



# An Empirical Study of the Antecedents and Consequences of Vernacular Language in Higher Education

Dr Anju Khandelwal<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Vineet Kumar<sup>2</sup>, Prof. Avanish Kumar<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Associate Professor, Balaji Institute of Management & HRD, Sri Balaji University, Pune (MS), India  
dranju20khandelwal@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Symbiosis Centre for Management Studies, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune (MS), India. Vineet.kumar@scmspune.ac.in

<sup>3</sup>Prof. and Former Head, Department of Mathematical Sciences and Computer Application Bundelkhand University, Jhansi (UP), India dravanishkumar@gmail.com

## Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to address various aspects of education, including languages and medium of instruction. Generally, the NEP 2020 emphasizes a flexible and multilingual approach to learning. It recognizes the importance of the mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction in the early years of education. The policy promotes a three- language formula, where students are expected to learn the mother tongue or regional language, Hindi and English. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduced several reforms for higher education in India. These reforms aim to transform the higher education system to make it more flexible, multidisciplinary, and in tune with global standards. This study attempts to understand the impact of language and its effect on teaching and learning in higher education.

**Key Words:** Language Barrier; National Education Policy (NEP) 2020; Higher Education; Professional Education; Educational Reforms.

## 1. Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 refers to the education policy of India that was approved by the Union Cabinet on July 29, 2020. It marks a comprehensive overhaul of the education system in the country and replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986 (Kumar et al., 2021). The key objectives (Fig 1) of NEP 2020 include the following-

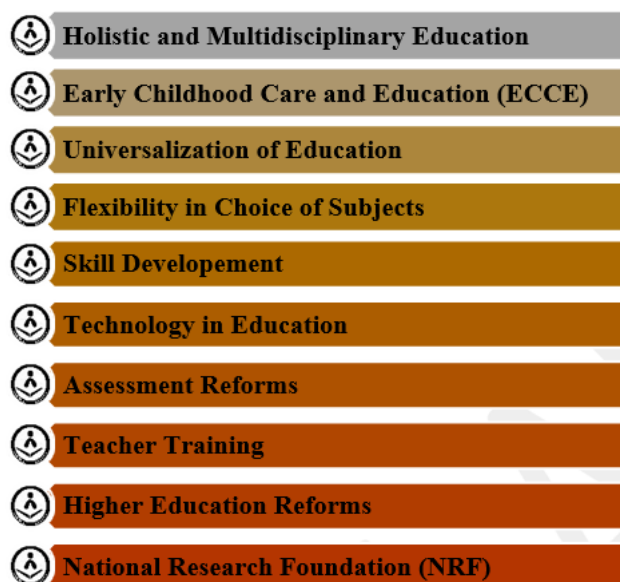


Figure 1: Key Objectives of NEP 2020 (Source: Ministry of Education, 2020)

### (a) Rational of the Study

India has lost over 220 languages in the last 50 years. 197 Indian languages are being earmarked as “endangered” by UNESCO. Under NEP 2020, special emphasis has been given to reviving India’s endangered and other regional languages. The government of India has proposed to establish the Institute of Pali and the Institute of Prakrit, etc. Classical language institutes are being asked to work as a multidisciplinary independent institution, or they can be merged with another university. Special emphasis is being given to the development and revitalisation of Sanskrit through B Ed colleges. The Indian government has come up with three-pronged

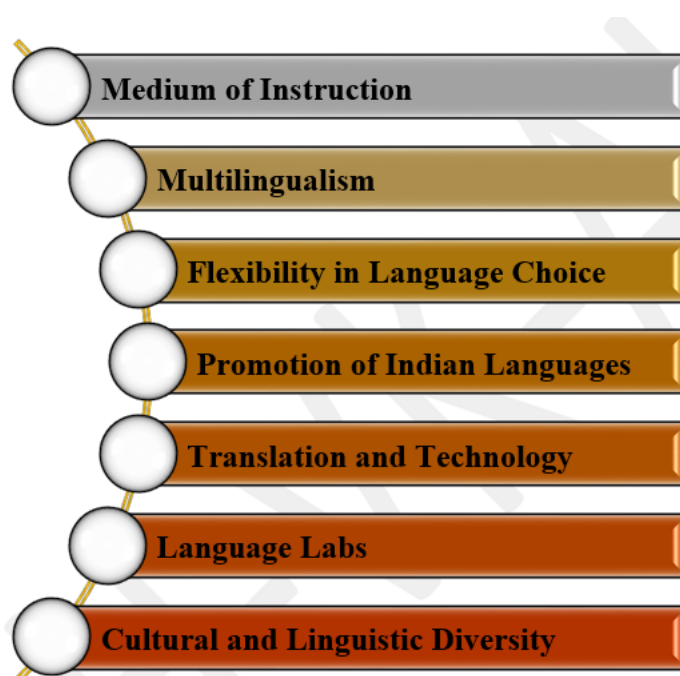


approaches for the revival of regional languages. (a) Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI) is going to create quality content in native languages. (b) Special emphasis is being given to teachers training in B Ed colleges so that a well-qualified and skilled talent pool is made available. (c) People who are “who’s who” of their domain like artisans, craftsmen, literature, etc. are involved in course curriculum and content development. A special provision of ‘Artisan(s) in Residence’ is being proposed so that students can interact and be influenced by them on a regular basis (Ministry of Education, 2020).

In this paper, vernacular language, native language, local language, regional language, and mother tongue will be used interchangeably. People of all age groups, regardless of ethnic background, feel comfortable conversing in their mother tongue or local/native/vernacular language. They are able to connect with their fellow citizens with great ease. They are able to express their emotions and expressions very easily to others. This also reduces the scope of miscommunication or any misunderstanding to a great extent.

