

## Integrating Well-Being into Education: Mental Health Perspectives of NEP 2020

Dr. Sucharita Roy Chowdhury (Basu) <sup>1\*</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Health in all aspect is the most important part of human life. Physical health used to gain much attention previously as it was observable from outside. On the other hand, mental health has been ignored by many. But in present times, psychologists and educationists have stressed on mental health and well-being of a student and as a result a new branch of Psychology has evolved named Health Psychology. Sound mental health helps an individual to overcome hurdles in life, maintain healthy relationship with others and develop pliability. Educational institutions have a major role to play in developing mental health and well-being of the students as it relates to educational achievement as well. India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces a comprehensive framework aimed at promoting holistic education. This study critically examines the mental health-related perspectives embedded within NEP 2020 and analyses their potential impact on learners' overall well-being. The policy emphasizes a shift toward competency-based education, curricular flexibility, experiential learning, and the incorporation of socio-emotional competencies to create supportive learning environments. It further highlights the importance of teacher preparedness, institutional counselling mechanisms, and inclusive practices to identify and address mental health concerns at early stages. By advocating balanced academic engagement alongside physical, creative, and ethical development, NEP 2020 seeks to reduce performance-related pressure and enhance emotional resilience among students. The analysis suggests that systematic implementation of these provisions can contribute significantly to improved mental health outcomes, learner engagement, and long-term educational equity. The study underscores the need for policy-driven mental health integration as a cornerstone of quality education in the 21st century.

**Keywords:** *Mental Health, Well-being, National Education Policy 2020, Holistic Education, Socio-Emotional Learning, Educational Reform*

Health is a concept which has multiple concepts like physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. Physical health is observable and hence any issue related to this receive attention of all, whereas mental health has long been neglected. But with the passing time, recent days have observed significant changes in this concept and mental health is also gaining recognition because of its critical role in shaping individuals' academic performance, interpersonal relationships, and overall quality of life. This shift in perspective has contributed to the emergence and growth of Health Psychology as a specialized branch

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Chittaranjan College

\*Corresponding Author

Received: January 8, 2026; Revision Received: March 10, 2026; Accepted: March 20, 2026

which focuses on the interaction between psychological processes and physical health. In the field of education, students' mental health has gained major importance and has become a matter of concern due to challenges and pressure in academics, competition, emotional stress, social challenges and value crisis. Researchers have consistently proved that sound mental health is related to the learners' achievements in life enabling them to cope effectively with various challenges, maintain healthy relationships and develop adaptability and resilience. Educational institutions thus hold a crucial responsibility in nurturing students' mental well-being. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 suggested a landmark reform by transforming the education system into a holistic and learner-centred approach. The new education policy has emphasized cognitive, emotional, ethical and social growth. This study critically examines the mental health-related perspectives embedded within NEP 2020 and analyses their potential impact on learners' overall well-being. By exploring policy provisions related to curriculum design, pedagogy, teacher preparedness, and institutional support systems, the study highlights the role of education policy in promoting mental health as an integral component of quality education.

### Conceptual Framework: Mental Health and Education

According to World Health Organization (WHO) mental health is a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (2001). Mental health refers to the state of well-being in which individuals recognize their abilities, manage normal life stresses, work productively and contribute meaningfully to the society. Not only that, it also influences motivation, concentration, academic engagement, and social adjustment in educational context. Students possessing positive mental health are more likely to show emotional regulation, higher self-confidence and constructive problem-solving skills. The relationship between mental health and education is interdependent. Sound mental health may lead to academic success, creativity and adaptability to the educational environments whereas excessive academic pressure and rigid education system can contribute to multiple mental health issues like anxiety, stress and burnout.

### The National Education Policy 2020

After a long 34 years India has got its new education policy in 2020. The National Education Policy 2020 marks a significant upgrade in education in all sectors. The focus has been shifted toward holistic and flexible learning. The goal is simple-facing modern challenges, diversity to global competition, and ensuring that students do not get lost in the shuffle of a rapidly changing world. by advocating holistic, multidisciplinary, and flexible learning pathways. The salient feature of this policy is focus on "holistic development."

### Objectives of the study:

1. To critically examine the mental health-related perspectives embedded within NEP 2020
2. Analyses their potential impact on learners' overall well-being.
3. to study the role of education policy in promoting mental health as an integral component of quality education.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

The study is based on secondary data like government publication, journal, articles.

