these are implemented, the best brains will come into this ecosystem as a preferred choice and lead India towards becoming a Vishwa Guru in the coming days.”

The success of the policy will depend largely on the efforts of teachers, and it is hoped that they will rise to the challenge and make a positive contribution to the global transformation course of action.

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Education of children living in Child Care Institutions of Delhi

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Abstract

Children are known to be the one third population of the total Indian population (National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), 2016). As per the report of National Crime Record Bureau; it was assessed around 60,000 children are missing each year in India. When it comes to the population of deprived children is 20 million in India (Udayan Care, 2016). The government is accountable to give opportunity to every single child to grow, when a family or parents fails to do so. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2015 which is abbreviated as J.J Act has laid down distinct arrangements for the rehabilitation of children in society and the main agenda is education. Education lays down the foundation of bright future of the children. The present study is an attempt to understand educational facilities provided to children residing in Child Care Institutions in Delhi. Qualitative research method is been adopted in the present study to develop deeper perceptive of present status of children brought up in children homes. The data is collected through in-depth interviews and group discussions using semi structured interview schedule conducted in children homes. The collected data was analyzed through thematic analysis.

Keywords: Child Care Institution, Child Rights, Children in Need of Care and Protection, Education

Education of children living in Child Care Institutions of Delhi

Introduction:

Children are known to be one third population of the total Indian population (National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), 2016). As per the report of National Crime Record Bureau; it was assessed around 60,000 children are missing each year in India. When it comes to the population of deprived children is 20 million in India (Udayan Care, 2016).The government is accountable to give opportunity to every single child to grow, when a family or parents fails to do so. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2015 which is abbreviated as J.J Act has laid down distinct arrangements for the rehabilitation of children in society and the main agenda is education. Education lays down the foundation

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of bright future of the children. As per the Juvenile Justice model rules 2016; it is mandate that every Children home must provide formal or school education to the children without any failure. It is further stated that the child required to be admitted to educational institute as per the current age. The rules make the provision for bridge and tuition classes with ongoing education.

The Indian constitution pledges fundamental rights given to all the citizens listed under following articles:

- Every person is equal before law (article 14)
- In view of the betterment of the people especially belonging to backward group, the special powers have been given to States to make laws to protect their rights. The states may constitute provisions for children, women, weaker section and lower caste. Additionally it is specified that all types of discrimination is prohibited. (article 15-16)
- Untouchability and any kind of discrimination on the basis of caste are abolished (article 17).
- There is freedom of speech and expression, and also to practice unions and associations. The act also allows to move and to reside within the region of India (article 19).
- Its making a compulsion of free and compulsory education to all children of 6 to 14 years (article 21 A)
- It prohibits human trafficking, beggar and other similar forced labour forms (article 23).
- It directs the States to deliver free and compulsory education for the children of below the age of 6 years (article 45).
- Children should get better prospects and facilities to grow with dignity. The article further emphasis on a childhood free from all types of mistreatment and abandonment (article 39 F)
- Any education institution which is run by the state or accepting state grants cannot say no to admission to the child (article 29-2).

The IPC and Child Protection:

- Under section 317 of IPC child abandonment is penalized and the section further states that if father or mother abandons the child it will be considered as serious offence. There is a provision for incarceration for up to 5 years or penalty or both.
- Section 363 describes the punishment for kidnapping the child which is

caging which may be extended up to 7 years and also penalty.

- Further section 369 defines the punishment in case of kidnapping of any child (below 10 years) which is sentence up to 7 years and also penalty.
- Section 372 penalized selling minor for the use of prostitution or intercourse which is punishable with the imprisonment up to 10 years and also liable to fine.
- Further section 373 describes the punishment given to any person who involves in purchasing child for prostitution. The section further defines punishment with the imprisonment up to 10 years as well as fine.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 abbreviated as JJ Act:

The JJ Act is the first legislation which ensures the protection of all children. Our Juvenile Justice system targets to promote and safeguard the rights of the children. The Indian government sanctioned the UNCRC (which is recognized as united convention on the Rights of Children) in 1992 and The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of children) Act 2000 was endorsed. The JJ Act is grounded on the ideologies of UNCRC and on the provisions of Indian Constitution. Under the act children are basically classified in two broad categories- the first are the Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and second category is Children Conflict with Law (CCL). The CNCP cases are dealt by the competent authority namely Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and the CCL cases are being heard by the authority namely Juvenile Justice Board (JJB). These committees have right to take decisions in the utmost interest of the child. The emphasis is given on the child's rehabilitation and integration.

The Right to Education Act:

Indian constitution's article 21 A makes the provision of free and compulsory education for children comprises in the age bar of 6 to 14 years. In the year 2009 the Right to Education Act came into picture as consequential legislation. The words- free and compulsory- were introduced in the act wherein free education means access to education at free of cost and compulsory education makes it mandate on concerned authorities to provide and ensure admission to the children who are 6 to 14 years of age without any delay or fail. It has become a vital right and following provisions are mentioned-

- Free and compulsory elementary education in nearby school
- Right of unavoidable admission, attending and completing the elementary

education

- Admission for non- admitted child according to the age of the child
- Financial support to educational institutions shared by central and state governments
- Guidelines and standards concerning to trained educator appointment, working days and hours, child-teacher ratio, building and infrastructure
- Harassing children and giving them physical punishment is prohibited
- The act prohibits school running without recognition and also private tuition given by the teachers for their financial interest
- Holistic development of children with the support of comprehensive curriculum and child friendly and child centered learning

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 POCSO:

POCSO was enacted to safe children from any type of sexual harassment, sexual assault and pornography also safeguard the child at every point of legal procedure. Further it makes provisions of child friendly reporting, investigation and also recording of evidence at the special court. It also emphasis on speedy trial of the cases registered under POCSO. The act is applicable to both male and female child and is gender neutral. The act has defined punishment in the following offences committed against the children-

- Any sexual assault with intention to insert penis or any other object in child's body part
- Touching the child with intention to assaulting or force the child to touch them
- To pass sexually assaulting remarks, gestures, flashing or even following the child
- Involving children in pornography, watching pornographic content which include children

The act criminalizes the offences listed above and also makes provision of maximum imprisonment or fine or both.

Objectives:

The research paper is an effort to analytically look at the position of education among children living in children homes of Delhi. The research objectives are as follows-

- To examine educational services delivered to children who are living in child care institutions in Delhi.
- To understand the academic challenges faced by the children staying in Child Care Institutions in Delhi.

Review of literature:

(Nilima, 2018) in her overview on child protection and development programmes for specially disadvantaged children in India, suggested a rights based approach which is a good means to deal with problem discrimination and injustice. In her manual “Children Protection and Juvenile Justice System for Children in Need of Care and Protection”, A significant change in intervention for CNCP is seen which is a paradigm shift from “need” to “rights”, from “welfare” to “development” and from “institutional care” to “non-institutional care”. There are many Acts, Legislations which have come up in the years to contribute to better child care and protection as well as human rights. The JJ Act which was revised in 2015, which had been formulated keeping in mind the provisions made in UNCRC. The central legislation JJ act directs the state to make the required provisions as well as infrastructure. But there is a huge gap between intent and practice. The factors which ranges from ignorance to attitudinal blocks. In the book author has described the Juvenile Justice Act pertaining to CNCP but the biggest problem is that the awareness on the law lacks in the society.

Savita Bhakry in 2006 in “Children in India and their Rights” mentioned in her book that many of the states in India are lagging behind on the child development indicators. It becomes important to advance the profiles of child development in these states. There are many reasons which contribute to the vulnerability of the children, Adverse child sex ratio, Poverty, Child Marriage, Child labour, Discrimination against children, Struggle for child survival and lack of education are some of them. In the book she have mentioned about the responsibilities of National Human Rights Commission who also protects and promotes child rights. We have seen children in the streets and in many difficult circumstances in our country. Unfortunately, there is very less information available on what type of the problems confronted by these children or how many are affected with it. India is the signatory at the World Summit for Children and the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in 1990, the Government of India prepared a direct orientation for children also at the same time dedicated a section on them which tries to bring them together at one place. It includes diverse groupings

of children who are disabled, affected by drugs, sufferers of disasters, refugee, street or slum children, migrant children, destitute, orphan and beggars, children who themselves suffering from HIV/AIDS or has parents who are HIV positive, trafficked, prostitutes child or who are forced into prostitution and any labour, children in conflict with law as a result a better protection is given to them and cause for such circumstances may possibly be interpreted (NPA, 1992: 25). Asha Bajpai, has very beautifully described on the Child Rights in India which are based on UN CRC. According to the author in her book, “Child Rights in India: Law, Policy and Practice” the rights of the child can be categorized as: Right to parental care, Rights to family environment, Right against economic exploitation, Right to protect from sexual mishandling and exploitation, Right to existence and expansion. The legal conception of a child has turned to vary depending upon the purpose. (Bajpai, 2012)

Asha Rane and Jeroo Billimoria replicate the situation of a child in India from the Rights perspective and also how the state, organizations as well as international organisations plays an important role in this issue. The authors have explained profiles of child advocacy campaigns and from the study it was found that there is a need for the insertion of issues related to children’s rights in the academic curriculum and training programme which encourages children participation in the schemes.

Methodology:

The present research study adopted descriptive research design to cultivate deeper understanding of current status of education of children. The data was collected using semi structured interview schedule (self-made). Thematic analysis and case studies was used to draw conclusions of the study. The study universe comprises both categories of children homes- Government homes and Non-Government Organisation homes. The study sample was taken from 4 types of CCI which include both girl’s homes and boy’s homes. The overall number of respondents contributed in the study was 20 children (10 boys and 10 girls) from both types of homes.

Findings:

A. Thematic analysis:

Admitting children to school- Both the homes- NGO and Government follows the guidelines as given under JJ Act. It is mandatory that every child admitted to child care institution should acquire admission to formal school. Section

27 (11) under JJ model rules 2016 prescribed the services to be provided to children which include prescribed school education to the children admitted to institutions and organization recognized as fit facility. Also the services include bridge education and life skill education along with continuing education. It was found that all the children were admitted to school and also enrolled in bridge classes as well as attaining life skill sessions. The institutions have enrolled children in best of their capabilities and also providing sessions to overcome issues they face during their studies.

Criterion for admission- Under Section 27 (11) of JJ model rules 2016 child has to receive age appropriate formal education. Thus the admission criterion is based on the age of the child which says that a child need to reach five years and seven years (maximum) to be admitted to grade 1. Hence the admission of the non-admitted child is done according to the age of the child. Though, the age standard appears unrealistic with special reference to children staying in CCI. A 12 years old child who never attended school and given admission in grade 6th he or she might not be capable to understand the concepts which are taught in the class. Mostly government homes children are given admission according to their age on the other hand NGO home admitting children as per their learning capabilities for example in the case of children who have never been to school got admission in grade 1 despite of their age.

Types of school- Under Section 27 (11) of JJ model rules 2016 it is articulated that the child has to receive age appropriate formal education. It doesn't specify any particular type of schooling where a child may be admitted. It depends on the capacity of the homes. It was found that majority of NGO homes children are going to private schools while children residing in government homes are attending government schools.

Challenges faced by children: The respondents residing in government homes shared that they are having difficulty in understanding the concepts and attaining preferred goals. It is because; a child gets admission in school as per the age criterion therefore it was difficult to understand the concepts being taught in their respective schools for children who have never gone to schools in their entire life; before their admission in children homes. However, the children homes providing additional sessions and bridge classes to help them but the issue persist. All this is affecting the mental health and the children felt under pressure. On the other hand, some of the children from NGO homes are admitted according to their ability which again led to difficulty in adjustment with other children in the classroom. A child shared that she feels shy as she

is 16 years old and studying in class 5, she is supposed to sit with younger children. She doesn't have any friends as all her classmates are younger to her.

B. Case studies:

CASE STUDY 1:

Abhinav (name changed) is a 13-year-old male and stays in Government run shelter home. The child was found abandoned in Delhi. He shared that he has no family, he lost his parents. He didn't reveal any information about his other family members. Child is been staying in children for last one year. Till now no one from his family has turned up to claim the child. The possible identified factors of child abandonment are- death of parents and further no extended family member turned up to claim child.

Abhinav is currently studying in class VIII. He goes to a government school and doesn't know the name of the school. He doesn't like to study and only go to school to meet his friends. He doesn't understand anything what is being taught in the school. He doesn't like going to school. He gets punishment almost every day. He doesn't pay attention in the class and the teacher scolds him. It doesn't affect him. He is not bothered about it. Sometimes he is asked to stand for an hour. He is also not bothered or thinks about his future. He doesn't have any aim in life nor have any role models.

The child is very reluctant, and he doesn't participate in any activities organized by the staff member. He was not even interested to give interview but when staff member social worker approached him he participated. He didn't attend group sessions which the researcher organized he wanted to sleep or wanted to watch television whenever any group activity was organized. He has fights with other children. According to social worker he used to take some drugs or inhale fluid. He even tried to run away from children home.

He is least interested in self-caring and maintaining self-hygiene. He wears smelly clothes and doesn't comb his hair. He doesn't take regular bath. He doesn't have any friends. He doesn't share anything to staff members and most of the time he stays alone. The child does not share any bond with other children and staff members of the home. He has no future goals and aspirations despite of regular counselling sessions the child remained same. As per the psychologist this is a case of conduct; wherein the child is willingly maintaining distance from others and this is because of the past experiences and harsh realities that he has faced even psychologist believed that until the

child will not show any interest this problem cannot be solved.

CASE STUDY 2:

Smita (name changed) is a 16-year-old girl who stays in the NGO home. The child was rescued from an apartment in Delhi. She didn't disclose any information about her biological family. Child was working as a domestic helper and was brought to the family when she was just 7 years old. Child reported events of physical and verbal abuse; she was never given any money for the work. According to the employer someone from her family sold her for money they didn't have any information about her family. The identified factors of abandonment are- Parents and family willfully abandoned and sold for money.

She goes to school and is presently studying in class V. she is studying in a private school near her shelter home. She likes going to school and enjoys her classes. The teachers are supportive and nice to her. There are no students in her class who bully others, nor does anyone tease her at school. She shares that she doesn't have any friends in school as all are younger to her. She feels shy in interacting with them. She sits alone in the class and only focus on her studies. She joins the others from the shelter home to visit the park in the evening, yet she prefers to spend time alone. She doesn't share her concerns with anyone. Whenever she is upset, she stays alone. Regarding her future; she is in dilemma as to what will be her future. She wants to be a psychiatric. She is aware of the term aftercare she is tensed that she has only 2 more years to stay in the home after which she will be shifted to after care. She gets upset of thinking of all these. The child was never been to school prior coming to children home. Hence, she started from class 1 and now she is class 5. The child feels shy and uncomfortable as she sits with younger children and they have age gap. She doesn't have many friends in school. She is reserved in nature and do not share her concerns with anyone. Only if caregivers ask she shares otherwise remain quiet. The child is presentable and polite in nature. The child had very traumatic experience in past where she was rescued from child labour where she faced physical and verbal abuse. She has run away thoughts and becomes aggressive at times.

Based on the case studies following similarities and difference are observed in both the cases:

Similarities

Case 1	Case 2
Found abandoned	Found abandoned
Staying in children home for more than 1 year	Staying in children home for more than 1 year
Attending formal education and bridge classes	Attending formal education and bridge classes
Child facing difficulty in studies as he was never been to school	Child facing difficulty in studies as she was never been to school
No friends in school	No friends in school
Regular counseling	Regular counseling
Doesn't share feelings	Doesn't share feelings

Differences

Case 1	Case 2
Government Home	NGO Home
Government school	Private schooling
age appropriate formal education- Grade 8th	admitted according to the educational level- Started from Grade 1, now in Grade 5th – here child is studying in 2 grades simultaneously
Not understanding the concepts	Understanding the concepts
No confidence	Gaining confidence
No future aspirations	Concerned for her future
No change despite of the counseling sessions	Significant change
Doesn't participate in group activities	Participates in activities
Least interested	Showing interest

Conclusion:

It is needless to say that CNCP are placed in Child Care Institutions which is known as the best protective environment from hazardous situations with the aim to nurture and their holistic development. Every Child Care Institutions are intent to offer safe and protected lodging and formal education. The research was commenced to understand the educational services provided to children in institutional care and examine the issues and problems confronted by the children. The conclusions of study shows majority of NGO homes children are attending schooling in private schools on the other hand government homes children are attending education in government schools. The respondents shared that they are meeting difficulty in realizing preferred academics goals as they do not understand what is being taught in class. As per the JJ Model

Rules 2016 child has to receive age appropriate formal education which leads to disinterest and difficulty in understanding the concepts because the child might not have attended school in his or her life. On the contrary, if the child is admitted according to the educational level he or she will have to compete with younger children which again a concern of lack of self-confidence. It was found that the children who are admitted as per their learning capabilities turned to be better in terms of understanding the concepts in their respective schools and did well in studies. However they also faced issues as they have to sit with younger kids due to which they feel shy but with the help of the constant counseling it helped them overcome shyness and they evidently show excellence in their studies. On the contrary the child who is attending age appropriate education is struggling to understand the concepts and facing challenges in studies. The results of the study suggested that the homes should emphasis on learning based on the abilities of the children instead of admitting them as per their age because the onus of the education should not solely lie on children but institution and government are equally responsible to provide them environment to learn and grow without any hurdle.

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Socio-Economic Challenges and Perceived Stress Levels among Single Mothers

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Abstract

Adverse life events, such as the death of a spouse or the separation from that spouse, cause single mothers to alter their lifestyles to improve the well-being of their children. This new double-fold headship increases the hard work and leads to a stressful life in the family and workplace for the rest of their lives. Though single mothers work hard, due to gender disparities and lower income generation, finding the means to end poverty is complex. The study adopted a descriptive research design, used a semi-structured interview schedule, and chose to analyse stress levels using the perceived stress level scale developed by Sheldon Cohen (1983). The study findings reveal that most respondents were daily agricultural workers. Due to inadequate education, they are forced to work in agriculture for a living, which is distressing to their financial situation, forcing them to upgrade their children's settlements and secure their lives. The majority of single mothers perceived their stress level as moderate. The present welfare schemes are not sufficient to empower single mother-headed families. Hence the researchers suggested that the policy-making and implementation of such policies for the welfare of single mothers has to be a consideration of every government and stakeholder in the field. Financial empowerment and mental health will improve through specific welfare schemes for single mothers.

Keywords: Single Mothers, Socio-Economic, Family, Poverty, Perceived Stress level.

Introduction:

One of the critical measures of a nation's development is the status of its women. The standing of Indian women has been evolving steadily over the

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last few decades, and the nation's history and culture emphasise the position of women in society (Topimin et al., 2021). They are more prone to worry and may find the changes in their lives brought on by becoming parents, especially trying (Agnafors et al., 2019). Motherhood is respected in a culture where males predominate, which benefits women in some ways (Zhang, 2022). The mother is essential in the family because she provides for and protects the children. The role of a mother is characterised by many sentiments of affection and conflicted emotions. Since single mothers frequently lack educational attainment, skills, and social networks, making ends meet may be challenging (Topimin et al., 2021). They are also viewed as one of society's most vulnerable social groups and have fewer chances to contend in the employment market. As a result, it can be challenging for single mothers to meet the needs of their families and attain financial independence. Every mother has a unique mothering experience. However, women experience pleasures, sorrows, lofty goals, and demands as they raise their children.

They are subject to patriarchal traditions, religious regulations, and pervasive inheritance rights inequality. Many people experience abuse and exploitation of their own family members, frequently due to property conflicts. Remarriage is significantly less common than male widowers to male widowers, remarriage is significantly less common and frequently expressly or tacitly prohibited by local communities and ingrained cultural standards. Widows frequently experience numerous forms of prejudice, sometimes even ostracism, due to their perceived "unlucky" status (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh, 2017).

Given that the prospect of remarriage is uncommon in India, the increased headship among widows shows that they decide to live with their children independently following the death of their spouse. Sometimes widows with young children go back to live with their parents. Widows are typically more likely to be heading since they are not permitted at the in-laws' house for fear that they could try to claim a portion of their assets. Due to her socio-economic circumstances, there is an increased likelihood that her in-laws may mistreat her. Additionally, she hesitates to visit her parents since she doesn't want to bother them (Swain et al., 2005).