#### (b) Language-related Provisions in National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

Language is a significant aspect of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, especially in the context of higher education. The policy addresses language-related issues with the aim of promoting multilingualism and ensuring a more inclusive and flexible approach. Here are some key points (**Fig 2**) regarding language in NEP 2020:



**Figure 2: Key Points Regarding Language in NEP 2020 (Source: Ministry of Education, 2020)**

NEP 2020 emphasizes using the mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction at least until Grade 5 and preferably beyond. This is intended to ensure a strong foundation in the early years of education in a language that students are familiar with. The policy promotes a multilingual approach in higher education. It encourages higher education institutions to offer programs in regional languages alongside English to facilitate access for a broader section of the population. It allows students the flexibility to choose the medium of instruction in higher education. This is aimed at allowing students to pursue their studies in a language they are comfortable with. The policy emphasizes the promotion of Indian languages and classical languages in higher education. It encourages universities to develop programs that promote the rich linguistic diversity of the country. Also, the role of technology in language learning and recommends the development of high-quality educational content/materials in various regional languages. It suggests using technology for translation and creating content in different languages. The policy advocates for establishing language labs to enhance proficiency in Indian languages, including classical languages. This is aimed at fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of linguistic diversity. Of course, the importance of English as an international language suggests that efforts should be made to enhance students' English proficiency. However, it also emphasises the need to maintain and promote regional languages. The policy acknowledges India's cultural and linguistic diversity and aims to preserve, promote, and develop this diversity in the education system. The language-related provisions in NEP 2020 are intended to address issues of accessibility, inclusivity, and the



preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity. The policy envisions a higher education system that is not only globally competitive but also rooted in the country's diverse linguistic and cultural fabric.

## 2. Literature Review

Education is undoubtedly very important for the overall growth and development of any society, but its penetration is uneven across the geographies, not only in India but worldwide. This is prevalent across all education segments, i.e. pre-primary, primary, middle, and higher education. This becomes even more pertinent in the case of higher education. This may be due to many reasons like lack of access to quality education, financial constraints, family responsibilities, the pursuit of employment opportunities, and availability of limited options for the students (as, per NEP 1986, students can only opt for one course at a time), safety concerns (especially for female candidates), lack of cost-effectiveness, rigid education structure, poor infrastructure, teacher quality and so on. All these factors lead to a poor gross enrolment ratio (GER). In 2018, GER in Indian higher education was 26.3 per cent. This directly affects the development of the Indian economy and society. In the same year, if we stretch GER further, we will know that it was 29.3% among males, 24.9% among females, 23.4% (Schedule Caste), and 18% among Schedule Tribes. This is way below the global GER of 40% (UNESCO, 2022).

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is trying to improve GER by taking higher education to the masses by introducing regional languages and bilinguals as a mode of delivery. As per NEP 2020, students can attend two courses simultaneously. They can also opt for multiple entry and exit points while pursuing their higher education. This will help those unable to continue their education and need a break due to familial or other financial reasons. Students are given a chance to opt for courses/subjects from multiple domains so that they can cherish their interests and, at the same time, become employable in the industry (Ministry of Education, 2020).

If education is being provided in their native language, then many students who could not join higher education earlier due to the linguistic barriers and were forced to be away from the workforce for high-profile jobs/careers can join and contribute their efforts. This will increase the availability of a well-qualified human resource pool. This will bring in the much-needed benefits to all the stakeholders, i.e. employers, employees, families, society, government and so on. This will help them in improving their livelihood and lifestyle. After acquiring higher education, they will be able to earn better, which in turn leads to more disposable income. This will ultimately be translated to more consumption which will get translated into increased production of goods and services. This will trigger a positive cycle or virtual loop in the country's economy and society (Schofer et al., 2021).

### (a) Potential benefits of using Vernacular Language as a Medium of Instruction (Mol)

If higher education is being imparted in vernacular language, it is expected to bring down anxiety or stress levels and significantly improve students' comprehension capabilities. Students need not toil or devote extra time and energy to understanding English (a foreign language), which is commonly used in higher education institutions (HEIs) as a medium of instruction. They must only focus on the content or the subject matter of the domain. It will encourage other students also who could not join HEIs due to the fear of English as a medium of course curriculum delivery. This will help increase higher education institutions' gross enrollment ratio (GER). The native language will work as a lynchpin among the students to connect them with each other, and a 'we feeling' or comradeship will be developed among them, which can result in a more cohesive society. A society that is concerned for each other's well-being and welfare. This will also lead to a revival of regional languages, culture, morals and value systems. Students will enjoy learning about the contributions of their ancestors. Even those who are first-generation learners (i.e. no one has gone to school/college from their family) will not face much difficulty in their studies as they will be able to get sufficient guidance and support from their family, society and surroundings.

As per the survey research conducted by Saxena and Khandelwal (2020), English was the first choice among the respondents (43.4 per cent), followed by Hindi, with a nominal difference of 2.5 per cent of respondents as a medium of instruction in higher education. Whereas more than two-thirds of respondents have clearly indicated that Native/regional/vernacular language as Mol has helped them in grasping/understanding the subject matter/concepts, enriching their knowledge and understanding better in higher education. Despite the challenges faced by the students in understanding the concepts in English, respondents might have given it first preference as an Mol as it helps them get better employment opportunities.

Keeping all these potential benefits in mind, the Government of India and many state governments have taken various initiatives to improve GER by up to 50% by 2035 (PIB Delhi, 01 AUG 2022). All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), through its constituent National Program on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), is translating the content of the courses offered by the famous technical institutions of India like the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Science (IISc). This is helping numerous students and professionals equip themselves with the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities not available to them earlier.



AICTE has also allowed 14 colleges/institutions to offer technical education (engineering courses) in 11 regional languages. which is yet another effort to democratise higher education and take it to the masses by breaking the shackles of language barriers. Government Medical Colleges of Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh are offering Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) in Hindi (Srivastava, 2023, August 11; Live Mint, 2022, November 05). This is an unprecedented move by the governments of both states. There is a huge need for such courses, especially for the rural and small-town people who are facing much difficulty due to English, a language which is commonly used to offer these courses. Such similar changes are expected to be introduced by other state governments soon to facilitate the youth representing the rural domain.

### **(b) Gaps in the Existing Literature**

There is a lack of literature that studies the relationship between the language used for imparting higher education and GER. This research is an attempt to fill this gap. If native language (or vernacular language or mother tongue) is used in higher education, then it is expected to improve the GER as students will feel more confident and motivated, which will be reflected in their attendance and class participation. They will be able to understand the concepts of the subject/domain/course better without straining too much on the language part. They will find it very easy and more convenient. This will provide them with enough time, and they are expected to improve their subject/domain knowledge and critical thinking skills. This will bring them closure with their classmates (so this will enhance social cohesiveness and camaraderie among the students). This will also help in preserving indigenous culture, heritage and knowledge.

