

NEP 2020 AND LIBRARY SERVICES: TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE ACCESS IN INDIA

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Abstract :

In the Indian Education System National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a paradigm shift, emphasizing holistic, multidisciplinary, and technology-driven learning. Libraries, as knowledge hubs, play a vital role in achieving the objectives of NEP 2020. This research paper examines the evolving role of library services under NEP 2020, focusing on digital transformation, inclusive access, lifelong learning, and the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS).

It highlights opportunities, challenges, and strategic recommendations for strengthening library services in alignment with NEP goals. The study concludes that libraries must transition into dynamic learning resource centers to support educational reforms in India.

Keywords : NEP 2020, Library Services, Digital Libraries, Indian Knowledge Systems, Information Literacy, Higher Education, Knowledge Society.

Introduction :

A nation's intellectual and socioeconomic advancement is shaped by its educational policies, which are a fundamental component of national development. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of India is a revolutionary framework designed to make education more flexible, inclusive, and interdisciplinary. It aims to create a fair and dynamic knowledge society and supersedes the previous 1986 policy. (JIER)

Really Libraries have always been central to education systems, serving as repositories of knowledge and facilitators of learning. In the context of NEP 2020, the role of libraries has expanded significantly. They are no longer limited to book lending but are expected to support digital learning, research, innovation, and lifelong education. This paper explores the relationship between NEP 2020 and library services, analysing how libraries can contribute to achieving policy objectives.

Overview of NEP 2020 :

NEP 2020 aims to overhaul the Indian education system through several key reforms:

1. Key Objectives :

- Universal access to education
- Holistic and multidisciplinary learning
- Promotion of research and innovation



- Integration of technology in education
- Emphasis on equity and inclusion

The policy envisions transforming India into a knowledge-based society by ensuring access to quality education for all learners. (JIER)

2. Key Features

- Introduction of the 5+3+3+4 curricular structure
- Multilingual education
- Flexible subject choices and multiple entry/exit options
- Increased use of digital technologies

These reforms necessitate strong support systems, and libraries are integral to this transformation.

3. Concept and Evolution of Library Services :

Libraries have evolved from traditional repositories to modern information centers:

1. Traditional Libraries :

- Focus on print collections
- Limited user interaction
- Physical access only

2. Modern Libraries :

- Digital resources (e-books, e-journals)
- Online databases and repositories
- Remote access services

3. Smart Libraries :

- Integration of ICT
- AI-based services
- User-centric and participatory systems

NEP 2020 emphasizes the transformation of libraries into technology-enabled smart learning centers. (ijrls.in)

Role of Libraries in NEP 2020 :

1. Supporting Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education :

NEP promotes multidisciplinary education, requiring diverse learning resources. Libraries provide:

- Cross-disciplinary materials
- Research support tools
- Collaborative learning spaces

Libraries thus act as bridges between different fields of knowledge.

2. Promoting Digital Learning and E-Resources :

Digital transformation is a core component of NEP 2020. Libraries contribute by:

- Providing access to e-books and e-journals
- Supporting online learning platforms
- Offering remote access to resources

Digital libraries enhance accessibility and reduce costs while supporting research-oriented education. (Vyom Hans Press)

3. Facilitating Lifelong Learning :

NEP 2020 emphasizes continuous learning beyond formal education. Libraries support this by:

- Providing open access resources
- Organizing workshops and training programs
- Promoting self-learning and skill development

Libraries serve learners of all age groups, aligning with NEP's lifelong learning vision.

4. Promoting Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) :

One of the unique features of NEP 2020 is the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems. Libraries play a key role in:

- Preserving traditional knowledge
- Digitizing manuscripts and archives
- Disseminating indigenous knowledge

Libraries act as custodians and promoters of IKS within the modern educational framework. (The Journals House)

5. Enhancing Information Literacy :

Information literacy is essential in the digital age. Libraries contribute by:

- Training users in information retrieval
- Promoting critical evaluation of information
- Teaching digital literacy skills

This helps learners navigate the vast information landscape effectively.

6. Supporting Research and Innovation :

NEP emphasizes research-driven education. Libraries support this by:

- Providing access to scholarly databases
- Offering research assistance
- Facilitating academic collaborations

Libraries are essential for fostering a research culture in higher education institutions.

Transformation of Library Services under NEP 2020 :

1. Digital Libraries The transition to digital libraries is a major trend :

- Institutional repositories
- Open access platforms
- Online catalogues

Digital libraries improve accessibility and scalability.

2. Hybrid Library Models :

Modern libraries combine :

- Physical collections
- Digital resources
- Virtual services

This hybrid model ensures flexibility and inclusivity.

3. Smart Libraries and Emerging Technologies :

Technologies shaping library services :

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Machine learning
- Data analytics
- Cloud computing

These technologies enhance user experience and service efficiency.

Role of Library Professionals :

1. Changing Roles :

Library professionals are evolving from custodians to:

- Information managers
- Digital resource specialists
- Educators and trainers

2. Required Skills :

- ICT skills
- Data management
- Information literacy instruction
- Research support

3. Continuous Professional Development :

NEP emphasizes training and skill development for librarians to adapt to technological

changes. (ijrls.in)

Challenges in Implementing NEP 2020 in Libraries :

1. Infrastructure Issues :

- Lack of digital infrastructure
- Limited funding

2. Digital Divide :

- Rural vs urban disparities
- Limited internet access

3. Skill Gaps :

- Lack of trained professionals
- Resistance to change

4. Resource Constraints :

- Limited availability of digital content
- Subscription costs

5. Policy and Governance Issues :

- Lack of clear guidelines for library integration
- Need for national-level library policies

Opportunities for Library Services :

1. Expansion of Digital Resources :

- Growth of open access materials
- Government initiatives like digital repositories

2. Collaboration and Networking :

- Inter-library cooperation
- Resource sharing

3. Community Engagement :

- Libraries as community learning centers
- Outreach programs

4. Innovation in Services :

- Virtual reference services
- Online learning support
- Gamification and interactive tools

Case Examples and Best Practices :



1. Academic Libraries :

- Integration of LMS (Learning Management Systems)
- Institutional repositories

2. Public Libraries :

- Community learning programs
- Digital literacy initiatives

3. School Libraries :

- Supporting foundational literacy
- Encouraging reading habits

These practices demonstrate how libraries can align with NEP goals.

Recommendations :

1. Policy-Level Recommendations :

- Develop a national library policy aligned with NEP
- Increase funding for library infrastructure

2. Institutional-Level Recommendations :

- Upgrade digital infrastructure
- Promote hybrid library models

3. Professional Development :

- Continuous training for librarians
- Integration of ICT skills

4. Users-Centric Services :

- Personalized information services
- Inclusive access initiatives

Conclusion :

The function of libraries in India's educational system has been redefined by NEP 2020. Libraries are today active promoters of knowledge, creativity, and lifelong learning rather than inert archives. Libraries may make a substantial contribution to accomplishing the objectives of NEP 2020 by embracing digital transformation, encouraging inclusion, and supporting multidisciplinary education.

However, successful implementation requires addressing challenges such as infrastructure gaps, digital divide, and skill shortages. With strategic planning and investment, libraries can become the backbone of India's knowledge economy.

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