The aspiring mother grapples with her experience in these shifting and contradictory circumstances and societal contexts (Chodon, 2020). Family life has become more underdeveloped in India due to the rise in divorce and split rates and the growth of short-lived marriage rates. Single women have assumed leadership roles in single-parent families, acting with greater

responsibility than single fathers. Women could not have choices or put their opinions into action due to different social and cultural constraints and concerns for their child's development. The primary concerns of solitary mothers relate to raising children, securing their future, and establishing themselves in life (Gadsden et al., 2016).

Due to divorce, separation, unwed motherhood, and widowhood, the woman had to support herself and her family. A single mother also runs the household, takes care of her children, and oversees in charge of running the home, taking care of her children and overseeing their schooling. If the woman makes a good living, it is not a problem, but a woman who earns little money and receives no social security must deal with numerous issues.

The UN's *The Progress of the World's Women* Based on statistics from 89 nations and territories, *Women's* (Women, UN, 2019) stated that globally, 101.3 million single mothers live with children. 7.5% of families worldwide only have one parent. These families are primarily headed by women (84.3%). Economic problems are the study of human conduct concerning close and rare implies that have elective work. In other words, it bargains with the choice problem (Chen & Edwards, 2022). All social systems face the financial problem of producing and guiding the use of limited or uncommon assets. The financial problem arises because the assets available to meet requirements and desires are limited.

The study by Gyamfi et al. (2001) indicates that while employment is linked to better mental health for low-income women, there are stronger links between entering the workforce and financial difficulty, parenting effects, and depressive effects for mothers who leave the labour. Single mothers with young children are more vulnerable to mental health problems than paired mothers, particularly when faced with financial, social, or distant adversity. Appropriate social assistance initiatives and screening methods are required to minimise further disparities (Liang et al., 2019). Single mothers were less likely to be in debt than mothers from two-parent families. However, mothers who felt alone or in stepfamilies and who lived alone or in stepfamilies and who experienced significant financial stress were more likely to report debt. Economic inequalities in the family organisation worsen (Heintz et al., 2021)

Single mothers' families, for the most part, have lower earnings and less get to well-being care. Managing work and child care can be fiscally troublesome and socially confining. Most single mothers' households may face economic

difficulties regularly. It becomes challenging to meet the basic requirements of the children, such as nutrition, clothing, education costs, keeping the previous standard of living, and fulfilling personal expenses (Kotwal & Prabhakar, 2009). In the meantime, the mothers also care for their mental health, which is vital to fulfilling their needs. The research focused on socio-economic challenges and perceived stress levels among rural single mothers.

Review of Literature:

According to Liang et al., (2019) many single parents who were also mothers struggled to manage their families because they lacked stable employment or other sources of money. They also experienced psychological and financial difficulties (Bukhari et al., 2021), dire economic circumstances, unemployment, reliance on welfare, low educational standards, many children, and early ages, negatively impacting the health outcomes of parents and their children. As a result, these single mothers were given more attention to growth programs. Another research (Zagel & Hübgen, 2018) found that 70% of single parents were female, and more than 80% were bereaved.

Single mothers (Lebert-Charron et al., 2021) have experienced less exhaustion than mothers whose partners were considered absent or only somewhat accessible. Compared to mothers whose spouse was viewed as being just moderately accessible, women with partners perceived as being extremely available had lower signs of parental burnout, anxiety, and depression. Mothers' mental health is statistically significantly impacted by their perceptions of their partners' support, which may also safeguard them as a safeguard against parental exhaustion, despair, and anxiety.

In most instances, widowhood is a significant contributor to solo parenting. However, the number has been rising recently as a result of divorce. It is essential to take notice of the rise in such households and their impact on children and society. In this case, a single mother cares for the house and the children independently. The breakdown of blended families and the rise in divorces contribute to the rise in single-mother households (Sekgale Israel Lehloko, 2021).

Knowing the good and unfavourable opinions of single mothers' social lives, cultures, and environments is necessary to gauge the quality of their lives (Chen & Edwards, 2022). On the other hand, this research will examine the various aspects of single mothers' lives, including their social and fiscal standing, mental

health issues, sexual and emotional abuse, and the government's available resources. Being a single mother involves a variety of interconnected situations (Kim et al., 2018). Single mothers with bodily and emotional illnesses have a wide range of options. Unfavourable outcomes result from insufficient care centers, illnesses, psychological issues, and despair. Severe illnesses and even mortality could come from all these stressors and bodily ailments (Hoffman & Rosenheck, 2001).

Harkness, (2022) describes lone mothers as subject to more significant financial and professional constraints. Conflicts with spouses and other family members, the stress of living alone, and loneliness lower single mothers' standing in society and make them more likely to experience financial difficulties. Poor single mothers may also experience emotional anguish (Pino Gavidia et al., 2022). In this situation, unmarried mothers experience more tremendous psychological stress than married mothers. Research claims that being a single mother causes numerous psychological changes, economic issues, a lack of social support, unemployment, inadequate money, etc. According to research, these issues are more severe in single mothers because they are traumatised twice as much as thirteen married women. Divorce can also result from a mental illness. Chronic stressors linked to lone mothers in remote areas may be more accessible and dangerous for divorced mothers (Hashim et al., 2018).

According to (Heller & Kaushik, 2020), single mothers experience financial difficulties, which could account for the rise in the number of single mothers sharing housing with spouses, parents, or other family members. Single mothers' comparatively low earnings, the absence of financial assistance from a partner, and a high need for money are the main contributors to their financial difficulties. According to (Senan, 2022) single mothers, unemployment is the biggest obstacle to their family's well-being. Unemployed unmarried mothers head one in five families. Numerous studies have shown that lone mothers encounter various issues in their daily lives. Single mothers who do not work frequently experience a lack of joyful home life, social isolation, physical and mental illness, and financial difficulties (Heller & Kaushik, 2020).

Compared to prolonged grieving symptoms, a moderate-severe symptom load for anxiety, sadness, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder was observed by most bereaved parents with young children (Falk et al., 2021). According to King et al. (2021), widowed veterans' spouses may benefit from more durable social support networks than nonveteran spouses. The subsequent research should examine if these effects continue in connection with other significant

stressful experiences that occur later in life.

The sadness and loneliness experienced after losing a husband or partner will probably not be lessened by discussing and preparing for being widowed. But being unprepared for widowhood worsens grieving, causes unneeded stress, and makes a surviving spouse's remaining years of life significantly more difficult (Chamie, 2020).

The risk of poor adjustment is elevated in the young widowed population (Chami & Pooley, 2021). Nearly two-thirds of respondents reported reduced functioning, likely depression, and significant rates of psychological discomfort. Almost half of them had extended grieving disorder, according to diagnostic standards. An attempt is to describe the exists relationship between socio economic challenges and perceived stress level among single mothers of rural Tamil Nadu. This research aims to fill gaps, develop a database for future planning, target resources and design policies more effectively.

Methods and Materials:

The present study has a descriptive research design and employs simple random sampling through the lottery method. The researcher aimed to investigate and explain the social-economic conditions and perceived stress levels among single mothers in Tamil Nadu. The semi-structured interview schedule and perceived stress level standardised scale created by Sheldon Cohen (1983) are used to obtain primary data. To strengthen the current study, the researcher has collected data through verification of Anganwadi teachers for eligibility as single mothers, such as widows, separated and divorced mothers with children, age, and residing in the four villages in Kandamangalam block, Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu, namely Rampakkam, Sornavour Keezhpathi, Sorappur, and Veeranam. In this study, data were acquired from forty interviews. The study's scope is limited, with the respondents ranging between twenty and seventy years of age and having children only included. After receiving promises of confidentiality, participants gave their informed consent. At any point, the respondents were allowed to quit the study.

Data Collection Tools:

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the researchers' customised Personal Information Form were used to gather data. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS): Cohen et al. (2004) created the scale. Erci (2006) conducted a validity and reliability analysis of the measure in Turkey. The scale has ten items, each

assessed on a five-point Likert scale. The scale yields a final score that might be anywhere between 10 and 50. Reversing replies to the four favourably expressed things and adding up all scale items results in the score. When a person has a score of 30 or more, they are considered stressed. Higher scores suggest greater stress levels. The Turkish scale translation has a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.70 (Erci, 2006). The Cronbach’s alpha for this study was determined to be 0.760.

Results:

The Socio-demographic profile, economic challenges, and perceived stress level were analysed from the collected data.

A. Socio-Demographic profile:

Table-1 explores the respondents’ socioeconomic background. According to the study findings, the ages of the participants range from 33 to 69 years. Less than half (42.5%) of those polled were between 30 and 40. Over one-third (35%) of respondents have finished their primary schooling. Most respondents remained with their offspring and one or two siblings.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of the respondents worked as farm labourers. Over half (52.5%) of the interviewees had a monthly salary of fewer than 5,000 Rupees. One-fourth (25%) of the respondents lost spouses due to alcohol-related death, while more than half (55%) lost their spouse due to the respondents losing their spouse due to different health problems.

Table 1
Respondents’ Socio-Demographic Profile

	Variables	Frequency (n=40)	Percentage (%)
Age	30 - 40	17	42.5
	41 – 50	14	35
	51 – 60	5	12.5
	61 - 70	4	10
Education Qualification	Primary	14	35
	Illiterate	13	32.5
	Middle	11	27.5
	Higher Secondary	2	5
Marital Status	Widowed	37	92.5
	Separated	3	7.5

Variables		Frequency (n=40)	Percentage (%)
Number of Children	One Children	14	35
	Two Children	14	35
	Three Children	9	22.5
	Four Children	3	7.5
Occupation Status	Agricultural Labour	30	75
	Private Company Labour	5	12.5
	Construction Labour	2	5
	Not Employed	2	5
	Government Employee	1	2.5
Monthly Income	Below Rs.5000	21	52.5
	Rs.5001-Rs.10000	11	27.5
	Rs.10001-Rs.15000	5	12.5
	Rs.15001 & Above	3	7.5
Reason for Widows, Separated and Divorced	Health Problems	22	55
	Accident	5	12.5
	Family Problems	1	2.5
	Due to Alcohol Intake	10	25
	Suicide	2	5

B. Economic Challenges:

Table 2 reveals that just over two-thirds (67.5%) of respondents experienced psychological and economic problems and 10% experienced socio-economic and psychological issues. The majority of respondents (87.5%) reported losing their jobs, which led to financial insecurity. To meet their fundamental requirements, the interviewees obtained credit from payday lenders, Self-help group loans, family members, acquaintances, jewel loans, and pawn dealers, credit from money lenders, SHG loans, family members, acquaintances, jewel loans, and pawn dealers to meet their fundamental requirements. The respondents used the credit to pay for necessities, healthcare, house improvements, and family and other relatives’ requirements.

**Table 2
Economic Challenges of Single Mothers**

Variables		Frequency (n=40)	Percentage (%)
Receiving any Financial Assistance	Yes	Widow Pension	27 67.5
		Old Age Pension	1 2.5
	No	Not Received	12 30

Variables			Frequency (n=40)	Percentage (%)
Occupation Status	Yes	Loss of Job	33	82.5
	No	Full salary (Government employee), Partial Salary (Private Company Labour) and sometimes got a job (Agricultural Labour)	7	17.5
Financial Support to handle the situation	Yes	Getting Credit from Money Lenders, Loans from Self Help Groups, Family and Friends, and Jewel Loans from Pawn Brokers.	33	82.5
	No	Own Parents, Own savings and Not Necessary	7	17.5
Purpose of Credit	Yes	Daily necessities, Health-related requirements, Home Construction, Family and other family functions	33	82.5
	No	Own savings and Not Necessary	7	17.5

C. Perceived Stress Level:

Table 3
The Perceived Stress Level

Perceived Stress Level	Frequency	Percentage
Moderate Level	29	72.5
High Level	11	27.5
Total Level	40	100

Table 4
Pearson’s correlation between age, years of living without a spouse and perceived stress scale

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2- tailed)	N
Age	-.334*	.035	40
Living without Spouse	-.042	.796	

*The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

The majority of respondents (72.5%, as shown in Table 3) report a medium degree of stress, while 27.5% report a high level of stress. Table 4 shows that age and perceived stress have a statistically significant correlation; however, there is no correlation between perceived stress and the number of years spent alone.

Discussion:

The various unexpected events have widened the socio-economic divide in Indian society, particularly among single mothers. According to the research

findings, half (51%) of respondents resided without their partner for one to ten years. The majority of respondents' spouses died as a result of different health issues, a result of alcohol-related mortality or an accident. Most single mothers have finished elementary school. Similarly, Härkönen (2018) discovered that poorer education levels among lone parents explain some of their elevated poverty risks. Except for a few private company workers, most in a private company, most respondents were labourers in agriculture. Most of them modified their day-to-day with credit from money lenders and self-help groups (SHGs) to purchase their daily house necessities and other family and related functions. Most respondents were in financial debt from different sources such as money lenders, jewellery loans, neighbours, and relatives. Most respondents, particularly young single mothers, anticipate any good government work based on their school credentials. Many single mothers struggled to provide for their children's academic requirements and felt concerned about their futures. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) provided cash assistance to applicants for a hundred days of wage work. Most respondents lived in hut-style homes; however, there was no appropriate assistance from anyone for building their own homes, and few lived in a constructed house due to insufficient money to construct further. The research has found that stressors cause psychological distress, worry, and health problems (Campbell et al., 2016). The study by Stack and Meredith (2018) shows that single mothers experienced significant psychological distress, worry, and stress due to their current position of sole obligation and concerns about their financial situation. However, the current study's experts have found that the economic crisis of single mothers directly impacts their psychological well-being. However, recent research has identified the factors that can either increase or decrease stress levels, especially psychological management, family support, coping with stress, and adversity financially. Many single mothers experience more significant psychological stress and dread, weakening them monetarily. They sometimes worry about how they will raise and discipline their children.

Conclusion:

The current situation of single mothers was too deplorable, particularly the idea of communities ranging from socio-economically sound too unstable due to several variables. Among the vulnerable populations in marginalised areas are single mothers. According to this research, single mothers are more psychologically and monetarily disadvantaged, and the government needs to review its current assistance programs to improve the welfare of single mothers.

Psychologists and social workers, for example, must strive to improve the emotional health of single mothers on various levels. Through a self-sustaining initiative, the civic group can focus on the financial security of single mothers. Social workers are deeply committed to addressing societal challenges and are committed to learning more about the psychological problems faced by single mothers in order to develop interventions that will improve their quality of life on a daily basis.

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Conflict of Interest:

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Studying factors affecting job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst school teachers in UAE

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate the job satisfaction and organisational commitment of teachers in UAE. Literature review done based on underline theories and on the past research bases. It was an empirical study. The research design was a descriptive design. Total 224 respondents' data was collected through a structured questionnaire from secondary schools in UAE. Data collected from the teachers of these schools online and offline modes. Smart PLS 4 software were used to analyse the data. Reliability and validity analyses were performed. Structure equation modelling performed to test the hypotheses. Moreover, Mediation analyses run to test the effect of mediating variable. Research revealed that teacher having good physical environments, good management policy, Organisational structure of the school and good school culture and climate having high Job satisfaction, and high Job satisfactions will increase their organisational commitment. Teachers who were dissatisfied with their workloads and the variety of responsibilities they had at the school. Their relationships with their school administrators and School Management Teams were negative in this area. Several individuals also lacked discipline and performed below expectations. The study has theoretical contributes in the area of Job satisfaction and organisational commitment. The study also has practical contribution for the school administration, Government policy makers and managers in this area. The study made recommendations to improve the motivation and job satisfaction of teachers.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Organisational factors, Organisational commitment, Teachers, Schools, UAE

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Introduction:

“Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life”.
– Confucius

The education career is one of the greatest vital parts of the educational system, and effort satisfaction is highly valued in contemporary everyday life. The teacher community is one of the cornerstones of social development and achievement (Lavy & Naama-ghanayim, 2020). They found that a good teaching and learning process depends on having a loving, welcoming, secure, and supporting environment in schools and classrooms. Teachers' performance a serious role in the growth of a prosperous, just, and compassionate society. The ratio of teachers to students has a big impact on how well the educational system is doing. It goes without saying that the value of teaching is directly impacted by the number of educators in the system, who make up 75% of the workforce. Due to the daily growth in administrative and other activities, teachers are unable to fulfil their core responsibility of educating pupils, which results in dissatisfaction with the fulfilment of job tasks. By considering the educational environment, the teacher's assessment of the school climate and his or her interaction with environment aspects may be used to describe the work satisfaction of the instructor (Zembylas & Papanastasiou 2004).

Teachers consider their work, their working surroundings, their relationships with coworkers and superiors, and their prospects for professional development and financial gain when evaluating how happy they are in their jobs. Creating an organisational environment that enables teachers to carry out their responsibilities in a competent and independent way should be the main focus if creating high-quality schools is the desired outcome. The number of internal and extrinsic factors that affect a teacher's work satisfaction varies. Teachers are highly happy about their school and how it is set up and operated when they feel empowered in areas that are important to them.

These crucial areas contain existence knowledgeable and engaging in consultative, supportive, and collaborative managerial, especially when given the chance to contribute to the creation of school areas (1999 Churchill & Williamson.). On the other hand, teachers who stay not fulfilled with their occupations will display actions such as frequent absences, stress and burnout, frequent absences from school, poor performance of assigned tasks, a lack of emphasis on student achievement and progress, conflicts with superiors, an aggressive or disobedient manner towards coworkers then students, a deficiency of support, a lack of inventiveness to helper their services for mission completion, and spiritual wit.

The phrase “the good old days of teaching are gone forever” is frequently used by disgruntled educators. Past researchers evaluated teachers’ happiness with several elements of their jobs in order to gauge work satisfaction in educational contexts. In the experiments mentioned above, Sergiovanni et al. (1967) determined job satisfaction by gauging the degree to which instructors felt their professional demands were met. Literature also suggesting that, “The effects of needs, organizational factors, and teachers’ characteristics on job satisfaction in kindergarten teachers,” the “satisfied teacher” is additional expected to be elder, have more teaching knowledge, besides be a portion of a school with a developed level of organizational difficulty.

Review of Literature:

Job Satisfaction:

Job fulfilment is an oft quoted terminology in employee workplace parlance. Its stimuluses one to wonder if spirits of joy, fear, and worry are important aspects in job satisfaction. We evaluate our job satisfaction through the lenses of the work we do, the working environment, our interactions with coworkers and superiors, and the chance to progress and learn. The three attitudes about work that are associated are job satisfaction, performance, and loyalty to the company. The popularity and volume of study on these attitudes implies that they have a direct impact on employees’ desire and intention to remain in their field. Everybody seeks for the good feeling of fulfillment, which is regarded as one of our fundamental requirements. When a person achieves their goals or satisfies their ambitions, they feel satisfied. It has been demonstrated by the International Social Research Program, which was undertaken in 1997 in 21 nations, that employee satisfaction levels affect the caliber of the work. Work satisfaction, affording to (1935) Hoppock, is at all collection of physical, physiological, and environmental basics that source an individual to truly say that they are satisfied in their employment. The majority of researchers concur that factors that affect job satisfaction contain the work the thing, pay, benefits, management, advancement, working environment, besides the work group and relationships within it (Luthans et al., 2005; Scarpello and Campbell, 1983).

Graham (1982) defines job satisfaction as “the sum of a person’s perceptions and attitudes towards their work.” A person’s subjective appraisal of their job in respect to the aspects that are significant to them, according to (2002) Sempene, Rieger, and Roodt, is a critical component in determining job satisfaction. Employees’ levels of job satisfaction have a huge influence on their social,

Dharmesh Gadhavi, Sooraj Ramchandran, Amit Patel, Krupa Modi & Dharmendra Thaker professional, and personal lives, which in turn affects how they behave at work since these assessments take people's emotions into consideration. Work satisfaction, according to Buitendach and De Witte (2005) an attitude and expressive reaction that indicates how persons feel around their employment in general as glowing as specific parts of their workplaces.