There is a paucity of empirical evidence that depicts the use of a vernacular language as a mode of instruction at higher education institutions (HEIs) and its impact on the overall effectiveness of educational outcomes and better career prospects in the real world (Nyika, 2015).

It is also not very evident from the existing literature what will be the long-term repercussions of the usage of vernacular language as a mode of instruction on the overall effectiveness of the quality of the graduates and how they are going to contribute their efforts towards national and global socio-economic development (Nyika, 2015).

### **(c) Potential Challenges in Implementing Native Language as a Medium of Instruction**

Currently, English is primarily being used as a mode of instruction in HEIs. English is being considered as an international language. This prepares them as a global citizen. They can tap into any global market for employment and other professional endeavours. Hence, those who are going to complete their education in vernacular or native language may find it difficult to get better career options after their graduation. English helps them in building a huge network, and they get connected with professionals from all over the world. It also helps the students tap into the humongous amount of knowledge bank, as most quality literature/resources are available in English. This discourages many governments and educational institutions from adopting vernacular language as a mode of instruction in university or higher education institutions.

There is enough empirical evidence that countries use their vernacular language as a mode of instruction at various levels in their education system. Many such students find it difficult to cope with higher studies as they are required to switch from vernacular to English. This is also very relevant in the case of India as well. Students predominantly come from rural areas (villages) or suburbs of tier 2, tier 3 cities and small towns where the vernacular is predominantly used to impart education. Such students struggle to get admission to higher education institutions in India and abroad. Even after getting admission, such students find it very difficult to manage their subject knowledge without adequate knowledge of the English language. Such students struggle to equip themselves with the required linguistic knowledge and cannot get better job prospects after graduation. Indian people speak thousands of languages. In such a scenario, it will be very difficult to reach a consensus on any one or two vernacular languages. Every state wishes to have their own language as a medium of instruction. This will lead to yet another challenge. Quality content/study material is scarce in many native languages. The problem becomes even more challenging due to the non-availability of qualified teachers who are proficient in their subject/domain and their vernacular language. Hence, teaching in higher educational institutions (HEIs) in the native language becomes even more difficult. Implementing the vernacular as a medium of instruction in higher education will be quite difficult as India has 22 official languages (as per the 8th schedule of the Indian constitution), 123 scheduled languages and 147 non-schedule languages (Ministry of Home Affairs, n.d.).

In India, education is not only considered as a mode of acquiring knowledge and improving lives. Currently, for most students, the goal/objective of education has changed from being knowledgeable to becoming employable. Hence, students put more emphasis on their communication and soft skills to get well-paid jobs. In this blind rush, they cannot provide much-needed attention to their subject matter/content.

As per Khandelwal and Kumar (2022), imparting higher education in Hindi or regional/vernacular/native languages has a lot of positive and negative effects on students, employers, society, regulatory bodies and





other stakeholders. As per these researchers few of the positive outcomes of offering higher education in the local language are as follows: increased GER by significantly reducing the dropout rate, poor and first-generation students will benefit immensely, students will emphasise more on the content of the subject/domain, Indian culture, value system, and moral values will get promoted, inclusive education system for bringing people of different languages closer etc. The selection process for the majority of government and private jobs is predominantly carried out in English. If they switch to vernacular language, they will be able to tap into a larger resource pool that was not available for mainstream or formal employment until now. If this can be introduced in the entrance examinations/tests like the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE), the selection process for professional courses of higher education, then more students will opt for such courses; hence the quality of intake is expected to go up. This will also help in getting quality teachers who could not get into the teaching profession due to the language barrier.

Humans are tuned to think and conceptualize things in our native language or mother tongue. This is effortless as we have been conversing in that language since our childhood. Hence, if the native language is being adopted as a mode of teaching in higher education, then it will lead to improved/enhanced engagement of the students. This will also help students improve their grasping of the concepts as they need not struggle to understand the different languages to become knowledgeable about the concepts their teacher(s) taught. Many students drop out of higher education as they find it difficult to cope with the course curriculum in a different language, which require almost equal amounts of effort. Students have limited time to study, and if the majority of their time goes into understanding the nuances of the language, they will obviously be unable to devote enough time to building their subject matter knowledge and expertise. All stakeholders have supported the stand taken by the government of India through the NEP 2020 to impart education at all levels, including higher education, in vernacular medium to improve students' engagement and learning. This will lead to improved GER and a larger resource pool equipped with the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities to enter their chosen career (Khandelwal et al., 2023).

As per Kim and Mattila (2011), language plays a crucial role in an individual's identity. It facilitates an individual's ability to express emotions, narrate experiences and communicate with others. This becomes very easy by using the mother tongue. Hence, English as a language is creating a hindrance for the people of India to enroll themselves in higher education courses. English is not their first or primary language, so they find it difficult to build a reasonable amount of expertise/command of the English language. They face much difficulty in conversing with others in this foreign language.

As per Khandelwal et al. (2023), higher education should be imparted in the mother tongue, vernacular or native language so that students can acquire knowledge without putting much effort into the language. They are expected to understand the course content in totality so that they are able to showcase their knowledge whenever the need is felt or they are being provided with a chance to showcase their knowledge and abilities. Above all, students will thoroughly enjoy the teaching and learning as their efforts will not be divided between learning a foreign language and course content. They can easily learn/grasp more without putting in extra effort. This will boost their confidence also. The authors have also suggested that the Government should deploy more strategies to build up the prerequisite infrastructure and other resources so that higher education courses can be delivered in Hindi or other Indian languages so that more and more youth can be brought into the ambit of higher education. The government of India and all its states also need to bring in much-needed changes so that employers/recruiters start opting for Hindi or other regional languages to complete the hiring process. This will promote/improve the usage of local languages in higher education even more.

The advantages of delivering higher education courses in vernacular language are numerous, but the path to adopting this is not easy. This is expected to face many challenges, such as these students finding it difficult to get employed in places where their local/native language is not used. Even hiring managers prefer bilingual people (i.e., those who know the local and English languages) (Saarela & Finnäs, 2003). There is a dearth of quality study material in native languages, and translating the content from English has got its share of challenges. Even it will not be easy to find talent (both teaching and non-teaching staff) to offer such courses in vernacular language. This move is expected to bring people closer and make their lives far easier, but there is an apprehension that they will not be able to connect with global professionals and the emerging changes in their chosen field/domain.