## **Mental Health–Related Provisions in NEP 2020**

The National Education Policy 2020 has stressed on mental health as integral part of education. As per the NEP 2020, “The development of capacities that promote students’ wellness such as fitness, good psycho-social wellbeing and sound ethical grounding are also critical for high quality learning” (NEP 2020). It ensures the mental health and well-being, socio-economic skill across different phases of education. Some key features of this policy in this context are appointment of counsellor at every educational institute, developing supportive healthy school climate which will eventually reduce stress via several pedagogical reforms, training of teachers in prioritizing mental wellness. It has also focussed on the basic training in health encompassing nutrition, personal and public hygiene, disaster response with first aid facility. It has also suggested for awareness among students regarding evil effects of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. By nutrition, the policy has meant healthy meals and healthy social- community involvement in the educational institutions. Further the policy has focussed on collaboration between educational institutions, parents, community, healthcare providers at different stages of education. Beside this, stress has also been given on the curriculum that would promote mental health literacy among all in an inclusive set up to ensure zero student left out in various phases of education.

## **Potential impact on learners’ overall well-being**

The NEP 2020 has made a remarkable shift in the aims of education by including mental health as one of the important components for holistic development of the students. Education is not based on rote learning; it is more balanced in emotional as well as supportive outlook. This remarkable recommendation has some potential impacts on the well-being of the learners. Because of the flexible curriculum, promotion of healthier learning habit, students get ample freedom to express their creativity in academic as well as other non-academic activities which in turn support their emotional regulation and self-esteem. Furthermore, the counselling services in the educational institutions promote and encourage healthy teacher-student relationship, healthy burnout of stress, reduce dropout rate and alleviate student engagement. Students feel supported and can seek for their mental issues in a destigmatize way. The collaboration between the students and other stakeholders ensure emotional resilience of the learner and empowerment of trained teachers which is beneficial in preparing the students for real life challenges.

## **Challenges in Implementation**

Despite its progressive vision, the effective implementation of mental health initiatives of NEP 2020 encounter several challenges like lack of trained counsellor, limited fund, proper infrastructure for teacher training, persistence of stigma in seeking help in mental issues, and disparities in institutional resources. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts among policymakers, educators, mental health professionals, and communities in overcoming these barriers. Adequate funding, capacity-building initiatives, and awareness programs are essential to translate policy intentions into practice.

## **CONCLUSION**

Mental health is a foundational element of holistic education and human development. The National Education Policy 2020 represents a significant step toward integrating mental well-being into India’s educational framework. By emphasizing competency-based learning,

## Integrating Well-Being into Education: Mental Health Perspectives of NEP 2020

socio-emotional development, teacher preparedness, and institutional support systems, the policy acknowledges the critical role of mental health in shaping educational outcomes.

This analysis suggests that systematic and inclusive implementation of NEP 2020 can lead to improved student well-being, enhanced learner engagement, and greater educational equity. Integrating mental health into education policy is not merely an add-on but a necessity for ensuring quality education in the 21st century. Future research and practice should focus on evaluating the on-ground impact of these policy provisions and developing strategies to strengthen mental health integration across educational levels.

### REFERENCE

- Curriculum on Health and Wellness of School going Adolescents, NCERT, New Delhi.  
<https://www.who.int/Data/Gho/Data/Major-Themes/Health-and-Well-Being>
- Meena, H.K. (2023). National Education Policy 2020 and Mental Health Care, Its Management and Need of Curriculum and Interventions, *Adhigam*, 146-157.
- National Education Policy 2020, Ministry of Education. Govt of India.
- Rao, K. (2025). National Education Policy 2020 and Mental Health. *Leadership, Education, Personality: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 20(01), 117-123.
- World Health Organization. (2001). Mental health: New understanding, new hope. World Health Organization. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/whr/2001/en/>

### **Acknowledgement**

Authors of Love Addiction Self-Assessment (LASA) and Nomophobia Questionnaire (NMP-Q) are duly acknowledged. The authors of the present study acknowledge the respondents for their active participation.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

**How to cite this article:** Chowdhury, S.R (2026). Integrating Well-Being into Education: Mental Health Perspectives of NEP 2020. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 14(1), 144-147. DIP:18.01.S16.20261401, DOI:10.25215/1304.S16