Organizational Commitment:

The relationship or link between employees and their employer is referred to as organisational commitment (the organization). As a result of embracing the organization's aims, workers attach meaning to the company, which is referred to as commitment. In this context, Liou (2008) outlined organisational commitment to help employees develop as professionals and adopt the company's aims and values. In addition, according to Liou (2008), within the confines of place and time, organisational commitment entails a mindset that develops as a result of interactions between an organisation and an individual, as glowing as a sturdy want to keep positive relationships with the organisation.

According to a variety of academic studies arranged the concept of "organisational commitment," this concept may stay explained as of an "attitudinal", "behavioural", and 'motivational' standpoint. Organisational commitment manifests spirits such as connection, proof of identity, and faithfulness to the administration as the commitment's entity (McElroy 1993). Organisational assurance can be definite as people interim in a specific method because they feel it is ethically correct rather than because it would benefit them individually. Employees' reception of organisational goal line and their readiness to put out exertion on behalf of the administration are characteristics of organisational commitment from the perspective of motivation (Miller & Lee 2001). The extent to which a worker is prepared to continue their involvement owing to attention in then affiliation with the organization's aims and ethics is, thus, referred to as organisational commitment.

The popular tri-dimensional model was utilised by Meyer and Allen (1997) to conceptualise organisational commitment in terms of its emotional, continuation, and normative aspects. These dimensions discussed the various organisational commitment development processes and their effects on employee behaviour. The teaching profession places highly on a society's success list, claims Bishay (1996). In addition, it has been noted that "teachers' organisational commitment and overall job happiness" (Howell & Dorfman, 1986) are crucial to comprehending how workers behave at work. It has been demonstrated that

job happiness among teachers is a crucial factor of teacher commitment, which in turn contributes to school success. Work satisfaction among educators is a multidimensional concept that is essential to teacher maintenance. According to Bishay (1996), employees will be more committed to their work if they are happy with it. Negatively inclined employees, on the other hand, will eventually quit the company.

Organizational Factors:

All of these factor's performance an important part in job satisfaction and organisational commitment, as do good relationships between coworkers, the absenteeism of conflict among coworkers, good message and an outgoing environment at effort, as well as support from capable and dependable coworkers in carrying out responsibilities. Hence, organisational factors include all of the aspects that have an impact on how the organisation functions and how each individual inside it behaves. Physical working conditions, management and policy, leadership, compensation, organisational structure, and culture and atmosphere are all included.

Extrinsic or environment linked factors are other names for them. People most frequently want to become teachers because they desire to work with children. As pay, perks, and status are intrinsically viewed as poor, very few people choose to teach for these reasons. Extrinsic factors, on the other hand, can have an impact on a person's work happiness, dedication, and desire to continue teaching throughout their career, whereas intrinsic causes may inspire people to become teachers.

Physical Working Conditions:

The socioeconomic position of the school has an impact on the instructors' planes of inspiration and work fulfilment, which in turn has an impact on students' academic progress (Christie et al., 2007; Smith & Hoy, 2007). About of the tasks dominant in these parts include:

Absence of physical funds such access to fresh water, good cleanliness, and basic organization; crowded schoolrooms; insufficient staffing and support for teachers; students' poor behaviour and refusal to follow directions and comply by the school's Cryptogram of Manner; and

The disparities that occur among the poorly resource schools, and the ongoing assessments of student results among sick and well-resourced school forms; •

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the outward lack of paternal involvement and administration of students' work at home-grown; • strength, threats of fear, and atrocious beatings on teachers who are apparent to be applying "undue pressure" on students by difficult that work be complete. Vischer, J. C. (2007) believes that physical environment and job satisfaction are related.

Policy and Management:

Governments and representatives perceive education schemes as tools for social commerce and the instigation of economic growing, claims Swanepoel (2009). According to "Popleton and Williamson" (2004), educators who are more actively complicated in and supportive of school reform would feel better about it and be more inclined to take part in such changes in the future.

Many rules permeate the educational environment and have an impact on how schools operate. The regulations governing teachers' salary, admittance, correction, security and security, elevations, school administration, gratitude and awards, valuation, and teachers' assessment were recognized as having a significant effect on educators' motivation and effort satisfaction in this study.

Organizational Structure of the School:

In the "United Arab Emirates", the state has authority over fundamental structural elements such school registration, teacher registration, pay and responsibilities, learner age restrictions, student-teacher proportions, program at each equal, and official exit guarantee. Schools are proper organisations with formalised teaching and learning, a labor-divided structure, administrative red tape, and standardisation practises (1998 Christie,). Schools which are official organizations, position individuals in certain connections to one another both inside and outside of their walls, such as students, instructors, principals, parents, and inspectors.

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School Culture and Climate:

Culture is seen as a phenomenon that exists at the set, institutional, level even if it takes a significant impact on predicting the actions of specific individuals. A school of culture encompasses its societies, rites, customs, awards ceremonies, besides disciplinary policies, which are typically rooted in the institution's past. About schools have poisonous cultures, which means that there is constant hatred and struggle between the instructors (Vail, 2005). The majority of the time, this poisonous culture results from "personality conflicts, professional rivalry, intolerance, envy", and prejudice. It is detrimental to the collegial essence and the accomplishment of common objectives. The principal must carefully address the presence of these ties and diffuse them in order to create an environment that is favorable to teaching and knowledge (Bloch, 2009 and Evans, 2001).

Climate in a school is influenced by its culture. Milner & Khoza (2008) define school climate as the collective view of organizational policies, practices, and processes, together official and casual. School climate is the "attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms" that support instructional methods then school processes (Milner and Khoza, *ibid.*). A healthy school atmosphere, according to Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland (2003), is one that fosters positive interactions between students, teachers, and administrators with the aim of setting challenging yet doable goals and putting effort into achieving them. Administrators are responsible for fostering a positive school atmosphere and culture. Teachers are more motivated, more optimistic, and additional satisfied through their occupations when their head teacher successfully outline their school's objective, effectively administer the school of instructional programmer, and actively foster a good learning environment.

The following hypotheses have been proposed.

H₁: Physical working conditions has positive and significant influence on Teacher's Job satisfaction

H₂: Policy and management have positive and significant influence on Teacher's Job satisfaction

H₃: School culture and climate has positive and significance influence on Teacher's Job satisfaction

H₄: Organizational structure of the school has positive and significance influence

H₅: Organizational factors have positive and significant influence on Teacher's organizational commitment via Job satisfaction.

School's Environment in United Arab Emirates:

An elective monarchy made up of seven emirates, the UAE is a nation in the middle east. Each emirate is headed by an Emir or Sheikh, and the emirs collectively make up the Federal Supreme Council, which chooses the nation's President, Vice President, and Prime Minister. Almost 120 different nations with a diverse spectrum of cultural, religious, and ethnic origins make up the business community in the UAE. The economy of the UAE is one that is rapidly growing. Manufacturing, logistics, finance, and tourism are just a few of the businesses it is aggressively developing and promoting. Due to its contemporary investment rules, excellent infrastructure, and accessible youthful and large pool of expatriate workers who tend to be talented, the UAE has attracted numerous foreign businesses that operate both inside and outside of free zones.

The number of Indian expatriate employees in the UAE is the fifth-largest in the world. As an economy dominated by expatriates, the UAE has seen tremendous development in the teaching sector. In recognition of this, the UAE Government devotes over 15% of its entire budgetary allocation to education. Moreover, the nation has a sizable number of private foreign schools. This is partly a result of the enormous number of aspiring expatriates living in the UAE. As teachers make up 75% of a school's workforce, the need for teachers grows along with the number of schools, which calls for research on job satisfaction and organisational commitment among instructors.

Conceptual Farmwork:

Maslow of Hierarchy of Wants, the Motivation Hygiene Concept, the Work Features Model, and the Dispositional Method are the four key theories that aid in understanding job satisfaction. The five levels of demands listed in Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954, 1970) are intended to satisfy the wants of the employer. Physiological, safe, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization are among these levels. This category also includes ERG theory, motivator-hygiene theory, and achievement theory. Motivation-hygiene theory, often known as Herzberg's dual-factor theory was initially developed by a psychologist named Frederick Herzberg in 1959, when he published the

two-factor model of motivation alongside (Lumadi 2014).

Hackman and Oldham's (1975) conceptual framework, which served as the spark for numerous studies, was influenced by Hackman and Lawler's (1971) Job characteristics model. Enriched or sophisticated jobs, according to their Work Characteristics Model (JCM), are largely associated with greater levels of job satisfaction, motivation, and production. For this study we have used Hackman and Oldham's (1975) conceptual framework as base.

Proposed research model:

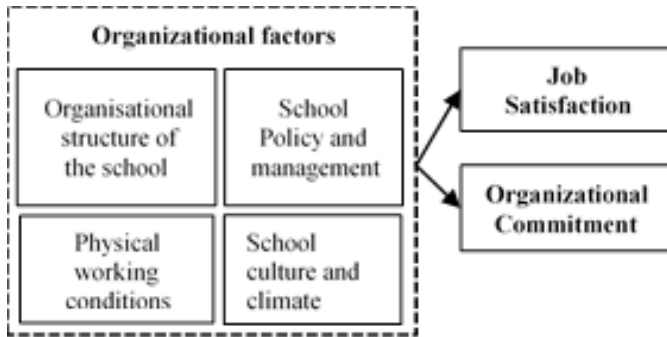
Research methodology:

For the current study, responses from UAE school teachers were gathered using a standardised questionnaire. Information gathered from the best UAE schools. Convenience sampling (non-Probability) was used to collect the data. Data gathered through personal interviews, social media and email. Hence, a total of 250 individuals were contacted, and it was determined that 224 of them qualified to participate in the study. A modified survey with a "5-point Likert scale", straddling from (1) strongly disagree (2) to strongly agree (3), was used to perform the study (5) was administered.

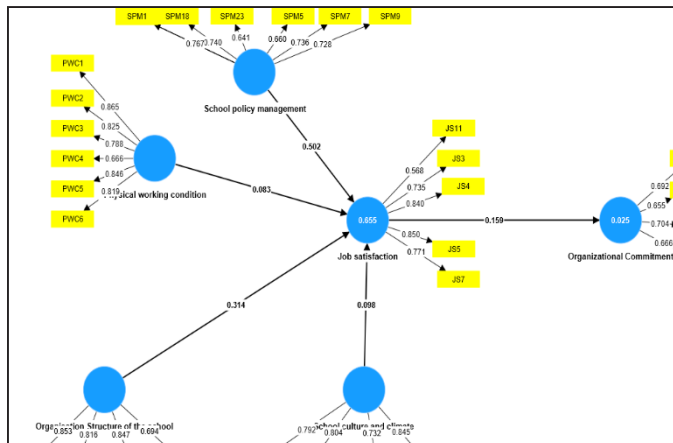
The respondents' demographic profile is as follows. The respondent's age ranged from 18 to 64. Ages 22 to 28 make up the majority of the sample. There were 68 females and 156 males in all. Consequently, it was determined sample is dominated by the men respondents.

Data Analysis:

Data analysis plays a key role in transforming raw data into insights for drawing meaningful conclusions. To test the proposed hypotheses, we conducted a data analysis, using SMART PLS4 for reliability, validity, and SEM (Structural Equation Model) testing. We used SEM as it examines the complex relationships among the study variables, assessing both the direct and indirect effects within a theoretical model. Notably, both the reliability and validity for each scale used in the questionnaire developed was established.



Assessment’s measurement model:



Construct Reliability and Validity:

The measurement classical was assessed by means of “internal reliabilities, composite reliability”, and Henseler of rhoA for the thoughtful constructs used in the model (Hair et al., 2022). The results are within the threshold limit (Table 4.1). Average variance extracted was calculated to determine the Convergent validity and all the values were more than 0.50 showing the convergent rationality was established.

Outer loadings for all the construct were more than 0.70, indicating reliability of the scales. In addition, Cronbach’s alpha calculated was more than 07 for all the construct showing that the reliability of the scale is established. Moreover, values of rho_a and rho_c were more than 0.7 and resulting reliability of the scale.

Table 4.1 Construct reliability & validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Job satisfaction	0.810	0.825	0.870	0.577
Organisation Structure of the school	0.819	0.846	0.880	0.649
Organizational Commitment	0.663	0.605	0.774	0.462
Physical working condition	0.889	0.889	0.916	0.647
School culture and climate	0.808	0.831	0.872	0.631
School policy management	0.808	0.826	0.857	0.436

Discriminant validity Heterotrait Monotrait) HTMT ratio

Table 4.2 showing the (Heterotrait Monotrait) HTMT relation which is used to determine the (discriminant validity) (2016) Heseler et al. The threshold value of Heterotrait Monotrait ratio is less than 0.90. Here the values are less than 0.90 indicating establishment of (discriminant validity).

Table: 4.2 Discriminant validity, HTMT ratio

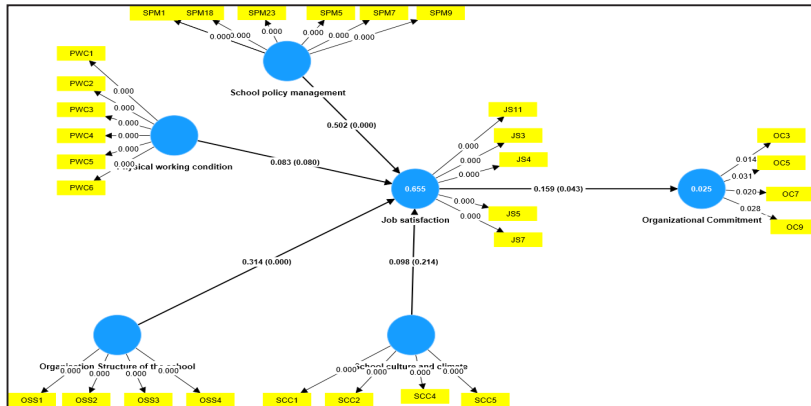
	Job satisfaction	Organisation Structure of the school	Organizational Commitment	Physical working condition	School culture and climate	School policy management
Job satisfaction						
Organisation Structure of the school	0.737					
Organizational Commitment	0.185	0.354				
Physical working condition	0.619	0.342	0.177			
School culture and climate	0.636	0.724	0.270	0.362		
School policy management	0.889	0.500	0.156	0.767	0.562	

Table: 4.3 (R square)

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job satisfaction	0.655	0.649
Organizational Commitment	0.025	0.021

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R Square rate point to the variance in endogenous variable clarified by the exogenous variable. The value of R Square should be between 0.25 low to 0.75 high Hair et al. (2011). Here the model explained 64.9 percent of the alteration in the results indicates that it is adequately suited.

Structural Model: PLS-SEM



Assessment’s structural model

The structural classical evaluations were carried out in accord with the recommendations made by (2019, 2022) Hair et al. First, the VIF was examined, with 3.111 being the biggest VIF found.

Finally, the study applied the bootstrapping approach to 10,000 subsamples to analyse the import of the path coefficients.

Path coefficient: All the path are significant except School culture and climate -> Job satisfaction.

Table 4.4 Path coefficient

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Job satisfaction -> Organizational Commitment	0.159	0.185	0.078	2.024	0.043*
Organisation Structure of the school -> Job satisfaction	0.314	0.304	0.087	3.624	0.000*

Physical working condition -> Job satisfaction	0.083	0.080	0.047	1.751	0.080**
School culture and climate -> Job satisfaction	0.098	0.114	0.079	1.242	0.214
School policy management -> Job satisfaction	0.502	0.501	0.076	6.632	0.000*

**p < 0.1, *p < 0.05*

Constructed on the path examination following hypotheses testing results have been obtained.

Table: 4.5

Hypotheses	Results
H1: Physical working conditions has positive effect on Teacher’s Job satisfaction	Accepted
H2: Policy and management has positive effect on Teacher’s Job satisfaction	Accepted
H3: School culture and climate has positive effect on Teacher’s Job satisfaction	Not Accepted
H4: Organisational structure of the school has positive effect on Teacher’s Job satisfaction	Accepted
H5: Job satisfaction has positive influence on Organizational commitment	Accepted

Discussion:

Teachers’ motivation and job satisfaction are influenced by the corporal occupied environment of their schools. Even if the school has excellent infrastructure, like a well-stocked library, a Jim, a sports ground, and a clean, green environment, these factors play a role in deciding how fulfilled employees are with their jobs. In the end, it will also contribute to the organisational commitment. High pay, opportunities for advancement and raises, and perks boost employees’ organisational commitment by raising their level of job satisfaction. Additionally, it has been found that staying longer in a particular organisation increases knowledge of its operations and policies, which reduces errors at work and, as a result, increases commitment to the organisation; it also increases the productivity of the organisation and of the faculty, which further increases employees’ job satisfaction.

Relationships between leadership, performance, and turnover may also be

Dharmesh Gadhavi, Sooraj Ramchandran, Amit Patel, Krupa Modi & Dharmendra Thaker explained by unmeasured elements of the school environment, such as community support, material assistance, etc. Future study should focus on sorting these relationships by gathering information on leadership, performance, organisational environment, and turnover over a number of time periods from other sources. It has been determined that the various aspects of work satisfaction have an effect on the faculty's organisational commitment. The following factors of job satisfaction have an influence on job satisfaction: safety and security regarding the job, variety of tasks and responsibilities, good relationships with management, opportunities for improving skills and knowledge, recognition, flexible working hours, responsibilities, better physical working conditions, conducting seminars or conferences or other training programmes, good salary along with fringe benefits, opportunities for promotion, and supportive and talented co-workers. If these conditions are met, there will be a greater organisational commitment and happier employees. Benefits, opportunities for promotion, supportive and talented co-workers; all these factors of job satisfaction have an impact of the organization commitment of the faculties. If these factors are fulfilled then it would lead to higher organizational commitment and satisfied faculties.

Implications:

It is advised that educational institutions put more emphasis on pay, benefits, physical working conditions, and opportunities for growth like holding conferences and seminars or occasionally offering other faculty development programmes in order to growth the job fulfilment of the faculty members working in higher education institutions. They would get more knowledge, but it would also improve their skills. Just some of faculty have completed a PHD, thus the administration should encourage them to continue their study even after starting a profession. The management is required to adhere completely to UGC/AICTE standards. The management must consider the factors that will encourage employees to stay with the company longer while designing and implementing policies, then include those factors into the rules and working practises.

As Physical environment, Policy & management and Organization structure is positively affecting on Job satisfaction and ultimately influencing the teacher's commitment the school management and Government should focus on these variables and try to improve it as much as possible. Teacher should be provided overall good physical environment to work like smart boards, smart classrooms, and cleanliness in the staff room or cabin area. Teacher's inputs should be taken in account while making a top-level policy of the school. Management

should ensure healthy relationship amongst the teachers and teachers and staffs. Moreover, there should be proper conflict management policy.

The workplace should be designed such that employees are motivated to take on more responsibility, don't feel under pressure to complete tasks, and believe there is room for progress in the future. They would feel less bored at work and the monotony of their work would be reduced by giving them a variety of activities and responsibilities. In the event that the faculties do well, management should ensure that their efforts are recognised by providing them with suitable awards. It would boost their self-assurance and zeal, forge a link of trust, and as a result, it would strengthen their promise to the school and job fulfilment.