After going through the extensive literature related to the impact of local languages on the outcomes of higher education, we can conclude that holistic efforts need to be made by all the stakeholders to promote the usage of vernacular/local/native languages as the mode of teaching and learning in the higher education institutions and universities.

### 3. Research Methodology

Research methodology is the systematic process of planning, conducting, and analyzing research activities.



The key component of the research methodology for this study is:

**Research Design:** Experimental and Quantitative

**Population:** UG/PG Students, Working Professionals

**Sampling:** Correlational, Descriptive, and Exploratory

**Sample Size:** 2586

**Data Collection Method:** Online via various webinars, seminars, panel discussions

**Data Analysis:** Experimental and Descriptive

**Data Collection:** PAN India

### 3.1 Research Gap

There is a lack of research to find the relationship between the mode of instruction and students' learning and engagement in their studies.

### 3.2 The Objective of the Study

This study is focused on understanding the impact of the mode of instruction and understanding the concepts of the respondent's grasping. If students are taught in their native language, their engagement and learning experience are expected to be better than if taught in English.

### 3.3 Hypothesis

**H0:** There is a significant difference between views on the Medium of Instruction in Higher Education and the Medium of Instruction for Professional Education. Also, there is a language preference for receiving a higher level of learning and a satisfactory level of higher education with reference to the medium of instruction.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

A questionnaire-based survey method was adopted to collect the responses from respondents during various webinars, seminars, panel discussions, etc., organized at different times. The data for this questionnaire was collected over a period of three academic years (from 2019 to 2022). Here, seven demographic questions are used for the purpose of analysis. Here, the present data shows the gender-wise (Table 1), region-wise (Table 2) and age-group-wise (Table 3) categorization that is obtained by questionnaire.

**Table 1: Gender-wise Frequency Categorization**

Gender Frequency Analysis					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	1179	45.6	45.6	45.6
	Male	1405	54.3	54.3	99.9
	Prefer not to	2	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	2586	100.0	100.0	

**Table 2: Region-wise Frequency Categorization**

Region Frequency Analysis					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Hindi Speaking Region	1572	60.8	60.8	60.9
	Non-Hindi Speaking	923	35.7	35.7	96.6
	Other	91	3.5	3.5	100.0
	Total	2586	100.0	100.0	

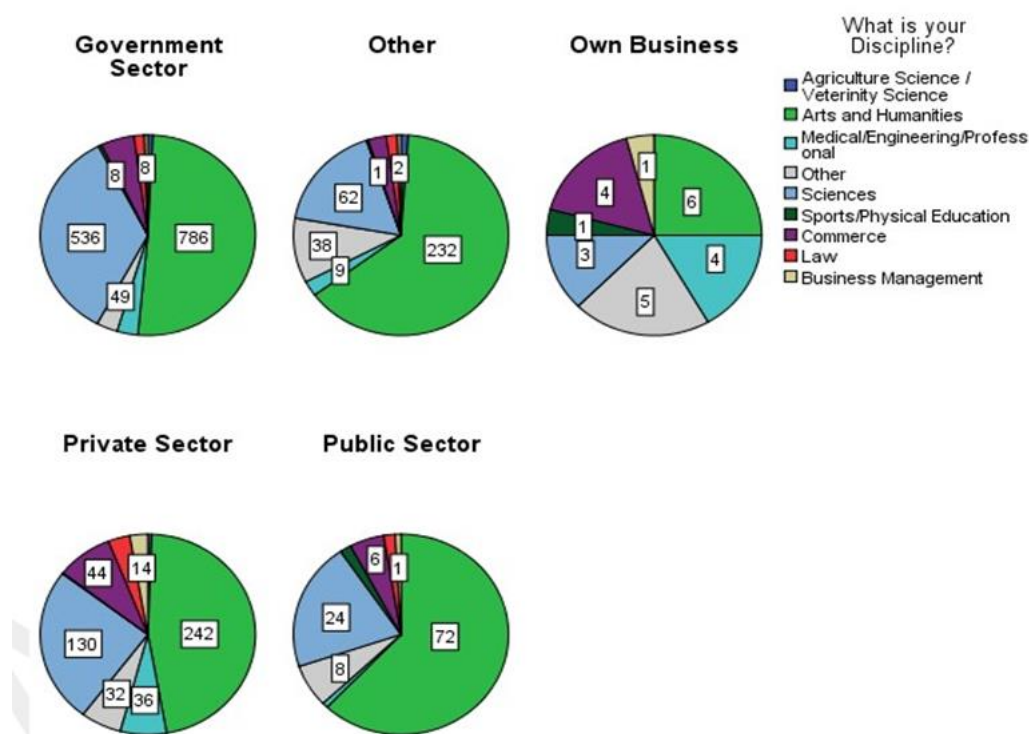
**Table 3: Age group-wise Frequency Categorization**



Age Group Frequency Analysis					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Above 60 years	49	1.9	1.9	1.9
	Below 40 years	1713	66.2	66.2	68.1
	Between 40 - 50	622	24.1	24.1	92.2
	Between 50 - 60	202	7.8	7.8	100.0
	Total	2586	100.0	100.0	

In this questionnaire, 45.6 percent were female, 54.3 percent were male, and only 0.1 percent of the participants chose not to reveal their gender (**Table 1**). The question was from the language area of the participant. In its answer, it was found that 60.8 percent of the participants who filled out this questionnaire came from Hindi speaking areas and, 35.7 percent from non-Hindi speaking areas, 3.5 percent related to others (Table 2). In the same sequence, it was found from the questionnaire that among the participants who filled this questionnaire, 66.2 percent of the participants were from the age group of 18 to 40 years, and 24.1 percent of the participants were from the age group of 40 to 50 years, the rest are above 50 plus (**Table 3**).