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Understanding Menstrual Hygiene Management and Disposal Practices in Shimla City, Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

Menstruation is a natural bodily process of releasing blood every month and has been marked as a significant biological and physiological change that occurs at the age of adolescence and lasts till the age of menopause. Menstruation is a phenomenon experienced by women and girls every month. The secrecy on the matter, cultural practices and traditions influence the way of dealing with menstruation (Rajagopal&Mathur, 2017). Menstruation is still considered a matter of disgrace and impurity and inhibits women to exercise the rights to freedom, education, and worship (Prasanna, 2016). Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) has incorporated that women can manage menstruation with dignity and without discomfort when they can use clean menstrual materials to collect and absorb menstrual blood that can be changed in privacy whenever they want to change with the accessibility of water and soap for washing the body and subsequently when they have access to safe and convenient disposal of used menstrual materials. The disposal of menstrual waste is a matter of silence because no change is observable on the ground even after mentioning menstrual waste in the Solid Waste Management Rules, as nothing has been changed on the ground. Normally, 8 dispensable sanitary pads are used by 121 million women and young girls creating 1.021 million sanitary pads burden monthly and 12.3 billion yearly (Ghosh et al., 2020). These products take 500 to 800 years to break down into smaller microplastics in the presence of light and have an inverse impact on marine and human life (Peberdy, 2019). These products are not only adding plastic waste but inversely impacting women's health due to the presence of chemicals which are added to make them more appealing. The presence of dioxins which are used to make the product white and sterile is responsible for ovarian cancer (House et al., 2012). The lack of segregation, disposal facilities and social stigma associated with menstruation affect the disposal behaviour of menstruating women. Further, women's knowledge, attitude, and availability of menstrual products are some factors that determine their choices of using them without knowing the adverse impacts on their health. The present study aims to understand menstruating women's attitudes, knowledge, perception, and willingness to the usage of safe products and disposal practices which in totality are the area of the menstrual hygiene management. For the study, Shimla has been chosen because of the presence of a Municipal Corporation as urban local bodies are responsible for safe disposal practices as per the rules

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Journal of Social Work and Social Development, Volume 14, Number 03, Special Issue, December 2023 of solid waste management. The study is descriptive in nature based on a mixed methods research methodology and resorted to purposive sampling to collect the primary data. The secondary data was sourced from reports, research articles, websites, governmental rules, regulations, and policy documents.

Keywords: Menstruation, Menstrual Hygiene Management, Menstrual materials, Health Impact, and Disposal Practices

Introduction:

Menstruation is a biological process that typically begins during puberty in adolescent girls between the ages of 10 and 19. The process continues until menopause in women of reproductive age which occurs in their late forties and fifties. Every month, the ovaries produce an egg that travels to the uterus where a dense layer of blood is present for the development of a fertilized egg. If the egg is fertilized by sperm, the process is known as pregnancy. However, if the egg is not fertilized, the uterine lining is shed through the vagina in the form of blood commonly known as menstruation (Water Supply & Sanitation Collaborative Council, n.d.) while the management of hygiene associated with the menstrual process is known as Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) (UNICEF, 2019). Menstruation is a phenomenon experienced by women and girls every month. The secrecy on the matter, cultural practices and traditions influence how menstruation is dealt (Rajagopal & Mathur, 2017).

Menstruation is still considered a matter of disgrace and impurity and inhibits women from exercising freedom, education, and worship (Prasanna, 2016) this holds true for India till now. Though it is a biological process, menstruating women and girls are taught to cope with it and not enter temples premises, touch holy objects, stay solitarily in unattached rooms for several days, and avoid contact with other individuals. These and several other restrictions control twelve weeks of women's lives in a year (Arora, 2017).

Thus, the commencement of menstruation brings susceptibility to discrimination, social exclusion, harassment, gender inequality, and stigma. Women and girls are deprived of personal choices and mobility during menstruation which causes extra stress and anxiety. Only menstrual hygiene management intervention can help prevent these challenges by helping women and girls not just deal with menstruation with dignity and confidence but also enable them to attain their unmet needs to deal with menstruation (UNICEF, 2018).

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM):

The track of menstrual hygiene is quite interesting as it has covered a long distance due to shrouded myths, misbeliefs, silence and a shameful environment prevailing around the matter. The matter remained unnoticed till contemporary times due to its absence in public health agendas but in contemporary times, it has had positive momentum and a special day has been designated to talk over the topic openly and to lay stress on managing menstruation safely and without fear. In the series of initiatives, May 28 is celebrated as menstrual hygiene day to spread awareness and now the matter has emerged as a global concern (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India). The main motive of MHM is to enable women and girls to reach their full potential by espousing good practices to manage menstruation with dignity and without distress.

The World Health Organization and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's Joint Monitoring Programme for drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene, 2018 have defined MHM as "Women and adolescent girls are using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to safe and convenient facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials. They understand the basic facts linked to the menstrual cycle and how to manage it with dignity and without discomfort or fear."

Women face obstacles in managing menstrual hygiene due to a lack of knowledge, awareness and social silence about menstruation. These challenges affect their health and well-being. Unhygienic practices, like unclean sanitary materials, cause bacterial infection; changing menstrual pads rarely and infrequently may cause skin irritation and infections; unprotected sex increases the potential for Hepatitis B and HIV. Additionally, the lack of hand wash facilities after changing sanitary pads increases the chances of thrush and Hepatitis B whereas frequent douching booms the bacterial infection into the uterine cavity and improper disposal practices can harm and cause infections to those who come in direct contact with it. All these are matters of concern and menstrual hygiene management addresses the issue of managing safe and secure menstruation (House et al., 2012).

Though MHM is still beyond the reach of 500 million women and girls globally who are facing inadequate WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene) facilities to

meet their monthly menstruation flow with dignity and without distress (World Bank, 2018). Menstrual hygiene impacts the confidence, health, self-esteem, and socialization of women and girls which is directly linked to gender equality (Sinha & Paul, 2018).

Poor menstrual hygiene has a direct link with urinary and reproductive tract infections which can cause ovarian cancer, uterine fibroids, toxic shock syndrome, endometriosis, and vaginitis. However, the use of menstrual products for long hours can also cause hypersensitivity among women, particularly those who have sensitive skin. Friction due to wearing sanitary products for long hours and elongated contact of menstrual products with the skin can cause irritation and infection while adhesiveness and odour neutralizers intended to enhance the acceptability and absorbency of sanitary pads may affect the health of women and girls (House et al., 2012). Accordingly, sanitary waste after it is discarded adds an unnecessary burden to the environment. In India, around 336 million women are experiencing menstruation and approximately 121 million are managing their menstruation by using an average of 8 sanitary pads per cycle. However, it is resulting in the disposal of 1 billion sanitary pads every month and 12 billion annually. (Murlidharan, 2018).

The MHM Guidelines (Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Government of India, 2015) addressed the multifaceted issues related to menstrual hygiene management comprising women and girls and supporting the congenial environment that surrounds them including culture, beliefs, and taboos. It emphasized meeting the specific needs of women and girls during menstruation related to hygiene and health like access to the right knowledge, information, awareness and access to safe material, facility of water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure and access to safe disposal of used menstrual products. It has enabled them to manage their menstruation dignity and privacy. Accordingly, MHM has also outlined the desired action from state and district administration, and technical experts in departments as well as from teachers and schools for the achievement of key issues related to menstruation.

Initiatives and Programmes Supporting MHM:

The central government has rolled out various programmes and schemes viz. menstrual hygiene scheme under National Health Mission (NHM) & Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram(RKSK), Jan Aushadhi Suvidha Napkins Scheme etc. under the different ministries and departments for the successful implementation of menstrual hygiene which is an encouraging

step. In line with this step, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is creating awareness, ensuring the supply of sanitary pads, facilitating toilets in schools and households and whereas the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation is enabling the safe disposal of menstrual products. Similarly, the Ministry of Women and Children addresses the need of those girls who are not in school and whereas the Ministry of Human Resource Development is imparting training to the teachers to facilitate the girls regarding menstrual hygiene management. The ministry is also sensitizing the school management committee to facilitate and support the girls to cope with their menstruation and to reach their fathers to sensitize them on menstruation so that they can take a supportive and righteous decision (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India).

In October 2014, the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) evolved as the turning point for menstrual hygiene. The state governments became bound to improve MHM and with the launch of the second phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen in October 2019 issue of sanitation and hygiene related to MHM has been addressed. The SBM-G is addressing menstrual hygiene management through two key approaches. Firstly, focusing on providing information, education, and communication (IEC) to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene. Secondly emphasizing the importance of the safe disposal of menstrual waste (Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, 2022).

Likewise, guidelines for SBM, 2014 (Ministry of Urban Development, GoI) have catered for the need for household toilets/community toilets/public toilets, solid waste management, IEC& public awareness and as well as capacity-building components. NFHS-5 in 2021 highlighted that the use of shared facility toilets is higher in urban households, where 11 per cent of people use them, compared to 7 per cent in rural households. Furthermore, SBM – Urban 2.0 (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, 2021) has become the world’s largest behaviour change programme because it has put the sanitation programme at the centre point of the government’s national development agenda. It has envisioned a “garbage-free” urban India and has put forth the segregation, collection, and disposal of sanitary waste. The programme has also given the specification for constructing community toilets with the installation of small-scale incarceration consisting of more than ten seats and having a vending machine for sanitary napkins in ladies’ toilets. Thus, SBM is supporting all the issues important for the safe handling of menstruation is being catered for it and MHM has become an integral part of it.

The Manual on IEC for ODF Plus (Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, 2021) has highlighted that states, districts and Gram Panchayats are responsible for spreading awareness on menstrual waste management among them. To support this endeavour, it has been emphasized that IEC funds under SBM-G may also be used to spread awareness regarding the usage of reusable sanitary pads and menstrual cups to reduce menstrual waste. Furthermore, the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 have ensured proper disposal of sanitary waste and waste has been kept under the dry waste category of non-biodegradable waste. Besides it, the Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules, 2016 has identified the waste containing blood and tissue under the category of bio-medical waste which should be incinerated, microwaved, or autoclaved to kill the pathogens and avoid the risk of infections. Accordingly, the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2016 (Central Pollution Control Board, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, 2018) have also specified the role of stakeholders like consumers, producers, urban local bodies, villages, and panchayats at the local level for the disposal of safe sanitary waste. The rules have also ensured the secure wrap of sanitary waste in pouches provided by manufacturers and brand owners so that its safe disposal may be ensured. The recommendation of pit burning, composting, deep burial, high-temperature incinerators, electric incinerators and low-cost and locally made incinerators have been given for their safe disposal depending on the type of waste and where to use it.

Therefore, all the initiatives and programmes are sound for building awareness through well-targeted communication, focusing on the formulation of state-specific MHM guidelines, capacity building at all levels and sharing of good practices with the central ministry. To know the ground reality up to what extent these programmes have supported MHM and whether MHM has succeeded to create awareness, building understanding levels and refining their attitude and perception of menstruating women and the surrounding environment is a big question itself.

The Rationale of the Study:

The need for the study has been felt keeping in view to understand the knowledge, perception and awareness of menstrual hygiene management acquired by women and girls after the implementation of several initiatives and programmes run by the government in line with several ministries and departments. Consequently, Shimla has been chosen as the government of Himachal Pradesh is also promoting menstrual hygiene through various programmes like the *Sashakt Mahila Yojna*

executed by the Directorate of Women & Child Development (Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of Himachal Pradesh), the Menstrual Hygiene Programme (National Health Mission, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Himachal Pradesh, n.d.) and “Woh Din” scheme on menstrual hygiene management (Directorate of Higher Education, Government of Himachal Pradesh, 2020). Despite the significant growth in the field of MHM and after the implementation of SWM, 2016 whether desirable changes have been noticed or not regarding understanding, knowledge, awareness, and perception level to manage menstruation. To know this a study has been conducted in Shimla city among menstruating women.

Objectives:

- To understand the knowledge, awareness and perception of menstrual hygiene among menstruating women.
- To assess the perceptions of practices being adopted by women to manage menstrual hygiene.
- To examine the practices adopted by women regarding the disposal of menstrual waste.

Theoretical Framework:

To meet the need for menstrual hygiene with dignity and without fear, the menstrual hygiene management framework has advocate responsibilities at each level. The framework consists of three parts namely Main Guidelines, Action Guides and Technical Guides. The main guidelines have focused on accessibility of the right knowledge and information, approachability to safe menstrual materials, the facility of water and soap and secure accessibility to used menstrual products. Whereas action guides have highlighted the role of the state, district, local authority family, community and society to create a friendly environment so that menstrual hygiene is seen acceptable occurrence and age-old cultural practices and misguided facts are uprooted. The framework also highlighted the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Self Help Groups (SHGs) and the linkage of personal hygiene under the Swachh Bharat Mission Guidelines. It also elucidates the availability of trained staff, supportive guidelines, policies and behaviour and the spreading of awareness for framing a congenial environment where women and girls can cherish their menstruation with dignity. In the third part, the technical guide highlighted that funds available under the IEC component of SBM (G) (Swachh Bharat Mission Guidelines) should be used to create awareness and

skills on menstrual hygiene management in all places. Subsequently, women's hygiene namely menstrual hygiene should be addressed under SWM (G). The technical guide has also emphasized the safe disposal of menstrual waste (Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, 2015).

Research Design & Methodology:

A descriptive research design has been chosen due to the systematic nature of the study as menstrual hygiene management took a long time to come to light as menstrual health was not included in the priority agenda of the government until 1992. Afterwards, the period from 2005 to 2010 was a turning point as menstrual health was strengthened through the National Rural Health Mission and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) workers were given the responsibility of spreading awareness and creating a major thrust in the community. (Murthy, 2017). Subsequently, in the year 2015, the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation released guidelines on menstrual health and hygiene. It covers all information on the questions like why menstruation hygiene is necessary. What it is? How it is beneficial to maintain the dignity of women? Role of society for building congenial environment and so on. A mixed research methodology has been chosen whereas qualitative data has been drawn from scholarly articles, guidelines, government's framed rules, regulation and policy documents, blogs, official websites and narratives of respondents whereas quantitative data has been drawn from the answers of selected respondents. Furthermore, to get primary data from 50 menstruating women residing in the area of the jurisdiction of Municipal Corporation Shimla i.e. Shimla City the purposive sampling was carried out with those who gave their informed consent in writing. The information has been derived from 21 structured questions to know their understanding (the level of knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and perceptions) regarding menstrual hygiene management. Additionally, discussions, observations, and personal experiences shared by the participants have also been given consideration. The collected data has been processed categorically in an Excel sheet to know the percentage.

Results:

Table 1: Respondent's understanding of menstruation

	Understanding of Menstruation	Absolute Numbers	Percentage
1	It is a biological, natural, and physiological process.	28	56

	Understanding of Menstruation	Absolute Numbers	Percentage
2	It is only a way to release the dirtiness of the body in the form of blood which is beneficial from a health point of view otherwise women face health issues and infertility.	16	32
3	Every month it is a sign that woman is secure from unwanted pregnancy.	2	4
4	It is the time when women have leisure time to take a rest from household work.	4	8
	Total	50	100

Source: Field study data, 2022 conducted in Shimla City

From the above table, 56% of women believed that menstruation is a natural and biological process, while only 32% of respondent women believed it to be a way of releasing dirty blood from the body, beneficial from a health point of view. 4% of respondents considered menstruation the only way to secure themselves from unwanted pregnancies, whereas 8% of respondent women believed it to be a time of leisure and a break from household work.

Table 2: Respondent's awareness about the usage of menstrual products

S.N.	Product Choices	Absolute Numbers	Percentage
1	Piece of cloth	7	14
2	Sanitary Pads	42	84
3	Tampons	1	2
4	Menstrual Cups	0	0
5	Cotton gauze	0	0
6	Pad made up of cotton or other organic materials	0	0
	Total	50	100

Source: Field study data, 2022 conducted in Shimla City

From the above table, it becomes evident that 84% of respondent women use sanitary pads to manage their monthly flow of bleeding and they believe it is a safe way to prevent themselves from leakage or stain. During the discussion when asked whether they know sanitary pads contain plastic and deodorants which are added as fragrances, they responded negatively. 14% of respondents admitted they manage their period with a piece of cloth and they have the opinion that cloth is safe as compared to sanitary pads, only 2% of respondent women use tampons whereas it has come from the study that no women are using cotton pads/gauze and other pads made from organic material. During

the one-on-one conversation, it was found that the respondent women have no clue/information about the organic sanitary pads.

Table 3: Respondent’s awareness and the tendency of changing sanitary pads

	To understand the number of pads used/ changed in a day to hold leakage	Absolute Numbers	Percentage
1	Less than two	20	40
2	Three to five	26	52
3	More than five	4	8
	Total	50	100

Source: Field study data, 2022 conducted in Shimla City

Table 3 revealed that 40% of the respondent women confessed to using only two or less than two sanitary pads a day, while 52% of respondent women admitted to the usage of three to five pads a day. 8% of respondents, however, said they used more than five pads in a day. It has been noticed that changing pads depends on the flow, and facility to WASH (Water Sanitation & Hygiene) especially when they are outside or at the workplace. Some women also revealed that buying sanitary pads is an extra burden as it affects their monthly budget which is allotted to them by their husbands for a month. In particular, when two or three people (including mother and daughters) at a time need sanitary pads to manage their periods, the budget is put under strain and it becomes difficult to buy more to meet everyone’s needs because, with the same money, they can buy fruits and vegetables for their home. Those who use three to five or more five sanitary pads admitted using two pads at one time (sticking one above the other) only to hold the leakage. The changing of pads also depends on the availability as well as on buying capacity that can be perceived from the experience of a forty-one-year-old woman named Darupati (name changed) who shared, *“I was in eighth standard when I menstruate and that time I was in school sitting on the ground. When the bell rang for school closing, I stood without noticing because I had no idea what had happened. A boy sitting behind me stopped me and said that something had happened because he had seen my stained shirt including stained soil. But I could not understand as I was not aware of menstruation. When I reached home, I asked my mother what had happened but she did not reveal anything and stopped me to talk about it. My elder sister took me to a room and narrated that I had gone through menstruation. I wept and asked how I will manage it. She gave me her own panty and a piece with the instruction that I can wear her panty during my menstruation. That day another incident also happened to me. The Patwari*

of our panchayat came to collect data from our house. He sat on the wooden floor and we also sit to answer his questions. When the session was over, I stood up and saw the wooden floor smeared with blood. I was shocked and without waiting, I knowingly dropped a water jug with my foot which was kept nearby me and then I spilled the water on my blood so that he could not notice. She further narrated that usually her dress was always stained due to wearing oversized panties”.

Subsequently, women were also inquired regarding when they change their sanitary pads to keep themselves hygienically clean and healthy, 52% of respondents gave mixed responses like they change sanitary pads when they feel bulky due to blood as it is difficult to change sanitary pads when they are outside or at the workplace due to the unavailability of a suitable place to change them or to dispose of them. Whereas some have an opinion that it is an extra burden to buy sanitary pads so they change sanitary pads in such a way that only one packet can manage the monthly requirement of menstrual flow.

During the study, it was found that 48 % of respondent women confessing to changing sanitary pads were homemakers whereas women who are working under the state government, central government, private sector, self-employed and some home-maker also revealed that due to lack of availability of covered dustbin, soap, water and proper disposal facility, they are unable to change. They have the opinion that due to the unavailability of a covered dustbin; they feel embarrassed to change sanitary pads for fear of being noticed by men so they stick two sanitary pads one above another so that they can manage the whole day.

Table 4: Respondent’s knowledge of the MHM Programme

Question	Knowledge about MHM Programme	Absolute Numbers	Percentage
1	Yes	19	38
2	No	31	62
Total		50	100

Source: Field study data, 2022 conducted in Shimla City

The respondent women also inquired about their knowledge level of menstrual hygiene management programmes, 62% of respondents denied that they don’t know about such programmes implemented by the government whereas 38% of respondents hold knowledge about the programme. Subsequently, knowledge and understanding level of the consequences of mismanagement of poor menstrual hygiene has been checked and it was found that 92% of respondent

women are aware of the health risks and 8% of respondent women have shown ignorance about it. The respondent women also confessed that although they know the health risks, they have to manage it secretly as a matter of secrecy. From the collected data 60% respondent of women hold the opinion that religion, culture, tradition and societal norms have impacted their thought. This impact can be judged from a narrative of a mother who unfolds a story of a nine-year-old girl, “We were busy in our fields and suddenly we heard the voice of a nine-year-old girl from a nearby house who was crying due to fear of bleeding. Her mother ran towards the house and three or four women also ran after. When we reached home, we came to know that her daughter has got her first period. The mother took her to the bathroom to take a bath and change clothes. After that, she was made to sit in a separate room which was made for menstruation purposes. I intervened with her mother not to send her daughter to a separate room as her daughter is very young but the men of that house did not allow this and said that this act would be against their “**Kul Devta**”. The incident shook the girl and she stopped talking and participating in school.

Table 5: Practices to discard menstrual waste

S.N.	Practices to discard menstrual waste	Responses	Percentage
1	You throw them unwrapped into bushes, hidden places and places that you find suitable to dispose of.	4	8
2	You wrap them and usually throw them in a dustbin of dry waste	37	74
3	Whenever you are outside or in the market you also throw them in latrines/toilets	0	0
4	You use incinerators installed in public toilets, community places and offices to destroy or burn the used sanitary pads/materials.	0	0
5	You wash your used sanitary pads/material and then bury them in the pit.	9	18
	Total	50	100

Source: Field study data, 2022 conducted in Shimla City

Table 5 reveals that 74% of respondent women acknowledged the practices of disposal of menstrual waste in the dry waste dustbin, 8% of respondent women accepted throwing the sanitary pads unwrapped into bushes or concealed places whereas 18% of respondents using the pit to bury the sanitary pads/material after washing it. Whereas no respondents are using incinerators to discard their used sanitary pads they have also confessed that they have seen such machines (incinerators) scarcely and if they are installed, they are not in working condition.

Similar observations have also been noticed when women were asked about the awareness disseminated by Municipal Corporation Shimla, regarding segregation and disposal of menstrual waste, 76% of respondent women denied whereas 24% of respondents say yes. Subsequently, women have also shared their experiences regarding the attitude of the garbage collector when they disposed of their used sanitary pads/menstrual material. 68% of respondents revealed an interesting fact usually they wrap the used sanitary pads in a newspaper in such a way that garbage collector doesn't come to know what type of garbage is being disposed off, 12% of respondent women disclosed that they do not throw sanitary pads/menstrual material in regular household waste, 16 % of respondent women gave a mixed answer like that they usually throw their used sanitary pad/menstrual products into bushes, hidden places, bury them in the pit after washing or some of them burn them whereas 4% of respondents faced denial situation by the garbage collector.

The women's fear of being gazed at the menstrual products by anyone, the inconvenience of proper disposal and the lack of awareness can be perceived from an episode unfolded by a respondent while data collection. She related how the improper disposal of the sanitary pad had become an eyesore to whole neighbours and a matter of embarrassment to whole women residing in that locality. She detailed, "We didn't know who has thrown sanitary pads without wrapping them in the nearby bushes and which had been dragged by a street dog and brought to the locality. Everyone was passing nearby but no one dared to keep them aside even we four to five women were sitting under the sun that day and we thought to throw them again in the bushes with the help of a stick. But after a conversation, a second thought came after and stopped us to do so why we would touch the dirt of other people? We also abused the deed of an unknown lady/girl who had done it. The next morning, when the garbage collector came to collect waste he also passed through the same walkways and when he saw sanitary pads he became furious and used abusive language in high pitch, '*Aurtao ko bilkul sharm nehi hae apni gandi cheese bhi aise khule mae fainkti hae unko sharm aani chahiye ki mard or bacche isse dekhege mae toh aisi gandi cheese bikul nehi uthauga aur sari aurte sun lo koi bhi apni aisi gandi cheese Mujhe bhi koodo mae na dena mae kuda uthana hi band kr dunga ye tumahri cheese hae tumhe pta hona chahiye inka kaya kerna hae*(Women have no shame at all as they have thrown out their dirty things in the open, they should be ashamed that it will be seen by men or children. All women and girls are warned to listen to me carefully that not to throw their pads in routine waste because I will not collect such

waste. It should be known to them what has to be done with the pads as it is their matter). We all women were immovable or in a state of insensibility because whole men and children have also witnessed that episode and we all were culprits in their eyes due to the mistake of that unknown woman/girl. She further unfolded that maybe a working woman/girl has packed her all used pads in a separate packet and had handed them over to a garbage collector before the episode of dragging them out by a dog or maybe due to mismatched time of garbage collection she might have thrown them in bushes or maybe she has been stopped by her religious practices of not handing over bloody things to men being considered a sinful act.”

During the study, the women were also asked about the suggestion to save Shimla City’s environment from improper disposal of menstrual waste. The women suggested different interventions like government should take proper initiative e, spread awareness, facility of incineration and promotion of eco-friendly products should be enforced etc.

Discussion:

Women aged 20–49 years participated in the present study, out of which only 12% of women were below the matriculation standard. 44% of the women were employed while 56% of the women were homemakers. From the study, it was found that inadequate facilities namely lack of segregation & disposal, shortage of incineration and lack of awareness regarding disposal of menstrual products which need to be disposed of in separate packets provided by manufacturers before handing over to garbage collectors, lack of sensitization among garbage collectors regarding the collection of menstrual materials/sanitary pads, silence and shame over menstruation, lack of knowledge about reusable products and its usage technique, pros and cons of sanitary pads on health and environment, lack of WASH facility at the workplace or outside the home is noticeable factors which are still blockading the way of achievement of Menstrual hygiene management program.

Conclusion:

The state of Himachal Pradesh has taken several steps to promote menstrual hygiene among women and girls. The Menstrual Hygiene Programme Guidelines, the *Shashkat Mahila Yojana* and the “Who Din” action plan are some examples of initiatives to promote menstrual health and hygiene. Nevertheless, results drawn from the present study show that these steps are proving to be insufficient as

women of the menstruating age have inadequate knowledge and lack awareness and understanding regarding the management of menstrual hygiene. The field study highlights that women are unable to access the proper WASH facilities and lack information regarding MHM guidelines, which intensely affects their rights to manage menstrual hygiene with dignity and without humiliation or fear. It is surprising that women are still unable to hand over their sanitary pads without hiding them due to the fear of being judged. It is also noticeable from the study that no women have knowledge about sanitary pads made up of cotton or other organic materials as well as about the usage of menstrual cups. Though MHM guidelines advocates for the right knowledge, awareness and availability of safe menstrual materials, the study shows shocking facts that menstruating women have no knowledge & awareness regarding the chemical nature of sanitary pads. Menstruating women are managing their periods just to avoid leakage while MHM guidelines are still out of their reach.

Though menstruation-related interventions are growing rapidly both at the government level and the non-governmental not only at the international level but even here in India, lots of effort still needs to be put to offer subsidized menstrual products to women and imparting information related to MHM guidelines. The outcomes are, nonetheless, unsatisfactory and seem meagre and imperfect to meet menstrual hygiene management standards (Sommer et al., 2019).

Poirier (2019) also comprehends that limited access to MHM impacts women negatively and unhygienic sanitation products also make them susceptible to reproductive tract infections and may even prevent menstruating women and girls from full social participation. The present study has highlighted the need for further evaluative studies to appraise the stakeholders' initiatives to know the gaps and the hurdles to implementing MHM's easy and convenient ways to dispose off sanitary pads. The present study also threw light on the easy and convenient ways of disposing off sanitary pads being practised by menstruating women in the study area. The present study also highlighted whether women are willing to adopt more eco-friendly sanitary products.

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A Cross-sectional Survey on the Quality of Sex Education in India

Annu Biswas¹

Abstract

Education being the backbone of any nation must be inclusive of every aspect of human reality; however, topics like sexuality in the Indian Education system are still taboo within a progressive country like India. The present study has confirmed this notion, which was a cross-sectional survey conducted among 1200 educated participants, selected through purposive sampling, in the age ranges of 18- 49 years and was inclusive of LGBTQIA+ Community. The participants were from the cities of Ahmadabad, Kolkata and Dehradun and comprised 595 males, 595 females and 10 Intersexes. An online survey form comprising both close-ended & open-ended questions, demographic form and opinion regarding quality of sex education received during school years, was circulated in the three cities through social media among school pass outs, undergraduates, postgraduates and academic professionals. A qualitative analysis was done on the responses received over the questions. Results are indicative of large disparities between cities, age-groups and sexes in terms of pornography use for awareness towards sex. Quality of sex education in all the three cities is compromised with hesitancy to discuss sexuality issues by teachers who conduct sex education classes. Lastly, current sex education in India is not inclusive of information regarding LGBTQIA+ Community. The study is supportive of revision in policies towards sex education to make it more inclusive for resolving the issues of youth of India.

Keywords: Cross- sectional study, Sex Education, Sexuality, Pornography, LGBTQIA+, School Education

Introduction:

Education is obtaining knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes through learning experiences, on-the-job training, and independent study. It can occur in a formal or informal context and involves the development of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical abilities (UNESCO, 2015). To achieve this, India's educational system has employed institutional entities, laws, and policies. The National Education Policy (NEP) is one such document describing vision and path for education reforms in India. Union Cabinet of India adopted it on July 29, 2020.

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The key features of NEP 2020 are holistic and multidisciplinary education, early childhood care and school education, curriculum & assessment reforms, teacher training & professional development, higher education reforms, bringing technological advances, equity & Inclusion within education system at all levels. It is an approach to education that explicitly emphasizes holistic education through the development of physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual elements. “Physical education” refers to the growth and well-being of the physical body as an element of education.

An aspect of the physical body with an emotional component is the sexuality that needs attention. It’s a suppressed aspect of human body on the Indian subcontinent, due to the stigma surrounding topics related to sex, gender and sexuality (Biswas. A, 2022). Interestingly NEP 2020 does not explicitly use the term “sex education” in the entire policy document. However, the NEP 2020 acknowledges the importance of comprehensive holistic education. It’s noteworthy that holistic education is inclusive of physical dimension; therefore any Policy of national importance must highlight the necessity to offer precise information and knowledge concerning sexual health and gender inclusivity from school level itself.

The key points emphasized in NEP 2020 regarding holistic education such as age- appropriate curriculum, health and well-being education, awareness and sensitization, and collaboration with the health sector to ensure accurate information, guidance and support in delivering reliable and evidence- based information to the students- must apply to the aspect of sex education as well, which is very much a part of holistic education.

The WHO defines sexuality education as a lifelong process of gaining information that shapes mind-set, viewpoint, and ethics about one’s self, and closeness with others. It includes sexual expansion, reproductive wellbeing, interpersonal associations, warmth, closeness, body image and the importance of consent and gender roles. Therefore, a comprehensive sex education ought to provide scientifically accurate, updated and reliable information about human anatomy, puberty, reproductive processes, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, sexual orientation and gender identity along with topics beyond just the biological aspects of reproduction (Kirby. D., 2008). With respect to the cognitive, emotional and social development of individuals at different stages of life, sex education should be inclusive of discussions on relationships, communication skills, consent, healthy sexuality, gender roles, body image, sexual rights and responsibilities.

Sex education should aim to develop essential skills and competencies such as to make informed decisions, communicate effectively, establish healthy relationships and practice responsible sexual behavior. However, majority of the literature is indicative that youth today, is engaging in risky sexual behavior more than ever (Kohler et al., 2008). Studies have explored various risk factors associated with irresponsible sexual activity, that include early sexual initiation, multiple sexual partners, lack of contraception use, alcohol and drug use during sexual encounters, peer influence, low self-esteem, and limited knowledge about sexual health. (Lin et al, 2020). These findings are supported by studies done in India to understand the prevalence, factors, and consequences of such behaviors among various populations. Likewise, one such study attributed the prevalence and pattern of unsafe sexual behaviors to transactional sex among different population groups in India (Saggurti et al, 2018).

Other studies exploring the socio-cultural, economic and individual factors associated with risky sexual behavior in India have cited reasons as gender inequalities, lack of all-inclusive sexuality teaching, and limited access to sexual health services, stigma and discrimination, substance abuse and migration (Khan et al, 2023). Chakrapani et al. (2019) investigated the consequences and health outcomes of risky sexual behavior in India, such as an increased risk of STIs, HIV/AIDS transmission, unintended pregnancies and psychological problems with a massive impact on psychological wellbeing, physical health and quality of life. Other potential consequences include relationship problems. (Thompson et al, 2017).

Hence, several researches have focused on analyzing the factors that can protect the youth from the perils of unchecked sexual behavior. For instance, Pinar et al. (2019), in their study investigated the protective factors and interventions that can promote responsible sexual behavior and reduce risky sexual activity and suggested for broad sexuality instructions, access to sexual health services, and proper use of contraceptives, communication skills and positive parent child relationships.

According to the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education, thorough sexuality curriculum ought to involve age relevance, scientific precision, gender equality and human rights, positive values and attitudes, skills-building, participation, and empowerment. (WHO, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, 2018) This is more indispensable, as there are other sources of information allied to sex and sexuality, which if exposed to very young minds can have detrimental

effects. For instance, internet, which is a click away, is the most accessed source of all kinds of information and has tremendous impact on teenagers who use unregulated online media, shaping the information landscape for the young people (Madden et al., 2013).

This becomes concerning with the accessibility of sexually explicit material over the internet, the effects of which have been proved to be complex and multifaceted as they often portray unrealistic and exaggerated portrayals of sexual encounters and body image. Research has found that exposure to pornography can lead to unrealistic sexual expectations and beliefs; therefore by discussing the discrepancies between pornography and real-life experiences, sex education can promote a more realistic understanding of sexuality (Bridges et al., 2010).

Proper sex education can help promote critical thinking and media literacy, as suggested by literature. It can help develop a more critical understanding of media content, including pornography and help in navigation through such explicit content in a more informed manner (Brown et al., 2006). Also it can help in emphasizing the importance of consent, respect and communication within intimate relationships. All-inclusive sex education programs that address consent and healthy relationships can have positive effects on sexual behaviors and attitudes (Santelli et al., 2017). By providing accurate information about healthy relationships, sex education can help individuals develop skills to form mutually satisfying and respectful partnerships.

Sex education can educate individuals about the potential risks associated with pornography consumption. This includes discussing issues such as addiction, objectification, and the potential for negative impacts on self-esteem and body image. Research has highlighted the need to address potential harms and risks associated with pornography use, particularly among vulnerable populations (Griffiths, 2012). Vulnerable population includes individuals who are at a higher risk of negative consequences when exposed to pornography. These include individuals with addictive tendencies, history of trauma, adolescents and sexual minorities.

Investigations have recognized a potential connection involving excessive pornography use and symptoms of addiction, including impaired control and harmful consequences (Grubbs et al., 2015; Laier et al., 2014). Those who have experienced some forms of sexual assault and abuse, are more susceptible to negative psychological effects from pornography exposure. Individuals with

a history of trauma may experience distress, triggers, or re-traumatization when exposed to sexual content, including pornography (Krahé et al., 2015). The current research is concerned about adolescents and sexual minorities. Adolescence is critical stage of development. Research indicates that exposure to pornography among adolescents is associated with various negative outcomes such as distorted views of sex, risky sexual behaviors, and negative body image (Hald & Malamuth, 2008).

Sexual minorities are vulnerable due to limited availability of inclusive and affirming sexual health education. Exposure to homophobic and hetero-normative content in pornography can negatively impact the well-being and self-esteem of sexual minority individuals (Harper et al., 2010; March et al., 2017). Ironically, the Indian sex education probably lacks inclusion of LGBTQIA+ topics in the first place, which can be attributed to factors like societal taboos, cultural norms, and legal frameworks that do not provide explicit support for rights and inclusion (Chawla et al., 2019).

Literature has mostly focused on issues of reproductive health, anatomy, physiology, puberty, adolescent development, sexually transmitted diseases and use of contraceptives. Hence only these issues are consequently reflected in the sex education curricula. However, few studies have examined the sexual and reproductive fitness behaviors of youngsters, and have highlighted the need for widespread and precise sex education to deal with the gaps of knowledge and promote healthy behaviors (Reddy et al., 2012). The gravity of the issue calls for major research investigations surrounding quality of sex education that is currently prevalent in India. It becomes essential to know the comprehensiveness (what and how of sexuality is being taught) of Indian sex education, in-order to understand how much Indian youth is informed while making sexual choices.

It is urgent with respect to literature suggesting that quality of sex education remains largely unmonitored and exclusive of topics related to gender sensitization. Also, availability of inappropriate information sources such as pornography, the vulnerable sects of the population who are at risk of developing negative physical and psychological impacts of pornographic exposure, the increased rates of risky sexual behavior, the non-inclusiveness of information regarding LGBTQIA+ Community and the repeated emphasis of most of the literature on making sexuality education a comprehensive one, presses the need to have further investigation.

Rationale of the study:

Paucity of literature is indicative that not much information is available on factual basis, on the comprehensiveness of sex education program in almost all of the schools in the Indian subcontinent. This research is an attempt to help get clarity, regarding the content of sex education curricula in terms of inclusiveness, prevalent in the Indian education system, specifically focusing on three different Indian cities.

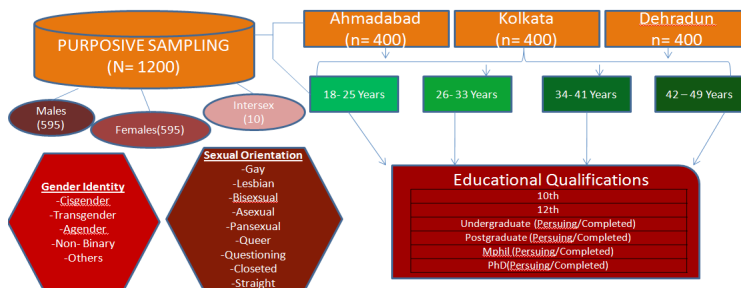
Aim of the study:

The aim of this cross-sectional survey was to explore the quality, content and inclusiveness of sex education being provided in Indian schools over the past 30 years.

Research methodology:

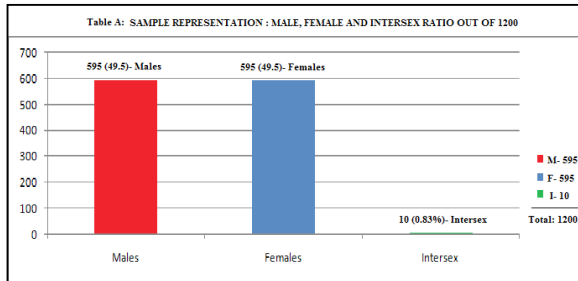
To determine the quality, content and inclusiveness of sex education being imparted in the Indian schools across country, three different cities lying over different geographical locations spread over the country were chosen. These were the cities of –

- Ahmadabad, a major metro city in the Indian state of Gujarat at the western end.
- Dehradun, a major academic attraction in the Indian state of Uttarakhand at the northern end.
- Kolkata, a major metropolitan city in the Indian state of West Bengal at the eastern end.

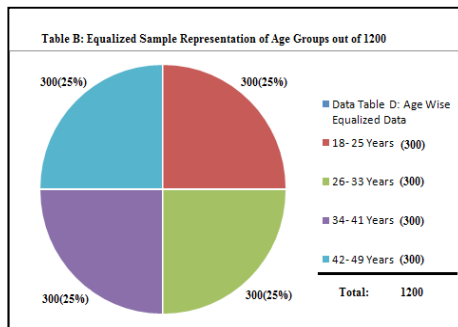


A total of 1200 participants were approached combined from all the three states. 595 identified as males which is 49.5% of the total sample size. Another 49.5% comprised 595 females, and 10 participants constituting 0.83% of the

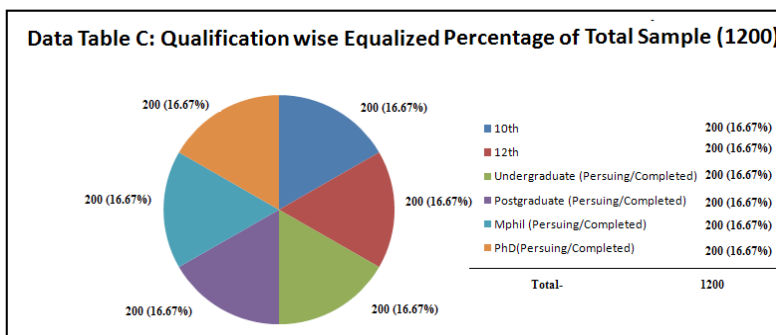
total sample, identified themselves as intersex individuals.



The entire sample of 1200 was selected taking care that 4 different age ranges, were equally represented, consisting of 300 participants (25%) under each age group. The figure below illustrates the same.



6 different educational groups were chosen for the study, ranging from matriculation to doctorate levels. 200(16.67%) participants from each educational qualification have been represented in the sample size of 1200.