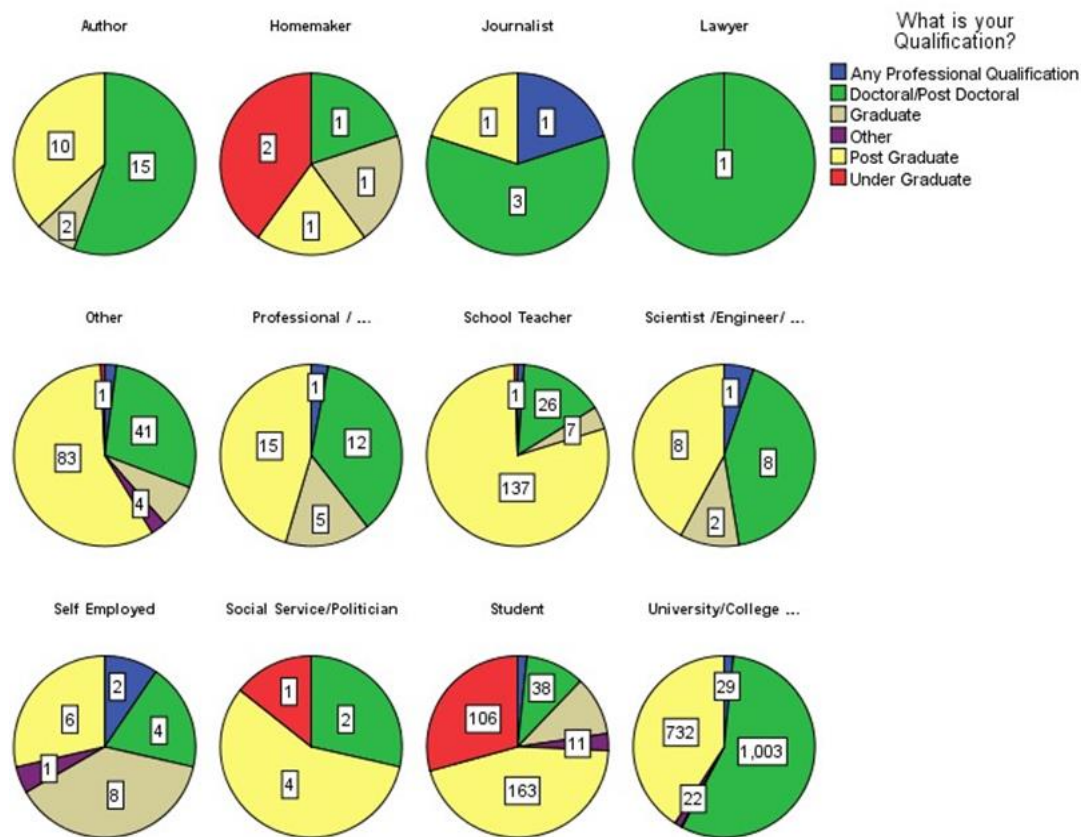
The next question among the questions asked is related to “**What is discipline and what sector does the respondent belong to?**”



**Figure 3: Graphical Presentation of Discipline and Sector from which Respondent Belongs**

**Interpretation:** Here, 9 different branches were taken from the field of education, and professions were also divided into 5 different parts (**Fig 3**). The answers received from the questionnaire show that 1338 i.e., 51.74 percent of the respondents were related to the arts and humanities stream, and 755 i.e. 29.19 percent were from science disciplines, and remaining from various other disciplines, and courses that were related to different professions.

Also, the next question, “What is the Qualification of the respondent, and from which profession does he/ she belong?” is represented below by a graphical representation.



**Figure 4: Graphical Presentation of Qualification/ Profession from which Respondent Belongs**

**Interpretation:** Here, we have graphed 12 different professions based on the qualifications of the respondents (**Fig 4**). The qualification of the respondents has been taken into 6 different parts: Professional Qualification, Doctorate, Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Graduate and Others. Various answers related to the profession received from the respondent reveal that the highest number of university and college teachers is 1003 i.e., 38.78 percent who all have Doctoral/Post-Doctoral level education.

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of a measurement tool or instrument. In other words, it assesses the extent to which a test or scale produces consistent and dependable results over time and across different situations. It assesses the extent to which items within a test are consistent with one another. Common measures include Cronbach's alpha (**Table 4**) for reliability analysis.

**Table 4: Cronbach's Alpha Test for Reliability Analysis**

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.856	.877	5

Validity (**Table 5**) refers to the extent to which a test or assessment tool measures what it is intended to measure. It assesses the accuracy and meaningfulness of the inferences made from the test scores. Validity is crucial to ensure that the test measures what it claims to measure. Without validity, the results may not accurately represent the intended construct. Reliability is a prerequisite for validity. A test cannot be valid if it is not reliable. If a test is unreliable (i.e., produces inconsistent results), it cannot be a valid measure of the





intended construct.

**Table 5: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Validity Analysis**

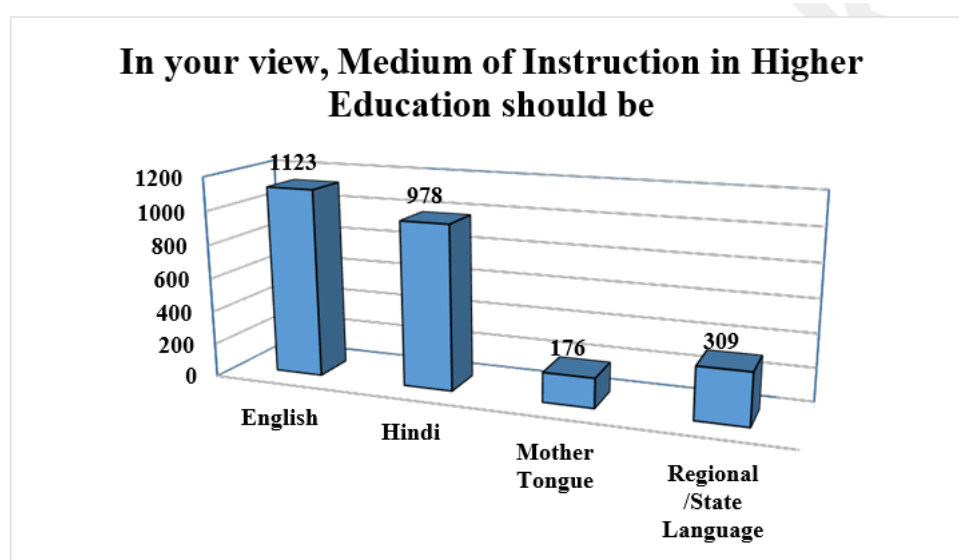
KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.819
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2407.113
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

The basic idea behind ANOVA is to compare the variability between group means with the variability within the groups. The significance of an ANOVA test (**Table 6**) is generally assessed by examining the p-value associated with the test statistic. The p-value represents the probability of obtaining the observed results (or more extreme) if the null hypothesis is true.