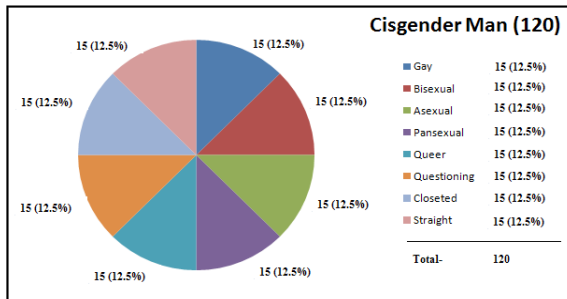


To give a comprehensive representation to the gender identities and sexual orientations, a carefully executed sampling was done:

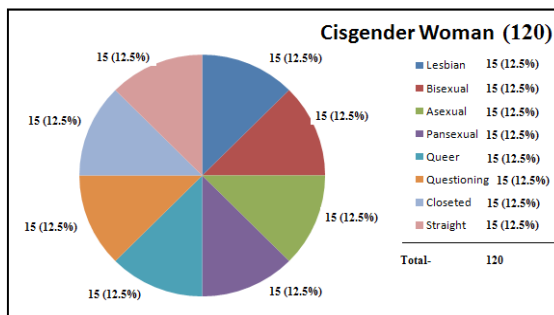
- Out of the 595 males and 5 intersex individuals who are living the gender roles of males, 120(10%) have identified themselves as cisgender men, 120(10%) have identified as transgender woman, 120(10%) have identified as agender,120(10%) have identified as non-binary and yet another 120(10%) have not identified with any of the gender identities.

- Out of the 595 females and 5 intersex individuals who are living the gender roles of females, 120(10%) have identified themselves as cisgender women, 120(10%) have identified as transgender man, 120 (10%) have identified as agender,120(10%) have identified as non-binary and yet another 120(10%) have not identified with any of the gender identities.

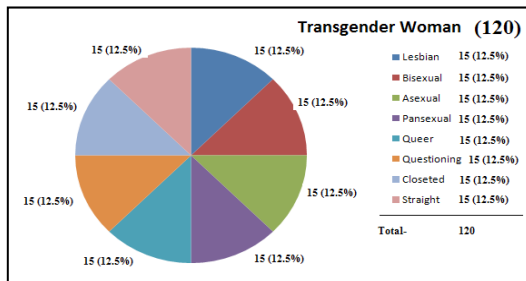
Out of the 120 cis-gender men, 15 (12.50%) have identified in each sexual orientation separately as gay, bisexual, asexual, pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted and straight.



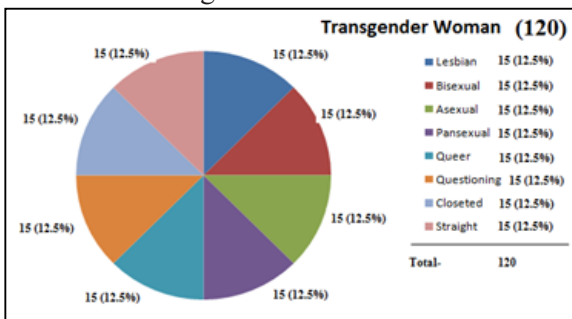
Out of the 120 cis-gender women, 15 (12.50%) have identified in each sexual orientation separately as lesbian, bisexual, asexual, pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted and straight.



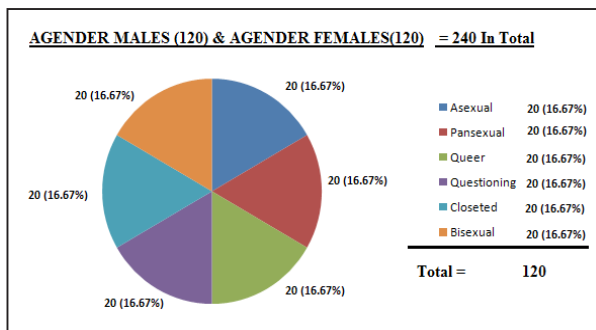
120 females identifying as transgender men, out of which 15 each identified as gay, bisexual, asexual, pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted, straight respectively.



Out of the 120 transgender women, 15 (12.50%) have identified in each sexual orientation separately as lesbian, bisexual, asexual, pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted and straight.

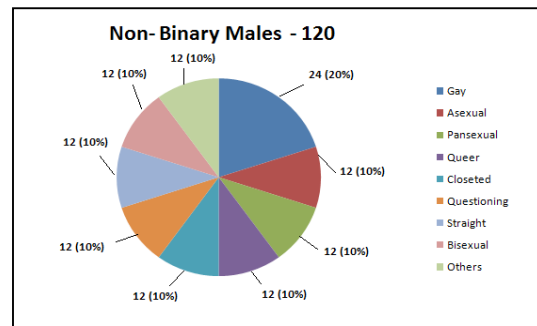
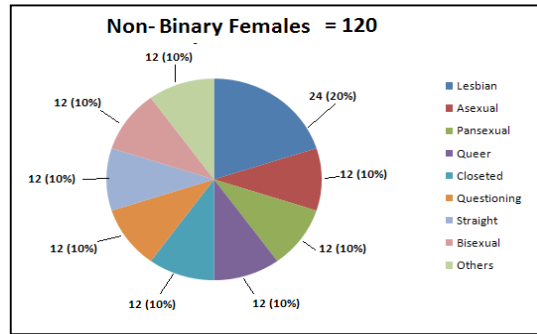


Out of the 120 agender males, 20 (16.67%) have identified as asexual, pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted and bisexual respectively. Similar representation has come in the case of 120 agender females. Therefore, a total of 240 agender males and females have been selected with the said sexual orientations.



Out of the 120 non-binary males, 24 have identified as gay and 12 each as asexual, pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted, straight, bisexual and others

respectively. Similar representation has come in the case of 120 non-binary females, in which 24 have identified as lesbian, and 12 each as asexual, pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted, straight, bisexual and others respectively. Therefore, a total of 240 non-binary males and females have been selected for the data collection with different sexual orientations.



Similarly, out of the 120 males who did not disclose their gender identities, 10 have identified as gay, 22 as lesbian, 11 as bisexual, 27 as asexual, and 10 respectively as pansexual, queer, questioning, closeted, and straight and others. Correspondingly, 120 females who did not identify with any gender, 10 out of them reported as gay, 20 as lesbian, 13 as bisexual, 25 as asexual, 12 as pansexual, and 10 each as queer, questioning, closeted, straight and others respectively.

Procedure:

An online survey form was constructed comprising questions pertaining to demographic details, location, age group, educational qualifications, sex, gender identify and sexual orientation. 10 questions specifically focusing on the content of sex education were asked. These questions focused on evaluating the course content that is expectedly received in schools along with prescribed standard content that should be ideally received as part of comprehensive and holistic

sex education. 1 question was kept open-ended and gave the participants an opportunity to give their feedback or opinions on the quality of sex education they were given.

The survey form was circulated online among school pass-outs, undergraduates, post-graduates and university academic professionals in the three different cities. The participants were specifically from the co-ed school background. Care was taken to represent the LGBTQIA+ Community along with the sexual majority of the population. The data collection took place for over 7 months to complete. A total of 3452 data were received, out of which 1200 were represented in the sample for this study. Data analysis took 1^{1/2} months to complete. Evaluation of the data included graphical representations and qualitative interpretation to look for specific patterns and themes.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria:

- People below the age of 18 years have been excluded.
- Participants included in this study were in the age range 18- 49 years.
- Qualification below matriculation (10th) was not considered for the study.
- Working professionals other than academicians have been excluded from the study.

Operational definitions:

- Education encompasses the development of cognitive, physical, social, emotional and professional competencies to enhance an individual's personal growth, societal participation and professional advancement. (Gupta. P, 2012)
- Inclusive education is a comprehensive approach ensuring equal access, participation and success in education regardless of diversity, abilities or backgrounds of all learners. It promotes a supportive and accepting environment fostering diversity, respect and collaboration.(Florian et al, 2011)
- Sex education is a planned all-inclusive educational initiative with goals of delivering factual, age considerate, proof- based knowledge on human sexuality, reproductive wellbeing, relationships and sexual behavior. It teaches about anatomy, physiology, puberty, sexual and reproductive processes, contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), consent, sexual diversity, gender identity, sexual rights, healthy relationships, responsible decision making, and communication skills emphasizing

respect, values and responsible sexual behavior. (Andrade et al., 2009)

- Sex is the categorization of individuals based on the reproductive structures, chromosomal composition and hormonal levels. (WHO, 2021)
- Males refer to a sex category characterized by the presence of specific sex chromosome (XY), reproductive anatomy typically including testes and penis, the production of sperm, and development of secondary sex characteristics such as deepening of voice, facial & body hair and increased muscle mass. (Fisher et al., 2019)
- Females refer to a sex category characterized by the presence of specific sex chromosome (XX), reproductive anatomy typically including ovaries, the uterus to bear offspring, and the progression of other sexual features such as breast enlargement, menstruation, and higher proportion of body fat. (Fisher et al., 2019)
- Intersex refers a sex category of those who have natural anatomical features that do not adjust typical definitions of male and female. Their condition involves wide or specific variations in chromosomes, hormones and reproductive anatomy that do not align with binary categorization. (Hughes et al., 2006)
- Gender is a social and cultural binary construct of femininity or masculinity that entails roles, behaviors, assumptions, and oneness that society ascribes to those depending on their seeming biological sex. (Connell, R. W. 2012)
- Gender identity is a personal and subjective experience, referring to internal perception of one's gender, which can be male, female, both or neither. It may or may not align with the assigned biological sex. It is distinct from biological sex and can be independent of gender expression or societal expectations. (APA, 2021)
- The term "cisgender" pertains to those whose gender identity corresponds to the sex entrusted at birth. (Tate et al., 2014)
- An all-around concept to portray gender identity that differs (it can be male, female, non- binary or outside of the binary categories) from the sex designated at birth is called Transgender. (APA, 2021)
- Sexual orientation is an intrinsic aspect of an individual's identity that reflects their preferred and consistent pattern of sexual or romantic interest, with lasting impression on emotional, romantic/sexual attractions towards those of identical gender, dissimilar gender or numerous genders. (APA, 2021)

- Queer is an all-inclusive concept portraying persons whose sexual preference and gender integrity diverges from the societal norms of binary understanding of sex and sexuality. (APA, 2021)
- Lesbian refers to individuals who identify as female and experience primary or exclusive emotional, romantic and/or sexual attractions towards the same sex. (APA, 2021)
- Gay is used to describe individuals typically males, who are romantically, emotionally/sexually attracted to the same sex. (APA, 2021)
- Bisexual orientation describes individuals who experience emotional, romantic/sexual attractions to individuals of both sexes. (APA, 2021)
- Asexual is a term to describe individuals who do not prioritize sexual relationships as a central part of their lives as they do not experience sexual desirability or have a deficiency of sexual interest towards others, while they may experience other forms of attraction such as romantic or emotional.(Brotto et al., 2010)
- Pornography encompasses explicit materials, including visual, audio, written or digital content often depicting explicit sexual acts, nudity or other sexual content that is intended to sexually arouse or stimulate individuals. (Stanley et al., 2018)

Tools:

Demographic Information Schedule and Informed Consent Sheet: this section comprised declaration and questions such as name, e-mail, age, location. Sex, gender, sexual orientation and highest qualification.

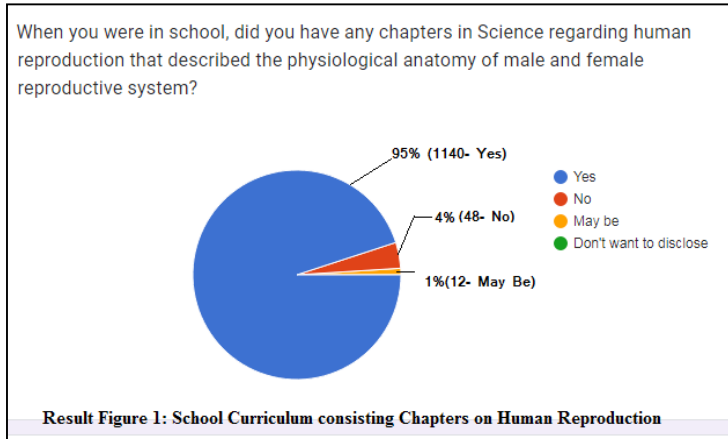
Survey Questions: This section had 10 questions, focusing on the opinions and experiences regarding received sex education and pornography usage.

Open Ended Statement: The survey ended with an unstructured query that gave the participants a free space to share occurrences that adds to the lived experiences of sexuality they went through over the years and hence the reasons they hold a particular opinion. The statement was-

- Any relevant information that you would like to share about what sex education should include, or any unusual experience that made you question the purpose of activity of sex is highly welcome. You can share any past painful experience as well, that belongs to you or a person you know. The information shall be reserved stringently private and will be interpreted as per the requirement of the research question.

Results:

Figure 1 is indicative of 95% of Indian respondents (1140 of the total sample) agreeing over inclusion of chapters on human reproduction, 4% (48 respondents) reported that there were no lessons on the reproductive anatomy, while 1% (12) expressed uncertainty about study of human anatomy.



Interestingly, city-wise data from Figure 1(a) is indicative that 13.59%, 51.49% and 34.91% out of 1140 participants agreeing to the anatomy classes, 79.16%, 8.33% and 12.50% out of 48 respondents reporting no anatomy sessions, and 50%, 16.67% and 33.33% of the 12 participants expressing uncertainty about anatomy studies came from Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Dehradun respectively.

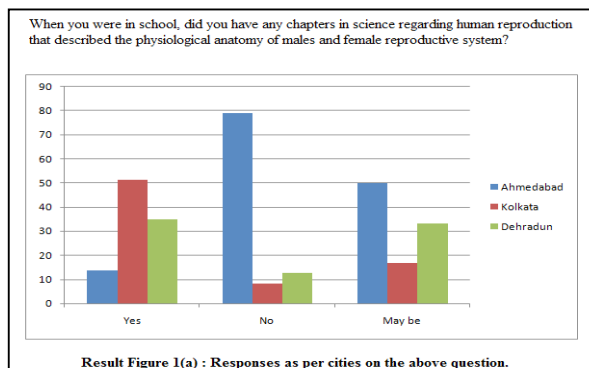


Figure 2 is indicative of the quality of teaching by Indian teachers regarding human reproduction. 25% of the respondents opined that the teacher was too fast to discuss the lesson, 31% responded that some portions were skipped by the teacher to end the chapter early, 36% reported that there was not much

interaction with the students for doubt clarification by the teacher. 13% revealed that there was hesitancy and embarrassment shown by the teacher while teaching reproduction, 37% agreed that the teacher just read from the book without explaining, and only 30% received encouragement for asking questions and doubt clarification.

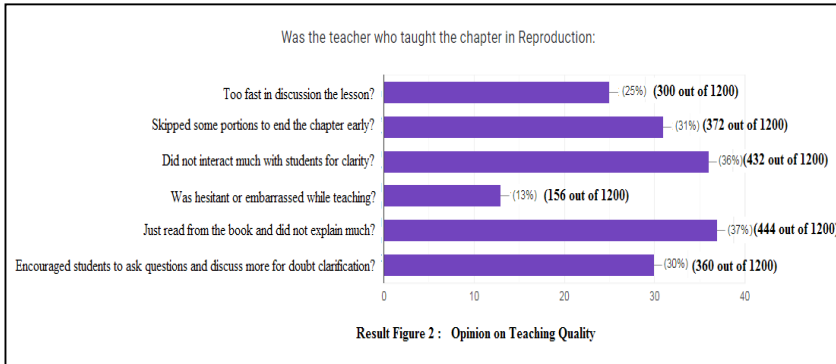


Figure 2(a) represents age-wise opinion on teaching quality based on the teaching style related questions raised in the survey. It indicates that the fast discussion of human reproductive anatomy in the classes is slightly increasing as compared to previous decade, along-with the trend of skipping portions from the chapter rising substantially. Discomfort in interacting and doubt clarification of students with widespread feelings of hesitancy or embarrassment while teaching sexual health is evidently increasing. Also, there is an increase in the trend of just reading from the book, while not explaining the concepts related to reproduction. A decline in encouraging students to ask questions is also apparent.

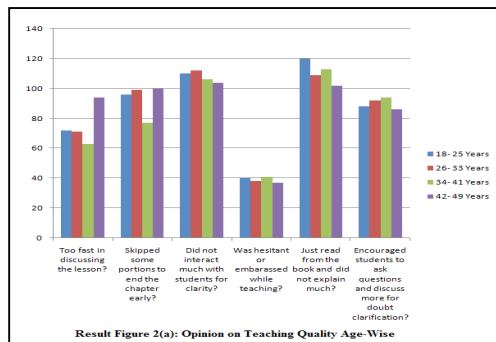


Figure 3 depicts Classroom environment during discussion of Chapter in

reproduction, giving a glimpse of how the topic is perceived among adolescents. More than half the sample has revealed that during anatomy classes, peers were laughing, giggling, joking or whistling signifying casual attitude towards such a sensitive human aspect. 32% opined that due to self consciousness, the class sessions were exciting and amazing, while another 21% opined that the session was tense and embarrassing. Only 16% opined that anatomy class sessions were interactive. Still another 21% reported that students passed sarcastic or sexual comments among themselves during anatomy classes.

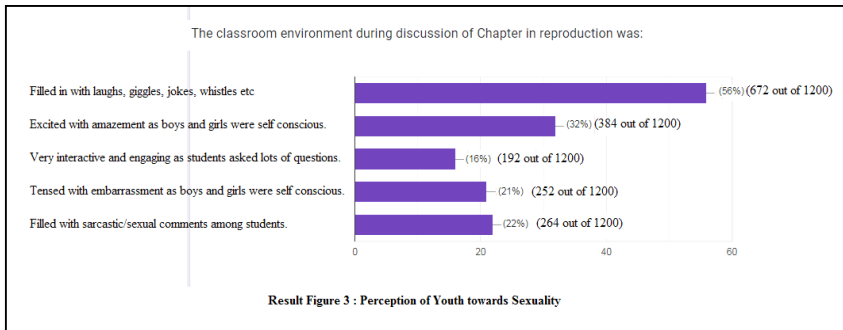


Figure 3(a) below represents differences in opinion among the sexes. More females and intersex reported that anatomy classes were filled with laughs and jokes, whereas more males reported excitement and amazement. Males were reportedly more interactive than females, while females and intersex opined that the sessions were tense and embarrassing. Also, more females and intersex reported of sarcastic and sexual comments during the anatomy sessions.

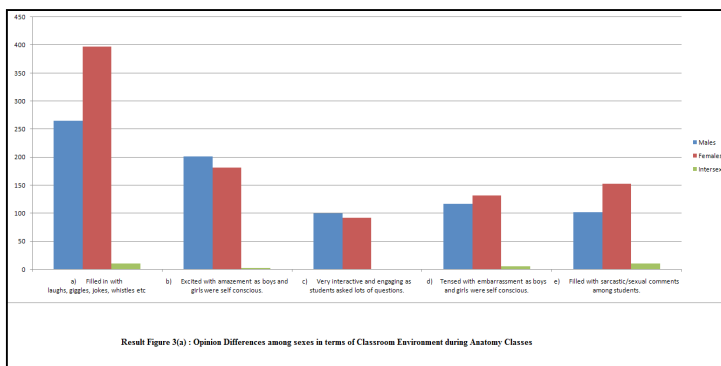
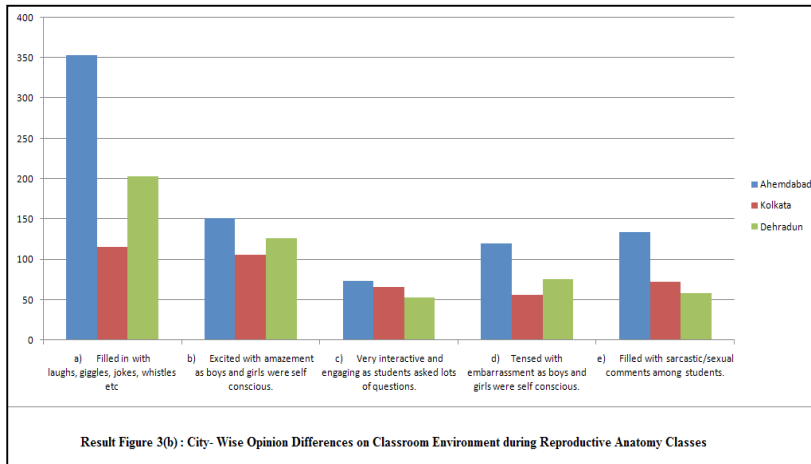


Figure 3(b) is representative of the city-wise opinion differences on classroom environment. Interestingly, majority of the participants agreeing for all the options in the survey question are reportedly from the city of Ahmadabad. The three cities have different trends in how adolescents feel, express themselves,

and interact during reproduction classes, which can be attributed to the cultural aspects of the pertaining geographical locations.