**Table 6: Analysis of Variance for Statistical Analysis**

ANOVA with Friedman's Test					
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Friedman's Chi-Square
Between People		2840.328	2585	1.099	
Within People	Between Items	674.214 <sup>a</sup>	4	168.553	1017.221
	Residual	6181.786	10340	.598	
	Total	6856.000	10344	.663	
Total		9696.328	12929	.750	
Grand Mean = 1.71					
a. Kendall's coefficient of concordance W = .070.					

Here the p-value is less than or equal to  $\alpha$  i.e. 0.05, so here we reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that there are significant differences between at least two group means. A significant result in an ANOVA test suggests that there are differences among the group means. However, it does not indicate which specific groups are different



**Figure 5: Graphical Presentation of Count based on Medium of Instruction in Higher Education**

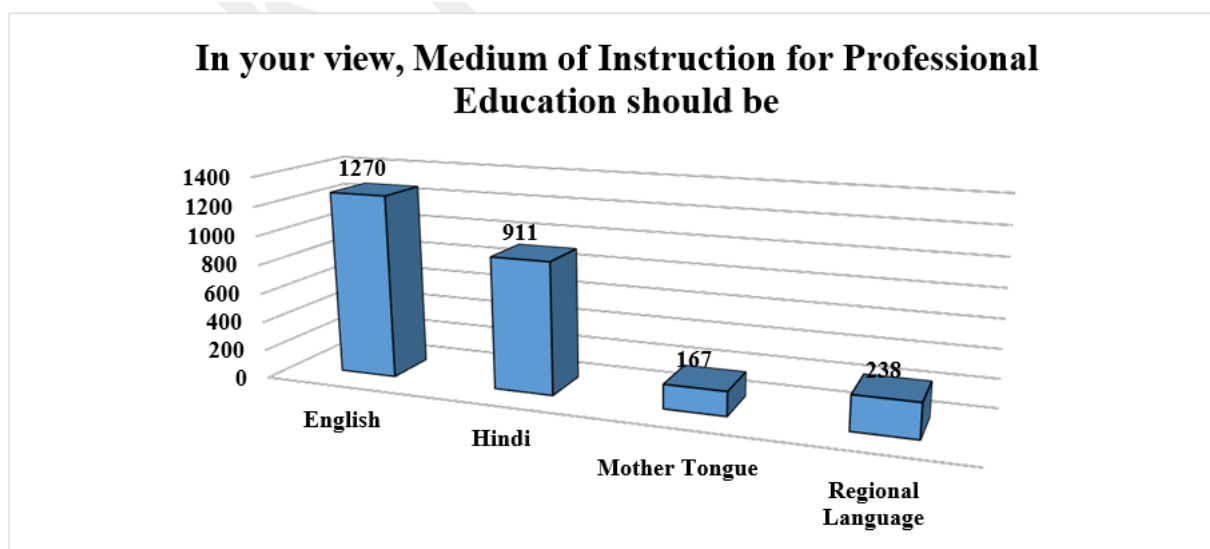


Figure 6: Graphical Presentation of Count based on Medium of Instruction for Professional

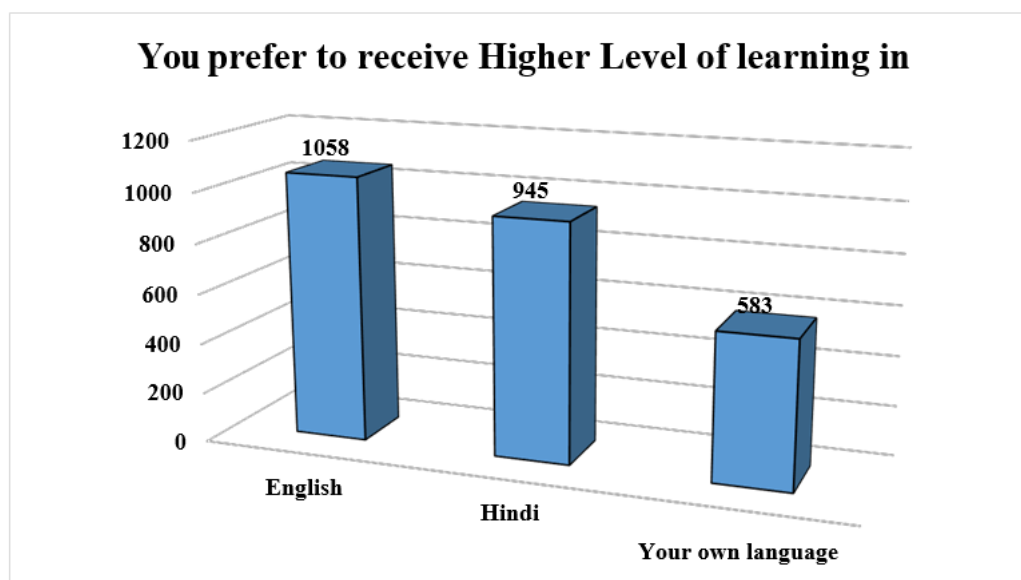


Figure 7: Graphical Presentation of Count shows Language Preference in Higher Level Learning