Apart from reproductive anatomy classes, the necessity of sex education classes in the country is highly vital. However, figure 4 shows 90% of the sample disclosing that their schools did not organize any sex education classes apart from the anatomy classes in curriculum.

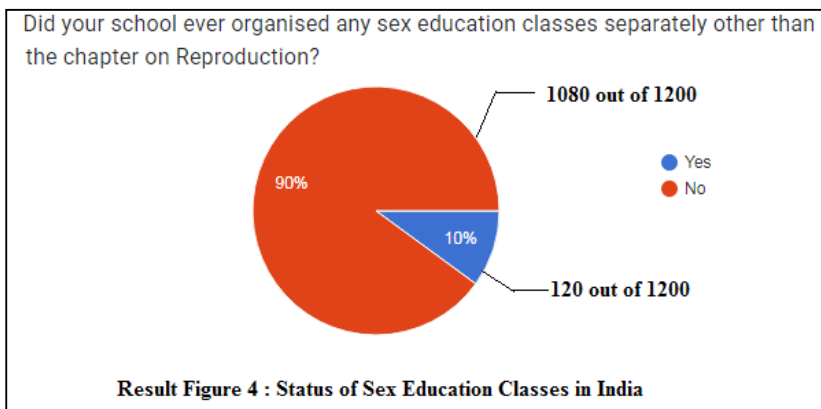
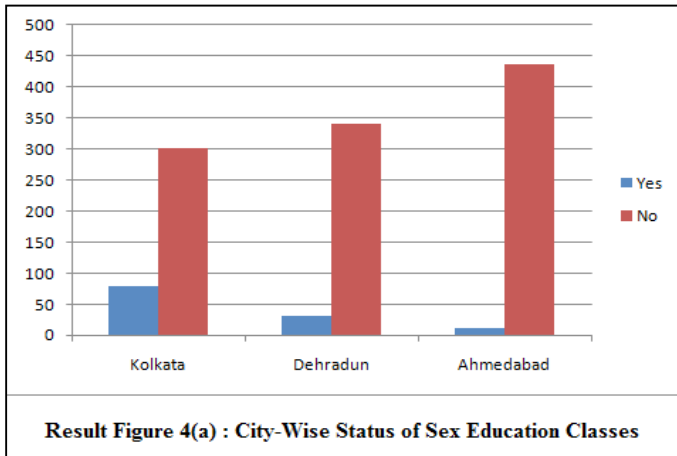


Figure 4(a) indicates that in all the cities, majority of the participants have reported no sex education classes in schools. Also, more participants from Kolkata have received some sort of sex education in comparison to Dehradun and Ahmadabad.



From figure 4(b) it is evident that majority of participants in the four age groups have reported receiving no sex education classes during school years. Though there is a slight rise in conduction of sex education classes over the decades, however, majority remain deprived of these educational programs even today.

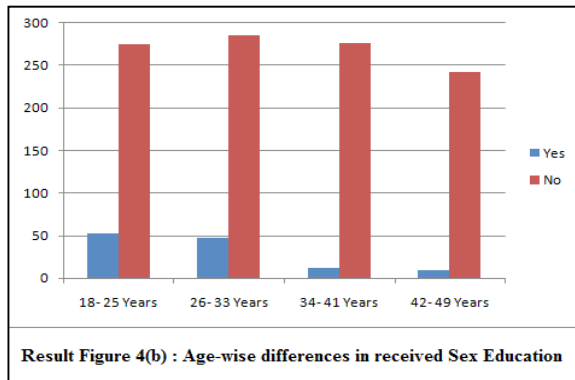


Figure 5 represents the content of sex education classes that are delivered in Indian Schools. It reflects 32% sample approving they were taught sex as an activity involving penetration of female genitals by male genitals. 48% reported that process of fertilization and pregnancy was taught; only 28% agreed that secondary sex characteristics were discussed and 43% have agreed that contraceptive measures were taught. A low 17% agreed that types of touch and forms of sexual abuse were discussed; even lower 2% reported teachings on gender variations, LGBTQIA+ discussions or negative impact of pornographic content. Seriousness of the issue lies in 34% reporting none of the teachings in the question were applicable to them.

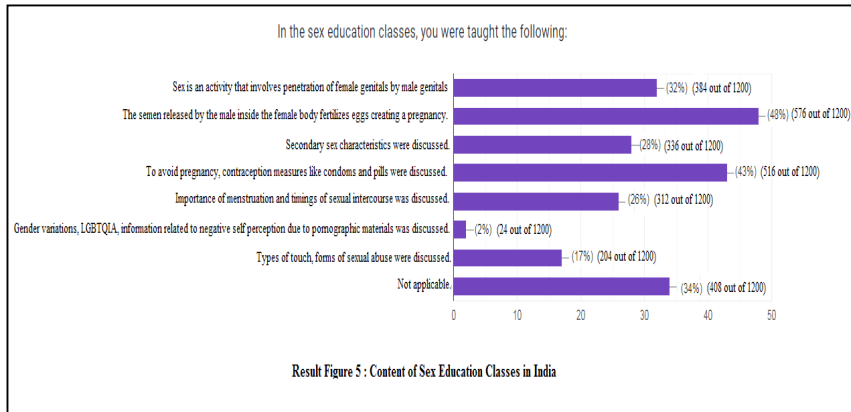


Figure 5(a) is indicative of age-wise differences in content of sex education received. It reveals that there is an increased focus on teaching youth about how pregnancy results and how pregnancies can be avoided. A lesser focus on secondary sex characteristics and importance of menstruation is apparent. Minimal focus is on acquainting students with gender identity, LGBTQIA+ Community, impact of pornography, body image, or types of touch and sexual abuse. Its concerning that as compared to older counterparts, increasingly more number of individuals in the age range of 18- 25 years have reported that none of the requisite content is being taught in sex education classes.

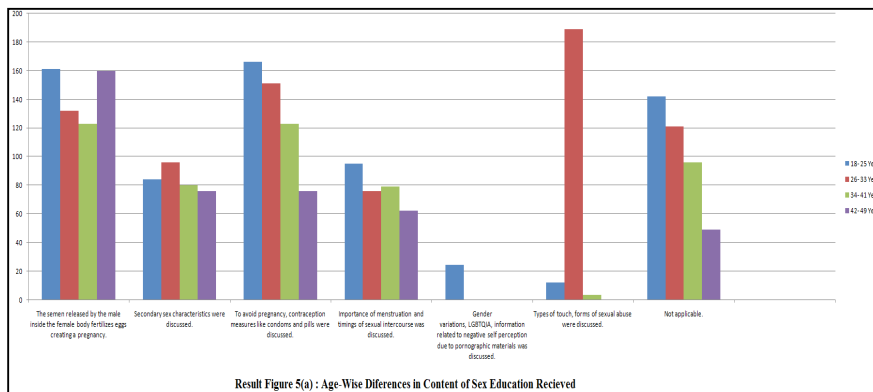


Figure 6 depicts awareness regarding pornographic content available online among all the 4 age-groups in the sample. It is revealed that 93% of the sample is well aware about existence and availability of sexually explicit content over the internet.

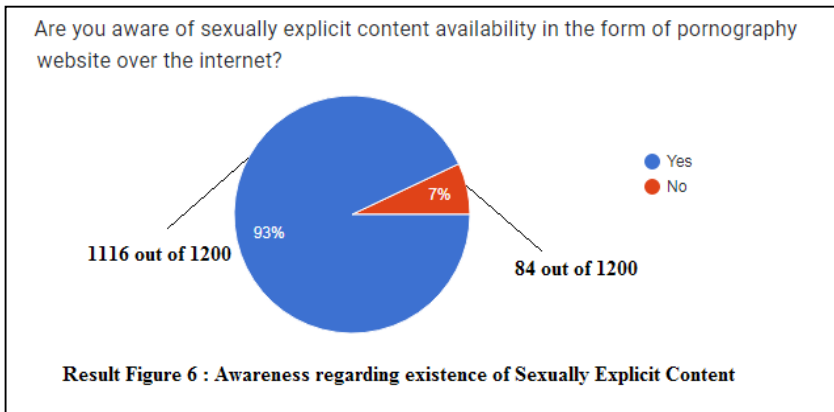


Figure 7 represents age of exposure to pornographic material. The findings indicate that 32% of the individuals came across explicit material by 15- 17 years. 29% encountered porn content by 12-14 years. 29% opted for “Not Applicable” while 8% were exposed at 9-11 years and 6% faced sexual content at the tender age of 6-8 years.

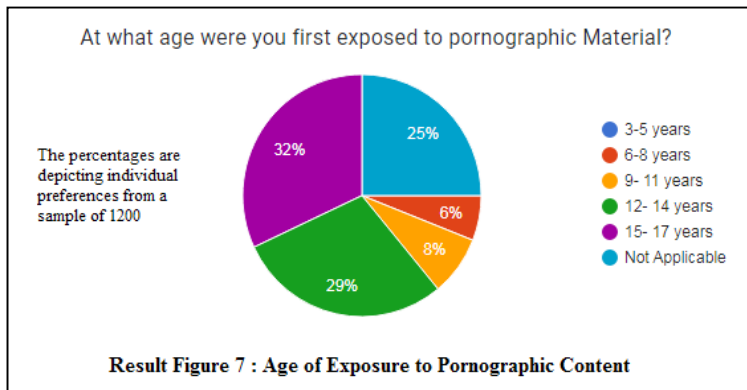


Figure 7(a) reflects age-wise comparison of first exposure. It’s apparent that increasingly more number of participants under 18-25 years are being exposed to pornographic content during teenage and earlier. The age of first exposure is 6-8 years among all age groups.

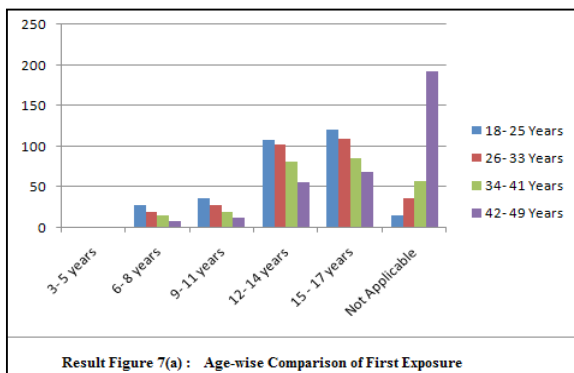
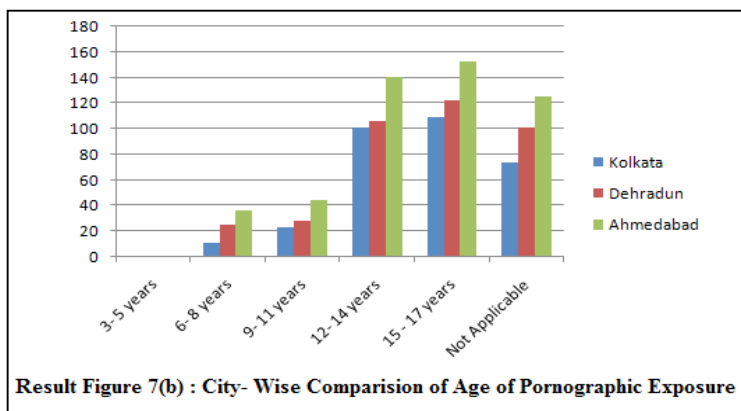


Figure 7(b) depicts city-wise comparison of age at which individuals in the sample were exposed to pornography. It is revealed that greater proportion of sample from Ahmadabad and Dehradun in comparison to Kolkata, are being exposed to pornographic content in ages ranging from 6- 17 years.



Opinion regarding usefulness of pornographic content is depicted in Figure 8. 15% have opined that pornography is necessary for understanding sexual activities, 13% consider pornography as important to understand the different types of sexual orientation. 23% agree that explicit content is vital for knowledge of different forms of sexual intercourse like oral, anal, etc. 14% have opined that porn is helpful in easily accessing socially censored information. 36% agree that porn is used for the purpose of masturbation. 74% are of the opinion that porn is not an appropriate medium of information for children.

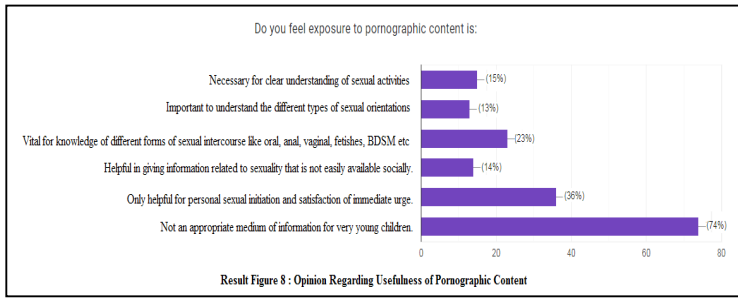
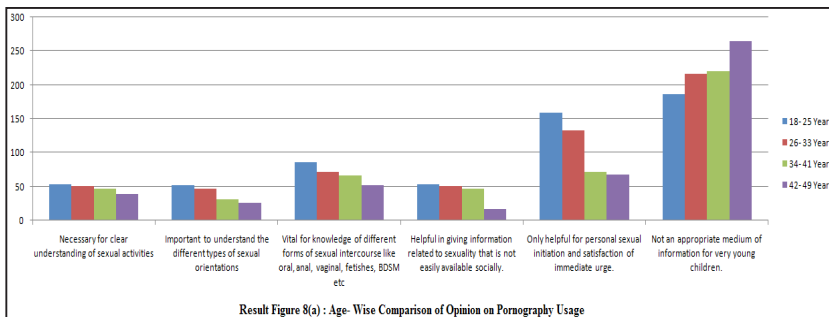


Figure 8(a) depicts age-wise comparison of opinion on pornography usage. It suggests that with increasing age there is a decline the opinion that pornography is necessary for clear understanding of sexual activities. More number of younger counterparts consider pornography a good source of understanding sexual orientations than older ones. Young participants find porn more vital for knowing forms of sexual intercourse than older ones. Decreasingly lesser number of older participants believe that explicit content is helpful in giving information related to sexuality not easily accessible socially. On the contrary, increasingly older participants believe that pornography is not an appropriate medium of information for very young children.



City-wise differences in opinion regarding pornography usage are depicted in figure 8(b). Participants from Ahmadabad have affirmative opinion in almost all the questions, in comparison to Kolkata and Dehradun. It is indicative that although pornographic media is consumed by the sample from all three cities, for purposes of sexual satisfaction and knowledge, yet they believe it is not an appropriate medium of information for young children.

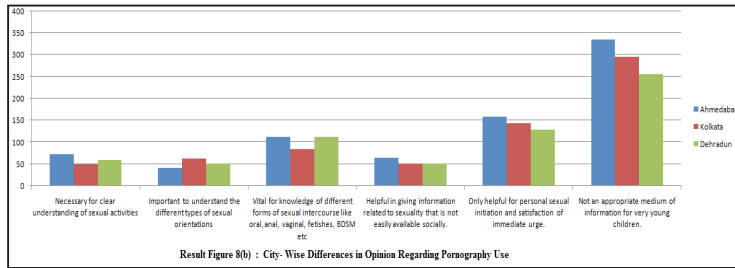
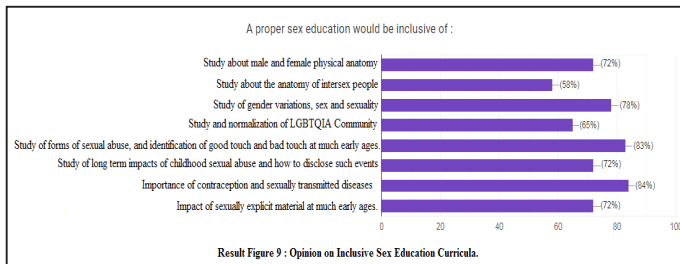
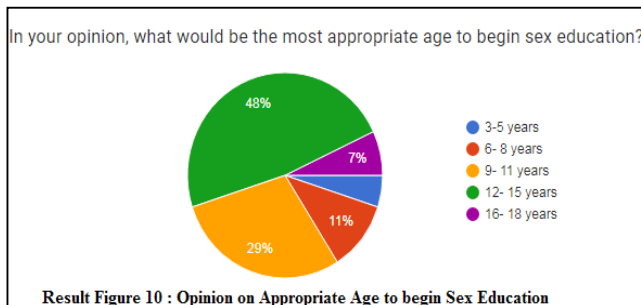


Figure below is indicative of opinion on Inclusive Sex Education Curricula. 72% have opined that sex education should include study of male and female anatomy. 58% hold that intersex anatomy should be included. 78% agree that study of gender variations, sex and sexuality should be included. 65% opined that study and normalization of LGBTQIA Community should be included. 83% have agreed that sexual abuse & its impact, identification of good and bad touch, and ways to disclose such events should be taught at early ages. 84% opine that importance of contraception and sexually transmitted diseases should be taught. 72% opined that impact of pornography should be taught.



As per the figure below, majority of the sample has opined that the appropriate age to begin sex education is 12- 15 years of age. However, a significant proportion believes, that the right age range is 9 – 11 years.



Discussion:

From the above results it can be deciphered that although Indian Education has chapters on reproduction, however still there are sections in the society who don't receive or are unaware of basic knowledge regarding male and female anatomy. City-wise data reflects that Western and Northern ends of the country are lagging behind in terms of classes on human anatomy in comparison to the Eastern end.

In terms of teaching the concepts of reproductive anatomy, it has been revealed that teachers still feel hesitancy and discomfort while discussing reproduction. Skipping portions or too fast discussion without clarifying doubts and just reading from the book without explanation is indicative that the quality of education pertaining to human reproduction is highly compromised in the country. In comparison to the previous counterparts, younger generation is receiving worsened quality of teaching.

Classroom atmosphere during anatomy classes comprising laughs, embarrassment, tension or sarcastic comments among adolescents is a harsh reality indicative of internalized beliefs of sex as an act of pleasure only. This adds to the damage done by low quality teaching, since these behaviors remain unmonitored, resulting in validation and normalization of such behavior & feelings among the youth. Sex differences indicated that females and intersex feel embarrassed about discussing reproduction in class, while males take it causally. This can have possible implications in terms of developing sexual schemas impacting sexual attitudes and beliefs. (Mahmut et al., 2021) Also, among the cities, due to possible cultural differences, adolescents perceive and interact differently among themselves sexually, since culture provides initial framework for considering sexuality (Agocha et al., 2014).

This study clearly portrayed that major revisions and monitoring are needed in the implementation of sex education at the school level, as majority of the schools at the Western, Northern and Eastern end are failing in rigorous sex education classes. This trend is prevalent since 30 years, as major sample from all ages were reportedly deprived.

Whatever proportion of the sample did receive any forms of sex education have acknowledged that curriculum of the sex education did not involve complete information regarding forms of sexual activities, & anatomical structure of intersexes. Secondary sex characteristics, types of touch and sexual abuse, necessity and ways to disclose abuse, information pertaining to LGBTQIA+

Community all remain unattended in all the three cities, across all ages. Lack of information on all these aspects leaves Indian Youth misinformed and unaware regarding their own and others sexuality as well as taking measures to protect themselves.

Unavailability of information formally results in seeking knowledge from sources which are not meant for all ages to view and comprehend. This study confirms that Internet, especially pornographic websites flooded with nudity and unimaginable sex acts is in awareness of majority of the sample. Youth as young as 6 years of tender age, when meets with incomprehensible sexual content over the internet, becomes susceptible to develop mental health conditions such as addiction and poor physical outcomes. (Adarsh et al., 2023)

The above finding is further supported by sections of the sample agreeing to use pornography for sexual stimulation, understanding sexual orientations and sexual positions. In spite of the opinion the current sample holds regarding usage of pornography, major opinion that consumption of sexually explicit content is not a good source of information for younger ones, directly supports the necessity of inclusive sex education at the earliest.