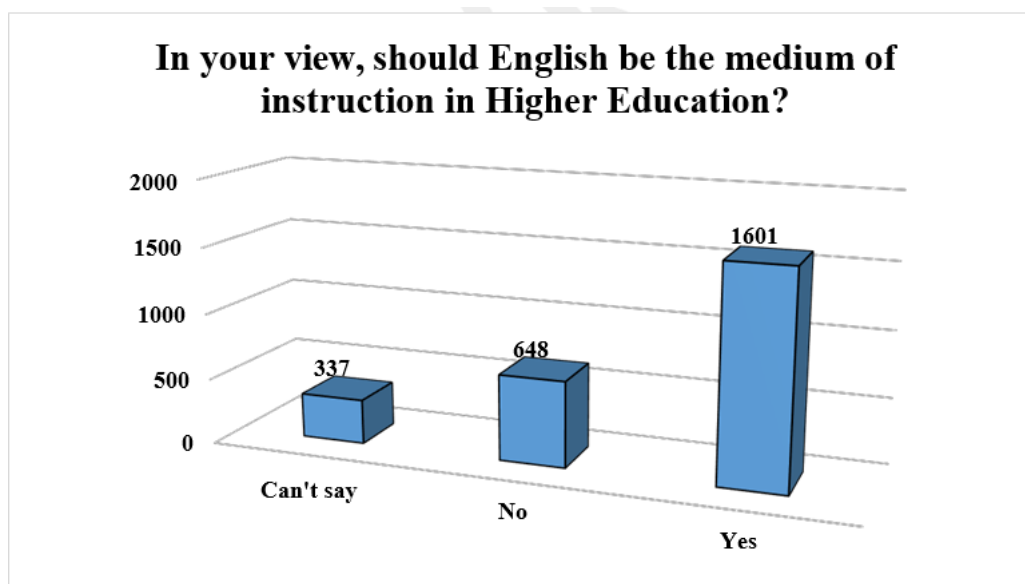


Figure 8: Graphical Presentation of Count shown Medium of Instruction in Higher Education

#### 4. Impact of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 on Higher Education

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 outlines several transformative measures for higher education in India. While the full impact may take time to unfold, here are some key expected impacts:

- The policy encourages a multidisciplinary approach and flexibility in choosing subjects, allowing students to pursue a broader range of courses. The impact of this is that graduates are expected to have a well-rounded education, potentially leading to a more adaptable and diverse workforce.
- The introduction of credit transfer and an Academic Bank of Credits allows students to accumulate credits over time, facilitating seamless movement between institutions. Its impact Increased the mobility of students, fostering a more dynamic learning environment.
- NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of vocational education into mainstream higher education. Its impact is that Graduates may possess both academic knowledge and practical skills, enhancing employability.
- The policy aims to boost research and innovation by establishing the National Research Foundation (NRF) and other measures. Its impact is an increased focus on research, which is expected to contribute to the knowledge economy and global competitiveness.
- NEP 2020 emphasizes improving the quality of education through mechanisms such as the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) and accreditation processes. Its impact is that Increased focus on quality is expected to elevate the overall standard of higher education institutions in the country.
- NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of technology in education and advocates for its effective integration. Its impact is increased use of technology for teaching, learning, and research, potentially enhancing the overall educational experience.
- Greater autonomy is granted to higher education institutions, and governance reforms are proposed to enhance decision-making at the institutional level. Its outcome is that Institutions may have more flexibility to innovate and respond to local needs, fostering academic excellence.
- The policy encourages greater internationalization of higher education through collaborations and partnerships. Its expected outcome is increased global exposure for students and faculty, promoting cross-cultural understanding and knowledge exchange.
- The policy emphasizes the importance of quality teacher education and continuous professional development. Its impact is improved teaching standards and a more skilled and motivated faculty.

#### 5. Findings of the Study

The medium of instruction should be accessible to all students, including those with different language backgrounds and abilities. It should not create barriers to learning. The medium of instruction should not compromise the quality of education provided. The medium of instruction should be relevant to the academic discipline and the global context. In some fields, proficiency in English might be necessary for accessing international literature and participating in global academic discourse. A few questions related to the medium of instruction represent that 43.42% of respondents prefer the English language in Higher Education (Fig 5),



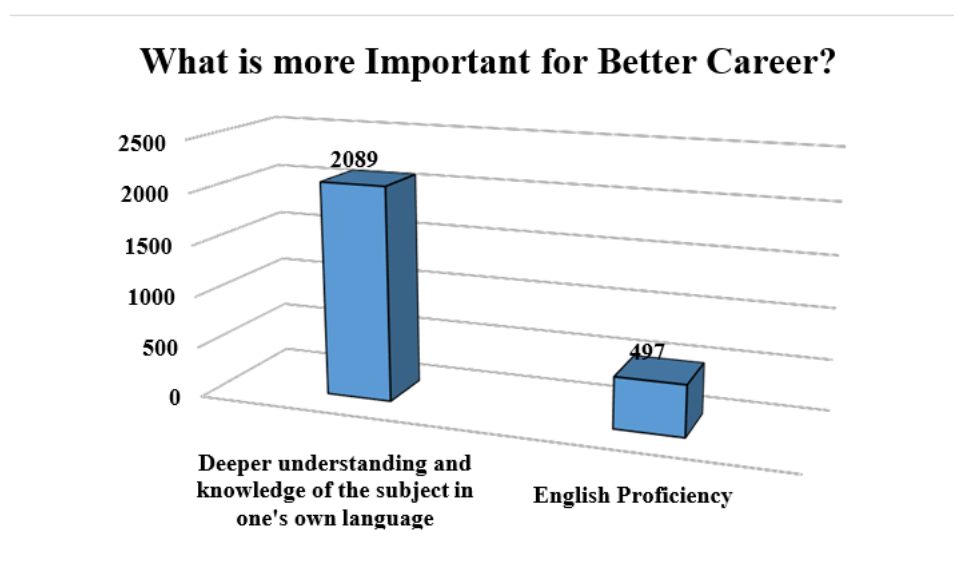
and 56.58% prefer Hindi/ state Language in Higher education. Similarly, 49.11% of respondents prefer the English language in professional Education (Fig 6), and 50.89% prefer Hindi/ state Language in professional education.

Also, in reference to the question "You prefer to receive a Higher Level of learning" shows that 40.91% of respondents prefer to receive a Higher Level of learning in the English language (Fig 7), while 59.09% of respondents prefer to receive a Higher Level of learning in Hindi language/ own language. In response to another question, "In your view, should English be the medium of instruction in Higher Education?" 61.91% of respondents preferred English as a medium of instruction in Higher Education (Fig 8), whereas 25.05% of respondents did not favour the English language. It is evident from the research that when respondents were required to change their medium of instruction then, almost 58 percent faced difficulty during their transition phase, but later on, this paid off as English has helped them in getting better career opportunities not only in India but also anywhere in the world.

Change is always resisted. The same is evident from the outcomes of this study as well. However, knowledge, skills and abilities developed while going through the change have helped the respondents achieve their professional goals better.

## 6. Implications of the Study

NEP is being designed to bring in much needed positive changes in the existing education system at all levels. This study focused only on higher education. Higher education is also affected by multiple factors. This research has focused only on one aspect, i.e. Language as a mode of instruction and its impact on the effectiveness of education. In response to the question "What is more important for a Better Career?", 80.78% of respondents feel that deep understanding and knowledge of the subject in one's own language is important for a better career (Fig 9), and only 19.21% of respondents went in favour of English Proficiency for a better career.



**Figure 9: Graphical Presentation of Count Representing Better Career**

The outcomes of this research suggest that language plays a very important role in education. Students feel more comfortable in their native language, but the lack of resources in the vernacular language and the limited scope of their careers compel them to opt for English as a medium of instruction. Only one study may be unable to understand the impact of the NEP 2020 on higher education. It is also too early to know the impact of NEP 2020. Further studies may be conducted to understand it even further. The successful implementation of these measures depends on various factors, including resource allocation, institutional collaboration, and effective policy execution. The full impact of NEP 2020 on higher education in India will become more evident as the policy is gradually implemented and evolves over time.

## 7. Result and Discussion

After analyzing the data, we could conclude that 1123 (43%) respondents preferred English as a medium of instruction in Higher education, whereas 978 preferred Hindi, 176 (mother tongue) and 309 (regional language). More or less the same type of trend is visible in professional education as well. 1507 respondents confessed



that they faced difficulty when the instruction medium was changed. 1921 respondents, or 74 percent of respondents, have preferred study material in both English and Indian languages. 15 percent of respondents opted for only Indian languages, whereas about 10 percent preferred to study books in English only. Most respondents have confessed that English has helped them open newer opportunities. It shows that English helps the respondents avail themselves of the global market's career opportunities. Nevertheless, in contrast, around 65 percent of respondents confessed that they find studying using Indian languages far easier and more convenient. Their learning and grasping go up significantly. More than 80 percent of respondents agreed that subject matter knowledge contributes more to career building, and language plays around 19 percent role in it. Almost 43 percent of respondents preferred to be taught in English medium while going through their higher studies. It is evident from the research that when respondents were required to change their medium of instruction then, almost 58 percent faced difficulty during their transition phase, but later on, this paid off as English has helped them in getting better career opportunities not only in India but also anywhere in the world. Changed is always resisted. The same is evident from the outcomes of this study as well. However, knowledge, skills and abilities developed during the change have helped the respondents achieve their professional goals better.

#### **Declarations of Conflict of Interest: None**

#### **References**

1. Khandelwal, A., and Kumar, A. (2022, 16-31 March), Translation in Hindi and regional languages, *Chanakya Varta*, 7(6), 15-17.
2. Khandelwal, A., and Kumar, A. (April-June 2023), Scientific and Technical Knowledge: In View of Indian Languages, *Aadhunik Sahitya*, 46(12), 122-131.
3. Khandelwal, A., Tandon, A., & Kumar, A. (2023). An experiential study on the role and inclusion of Indian languages for generating employment opportunity. *International Journal of Knowledge and Learning*, 16(2), 171-185. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJKL.2023.129901>
4. Kim, E.E.K. & Mattila, A.S. (2011) 'The Impact of language barrier and cultural differences on restaurant experiences: a grounded theory approach', *Management Science Letters*, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp.159–166 <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14394/30135>
5. Kumar, K., Prakash, A., & Singh, K. (2021). How National Education Policy 2020 can be a lodestar to transform future generations in India. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 21(3), e2500. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2500>
6. Live Mint (2022, November 05), After Madhya Pradesh, This state offers medical courses in Hindi from 2023, Retrieved on 10 January 2023 from <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/after-madhya-pradesh-this-state-offers-medical-courses-in-hindi-from-2023-11667622863908.html>
7. Ministry of Education (1968), Retrieved on 10 January 2023 from [https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/NPE-1968.pdf](https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/NPE-1968.pdf)
8. Ministry of Education (1992, May 7), Retrieved on 10 January 2023 from <http://education.nic.in/policy/npe86-mod92.pdf>
9. Ministry of Education (2020), National Education Policy 2020, Retrieved on 15 January 2023 from [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/NEP\\_Final\\_English\\_0.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf)
10. Ministry of Home Affairs (n.d.), Constitutional provisions relating to Eighth Schedule Retrieved on 12 January 2023 from [https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/EighthSchedule\\_19052017.pdf](https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/EighthSchedule_19052017.pdf)
11. Nyika, A. (2015). Mother tongue as the medium of instruction at developing country universities in a global context. *South African Journal of Science*, 111(1-2), 01-05. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2015/20140005>
12. PIB Delhi (01 AUG 2022), Salient Features of NEP, 2020, Retrieved on 10 January 2023 from <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1847066>
13. Questionnaire <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IsFb1iWie4-ILHlg4b-Ndha4-J0MDc-?usp=sharing> (Access to the questionnaire will be provided if required)
14. Saarela, J., & Finnäs, F. (2003). Unemployment and native language: The Finnish case. *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 32(1), 59-80. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-5357\(03\)00007-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-5357(03)00007-6)
15. Saxena, S., & Khandelwal, A., (2020), COVID-19 and NEP 2020 Impact on Indian Education System, Conference: Role of Technological disruption in Management, Science and Humanities in Emerging World Order, 218-228 Retrieved on 29 January 2024 from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352091533\\_COVID-19\\_and\\_NEP\\_2020\\_Impact\\_on\\_Indian\\_Education\\_System](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352091533_COVID-19_and_NEP_2020_Impact_on_Indian_Education_System)
16. Schofer, E., Ramirez, F. O., & Meyer, J. W. (2021). The societal consequences of higher education. *Sociology of Education*, 94(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040720942912>





- 
17. Srivastava, A., (2023, August 11), Uttarakhand set to offer MBBS course in Hindi from 2023-24 after Madhya Pradesh, Retrieved on 10 January 2023 from <https://www.indiatvnews.com/education/higher-studies/uttarakhand-set-to-offer-mbbs-course-in-hindi-from-2023-24-after-madhya-pradesh-2023-08-11-886099#:~:text=The%20government%20medical%20colleges%20of,from%202023%2D24%20academic%20session.>
18. UNESCO (2022), Higher education figures at a glance, Retrieved on 10 January 2023 from [https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/f\\_unesco1015\\_brochure\\_web\\_en.pdf](https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/f_unesco1015_brochure_web_en.pdf)