Open ended responses of the survey have extremely sensitive information pertaining to some participants being sexually abused when they were young, and hence they have emphasized the necessity for early sex education. Understanding the importance of good and bad touch becomes extremely vital for identifying and protecting oneself from any forms of sexual abuse at very young ages. Not having any sexual relationships as one approaches a certain age, is also considered as “Naïve” or Innocent” leading to ridicule in peer circle. This also causes mental agony among the youth, and its prevention needs large scale sex education drives.

Another sample portion revealed that exposure to pornography results in insecurity among the youth in terms of body image of the person, and for the sexual abuse perpetrator, it becomes an opportunity to mock the other individual. Shame and doubt surrounding sexuality often makes people keep their sexual abuse unreported, leading them to suffer from mental and physical consequences for a prolonged time.

It has been further revealed that peer circle often forces one to watch pornographic content without the consent of the individual. Not wanting to participate in the consumption of explicit content results into physical and verbal abuse by the peers. Apart from this, the necessity to introduce LGBTQIA+ study in sex

education curriculum would enhance acceptance among youth regarding the spectrum of possibilities in sex, gender and sexuality.

This study presses the need for a comprehensive sex education, which must teach the youth, irrespective of gender and sexuality, that consent and clear communication is the primary most important aspect in a healthy sexual/romantic relationship. It has to be taken care, that while talks on sex and sexuality should increase, it should not manifest as an acceptable norm to impose one's sexual desires on others without consent.

Conclusion:

Above discussion have lead to the acceptance of alternative hypothesis that Indian Sex Education is not gender inclusive and comprehensive to answer the adolescent's curiosity. Also, there exists large disparity in the quality of sex education received among the three cities, the age groups and the different sexes. Northern and Western end of the country are in deeper need of rigorous and monitored sex education practices, whereas the Eastern end needs to increase the same along with inclusivity.

Implications:

Comprehensive & inclusive sex education that includes dedicated and involved teachers, teaching topics of reproduction, pregnancy, menstruation, masturbation, sexually transmitted infections, proper use of contraceptives, importance of consent and communication, forms of sexual abuse and touch, gender and sexuality and perils of pornographic usage becomes the need of the hour. Along with the involvement of teachers, there is a dire necessity of parents to respectfully monitor the sexual behavior of the adolescents, leading to self acceptance while guiding them through the process of sexual maturation.

Recommendations:

Though National Education Policy has been introduced for the betterment of youth at school and college level, however, missing out the aspect of sex education only makes this policy incomplete. Hence, it is recommended that large scale studies on this sensitive issue be done, in order to reach the policy holders for making necessary changes.

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National Education Policy and Its Impact on Educated Unemployment in India

Maheshvari Yadav¹

Abstract

The recent most sensitive issue of India as well as the whole world is Unemployment. In case of unemployment educated Unemployment is striking attention of every intellectual. It's important to have an education but the ultimate goal of any education is to get employed. In India the ratio of educated unemployment is very disturbing. There are number of reasons for this situation but among all these one is our education policy. In this research study we are discussing the new education policy which is going to implement from the year 2023. This study analyze the possible impact of new education policy on uneducated employment as well as contribution of this new policy in creating awareness of new era of skill required for better job opportunities. This study analyzes the data of CMIE for recent numbers of educated unemployment as well as UGC for enrolled students in university as well as colleges and also the standards of universities which provide higher education. The result of the study shows importance of new education policy having certain skill based courses which provide job opportunities as well as awareness regarding it.

Keywords: Education, Unemployment, Policy, UGC, CMIE, AISHE, Industry

Introduction:

Education is always considered as an inevitable part of human life. Education gives the way of living to any individual without considering their socio economic status or physical inability. In last 15 years the life of human being is very much affected by technology either in a positive or in a negative mode. Humans have to change their life style, their way of living, their mode of education according to changing technology. A change in technology makes inevitable change in corresponding area and if the necessary changes are not made it will ruin the entire structure whether relates to normal education or higher skill based education. This research study is emphasizing the need of this change that we should make in our education policy to compete with rapid change in technology, demand of skilled humans and many more. Here this paper explain the National education policy, its structure, need of National education policy and most importantly the possible effect of New national

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education policy on employment structure of India. This paper is also present some analytical data about Employment and students enrollment with colleges and university. The statistical data regarding state and nation employment ratio, educated unemployment in rural as well as urban also present in this paper. The latest courses offered by UGC through new education policy and how it empowers the students to cop with changing demand of corporate as well as government institutions also mention in this research study.

Objectives

The following are the study's main objectives:

1. To get the detailed information about NEP and its main elements.
2. To get the detailed statistical information about total enrollment of students in Higher Education including colleges and Universities.
3. To get the detailed statistical information about Unemployment, Educated Unemployment as well as Urban and Rural Unemployment.
4. To analyze the information about education, enrollment, educated unemployment with relation to the New Education Policy.

Methodology:

This research is a descriptive study. The study is based on secondary data which derived from number of research articles, books, journals and websites. Through Literature review analysis and conclusion is derived.

Limitations:

This research study is based on Secondary data only. Moreover it is a theoretical based research only descriptive analysis is done no statistical analysis or method is used in this research study.

Literature Review:

Dixit K., Tiwari P., Gupta S., Singh P., Gupta H., (2011) has given detailed analysis of Educated Unemployment and suggest that the failure of providing correct education to youth of India leads to many problems like crime, corruption and social injustice. This research paper gives importance on providing education to young boys and girls in accordance with their capacity. It will also help in solving the problem of unemployment.

Other authors like Gupta S., Dwivedi V., Soni D., Singh B., (2011) has shown

the importance of education for sustainable development. For the improvement of quality of life of education the environmental, societal and economical consideration is necessary. In this paper an effort has been done to evaluate the different criteria of education for sustainability.

Godre M., Deoskar A. (2021) highlights the challenges of Indian higher education as well as the progress of Indian higher education due to Modern teaching technology. Authors also suggest some guidelines as well as implementation strategy of NEP 2020 on Higher Education of India. This paper also talks about Industry 4.0 which means interconnected worlds, connected together physically as well as digitally. Finally this paper concluded that today's educated youth is not able to find qualitative jobs in the Industry 4.0 and NEP can bridge the gap between traditional education offering and what today's industry demands.

In another articles Yadav M., Yadav B. (2021) discuss in their paper about overall unemployment rate and youth unemployment rate in India from 2000 to 2020. They also highlights the share of jobs in India in 2019 based on educational qualifications and also graduate employability (2021) by educational qualification and gender from 2014 to 2021. This research paper also suggests some immediate and preventive actions of this vicious problem.

The AISHE report of 20-21 (<https://aishe.gov.in/aishe/home>, 2020-21) has shown the very exciting data of Gross Enrollment Ratio, Number of Universities, Number of Colleges, Number of students, Number of teachers, Pupil Teacher ratio and gender parity index. This AISHE report clears all doubt regarding increasing rate of enrollment ratio as well as colleges and also students who cleared bachelor and master degrees.

Badiger G.and Pujar U. (2023) puts emphasis on basic education system which leads to ultimate growth of nation in terms of employment and improving quality of life. This research paper is a very good attempt to highlight the issue of unemployment which includes data from World Bank as well. This research paper shows the importance of New Education Policy 2020 to solve the problem Unemployment among youth of India with proper skill based educational courses.

Finally Darbar T. (2021) highlight the Impact of New Education Policy on higher education, its opportunities and challenges. This study also emphasis on many opportunities available to education fraternity. This paper also describes the road leads to implement new Education Policy.

Overview Of National Education Policy:

The New Education Policy was launched by union Cabinet for the transformation of School and Higher Education System on 29th July 2020. This is the first Education policy of the 21st century that has replaced 34 years old education policy. The New education policy builds on four pillars like Access, Equity, Quality and Accountability. This policy aims to make India a “Global Knowledge Superpower”. This policy helps to make our education system more flexible, holistic and multidisciplinary which improve the capabilities of students.

For the National performance assessment a new platform will be set up which is **PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic development)**. Primary education has an access of vocational courses which also includes internship. The skill based courses like gardening, pottery, electric work, and others are going to be part of primary education and students must aware the importance of these livelihood and life skill. The skilled based subjects like Yoga and Meditation, Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship, Stress relief management, Sports and Practice, Environmental studies, Industrial Psychology and Management, recent trends in management and Disaster management can be offered by different universities.

Countries like USA, Germany, and South Korea gets vocational education 52%, 75% and 96% respectively in comparison of India where it is not more than 5%, which is very low and that is the reason why we should include vocational courses at primary level. Our New education policy includes at least one vocational course from grade 6 to 8 for each child of India.

Higher education is very necessary for further development and overall growth of India as country. The aim of National education policy is to increase GER (Gross Enrollment Ratio) from 26.3% to 50 % by 2035.

Enrollment Of Students In Higher Education:

Higher education is very necessary for further development and overall growth of India as country. The aim of National education policy is to increase GER (Gross Enrollment Ratio) from 26.3% to 50 by 2035. The total enrollment in higher education has increased to nearly 4.14 crore in 2020-21 from 3.85 crore in 2019-20. The total 72 lakh students have increased which is 21% a quite high number. Even female ratio has also increased to 2.01 crore from 1.88 crore in 2019-20. Under this new education policy UG education has number of entry and exit points where students get certificate after one year,

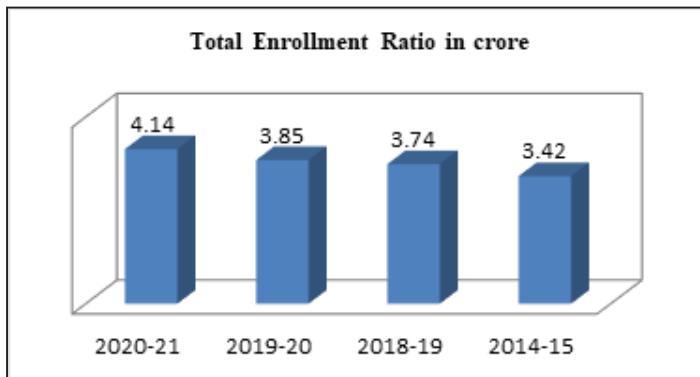
an advanced diploma after two years, a degree after three years and a bachelor with research after four years which is also called honors.

Different HEIs has to create **Academic Bank of Credit (ABC)** for storage of academic credit earned by students and will be transferred and counted for final degree. The one of the aim of NEP is that HEI becomes multidisciplinary institutions and each of them have 3000 or more students by the end of 2040. Even for admission in HEI there should be a common entrance test offered by a NTA.

As per AISHE (All India survey on Higher Education) 20-21 almost 79.06% of the students have taken admission under undergraduate level and 11.5% in postgraduate level. Maximum students got admission in social science (20.56%) followed by science (14.83%).

Government universities (59%) contribute towards 73.1% of the enrollment and government colleges (21.4%) contribute towards 34.5 % of the enrolment.

The top 6 states who attained the highest position in enrollment of students are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Rajasthan. Total pass out students have increased to 95.4 Lakh in 2020-21 as against 94 Lakh in 2019-20. 43% universities and 61.4% colleges are located in rural areas.



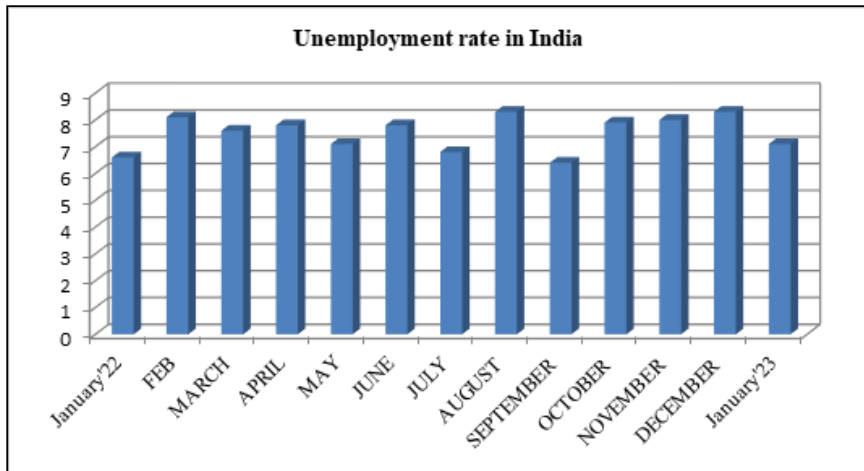
Educated Unemployment:

As per latest report around 47% Graduates in India are not suitable for any kind of Industry role. This is a very dangerous data for the growth of the country. Unemployment rate of educated persons in India was at 11.4%. Half of India's population is under 25 and about 66% are younger than 35. This percentage

has very large number in total. Actually it is an interest of everyone whether educationalist, politician, social worker or policy makers to examine the growth of jobs in India. The following statistical data with graph will help to understand the Unemployment situation in India. Through graphical presentation it is easier to understand the whole situation and comparison can be possible.

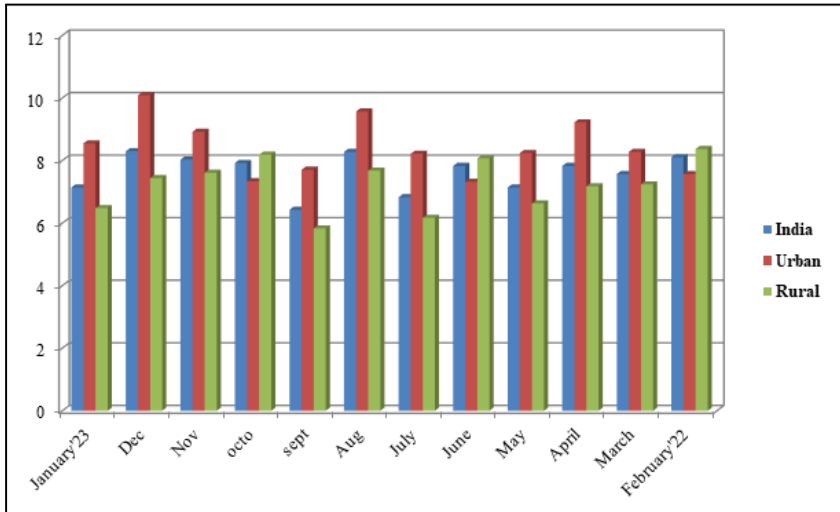
Unemployment Rate in India:

MONTH	JAN'22	FEB	MARCH	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN'23
RATE	6.6	8.1	7.6	7.8	7.1	7.8	6.8	8.3	6.4	7.9	8	8.3	7.1



Monthly Urban and Rural Unemployment Rate in India

Month	India	Urban	Rural
January'23	7.14	8.55	6.48
Dec	8.3	10.09	7.44
Nov	8.03	8.92	7.61
October	7.92	7.34	8.19
September	6.43	7.71	5.83
Aug	8.28	9.57	7.68
July	6.83	8.22	6.17
June	7.83	7.32	8.07
May	7.14	8.24	6.63
April	7.83	9.22	7.18
March	7.57	8.28	7.24
February'22	8.11	7.57	8.37

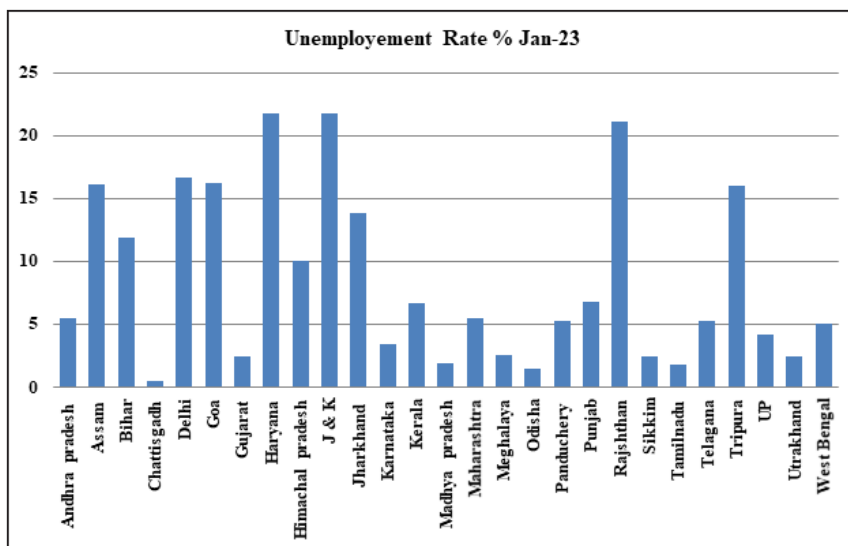


Unemployment Rate January 2023:

In this graph the unemployment ratio of the states of India has been presented which allow to easily understanding the situation. The highest unemployment ratio is from J & K and Hariyana while the lowest ratio is from Chattisgadh and Tamilnadu.

State	Jan-23
Andhra Pradesh	5.5
Assam	16.1
Bihar	11.9
Chattisgadh	0.5
Delhi	16.7
Goa	16.2
Gujarat	2.4
Haryana	21.7
Himachal Pradesh	10
J & K	21.8
Jharkhand	13.8
Karnataka	3.4
Kerala	6.7
Madhya Pradesh	1.9
Maharashtra	5.5
Meghalaya	2.6

Odisha	1.5
Panduchery	5.3
Punjab	6.8
Rajshtan	21.1
Sikkim	2.4
Tamilnadu	1.8
Telagana	5.3
Tripura	16
UP	4.2
Utrakhand	2.4
West Bengal	5



Conclusion:

This research study concluded that NEP is a big hope for widely increasing Unemployment rate in India. Here the ratio of Educated Unemployment is a big threat for India as globally developing country. The reforms suggested by NEP and subjects offered by it including vocational subjects will help to fulfill future requirements. The flexibility of this policy (Multiple Entry and Exit) is a biggest elements and this will help students to grow them in their choice of fields. This paper concluded that the new education policy has the all relevant criteria for overall sustainable development of education. The advancement of technology leads to transform the traditional working methodology in to

modern technology. This arise a need for problem solving creativity and digital literacy which achieve only implementing successful NEP 2020 for India 2. It is very necessary to have certain standard in education and this NEP will help to achieve that. NAAC accreditation is going to be compulsory for higher education institute which will definitely help to improve overall standard of educational institutes.

Suggestions:

The success of any planning highly depends on its implementation. This new education policy is having all the characteristics for tremendous success but everything depends on the implementation. The subjective prejudice should be taken aback and objective of the policy should come on front stage which will give definite hope for the success of new education Policy. Political agenda and craving for privatization in Indian Education system is a big hurdle for NEP 2020. Urban educated unemployment ratio is much higher than rural educated unemployment. This policy has suggested some interesting vocational courses, which should teach in a way that student really get practical knowledge and help for getting a job. This will help to reduce educated urban unemployment. Proper implementation of NEP will definitely help to students from socially backward class and uplift them by providing skill based education. This research paper also suggests that the new era courses relate to social media as well as technology must be included. Whether students relate to commerce field or arts stream this technology based courses should be the part of curriculum of colleges. So ultimately NEP 2020 can be a solution for the problem of Educated Unemployment of India if implemented properly.

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- Articles only in the discipline of Social Work and Social Sciences (i.e Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Political Science, Rural Studies, Management, Education etc. would be accepted.)
- Length of the manuscript for article should be no longer than 6000 words including references. The abstract must be between 150 -200 words.
- Length of a book review should not exceed 1200 words.
- There should be four to five key words for indexing purposes.
- The article should be typed in double space using Times New Roman font, 12 font size and Justified alignment.
- All in-text citations must be included in the reference list and all references should have in-text citations.
- Tables and Charts in an article should not exceed five to six in number and must be correctly numbered and labelled.
- The Authors should follow the APA 7th Edition Referencing style. The following links may be useful.
 - (<https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/reference-guide.pdf>,
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- Please follow the format of the first page of an article and a book review as given in the following pages.



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