RESEARCH ARTICLE

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF NEP-2020 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGES OF NADIA DISTRICT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Purpose: This study assesses the impact of NEP-2020 on undergraduate colleges in Nadia District, focusing on student adaptation, academic performance, and the effectiveness of the new major-minor course structure. It examines how students from both urban and rural backgrounds are coping with the transition, highlighting key challenges and opportunities. *Methodology*: The research adopts a qualitative approach, analysing pass rates, subject-wise performance, and student feedback from colleges affiliated with Kalyani University. Data was collected from institutional reports, university records, and official government documents. *Findings:* Results indicate that while NEP-2020 offers greater academic flexibility and skill-oriented learning, students face increased academic pressure, digital accessibility issues, and a lack of structured guidance. The overall pass rates (75–85%) in 2022–23 reflect a return to pre-pandemic levels, but rural colleges witnessed a sharp decline compared to urban institutions. *Research Limitations*: The study is limited to undergraduate colleges in Nadia District and does not include postgraduate programs or institutions outside the region. Long-term effects of NEP-2020 on employability and research outcomes require further investigation. *Practical Implication*: The study provides actionable insights for universities, policymakers, and educators to improve faculty training, digital accessibility, and student support services. Addressing these issues can enhance the effectiveness of NEP-2020 implementation. *Social Implication*: The findings highlight the widening gap between urban and rural students, emphasizing the need for inclusive educational reforms to ensure equitable learning opportunities. *Originality:* This study presents first-hand empirical data on NEP-2020's curriculum impact in Nadia District, making it a valuable reference for future academic and policy discussions.

INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced a transformative shift in the Indian education system, particularly at the undergraduate level, by offering a holistic and flexible framework for learning. This policy empowers students to pursue multi-disciplinary education, moving away from the rigid division between major and minor courses, and allowing students to explore a combination of subjects that enhance both their academic and professional development (NEP, 2020). One of the key features of NEP-2020 is its focus on providing a wide array of courses, such as Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC), Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC), and Value-Added Courses (VAC), alongside the option to choose both major and minor subjects. Furthermore, the introduction of a four-year undergraduate program with integrated research opportunities aims to foster critical thinking, innovation, and a deeper understanding of the chosen field (NEP, 2020). However, despite the numerous advantages presented by NEP-2020, its implementation has faced significant challenges, particularly in the undergraduate colleges of Nadia District. Students, especially in rural colleges, have encountered difficulties in adapting to the new system, often struggling to comprehend the full scope of the opportunities offered by the policy (Chowdhury, 2021).

The shift from a traditional, structured curriculum to a more flexible, multi-disciplinary model has posed challenges, particularly among students who are not accustomed to interdisciplinary learning. This gap between honours and pass category students has further exacerbated the issue. Honours students, who generally show greater dedication to their coursework, tend to engage more meaningfully with the curriculum, whereas pass category students often exhibit limited commitment to their major subjects and fail to engage effectively with the SECs, which are intended to improve employability (Das, 2021). Additionally, many students are unaware of the full range of opportunities under NEP-2020, such as research projects or interdisciplinary subjects that can enhance their academic profile (Patel, 2022). Despite workshops and initiatives aimed at informing students about these opportunities, the overall response has been underwhelming. The lack of awareness and limited engagement have hindered the successful implementation of NEP-2020 in the district, preventing students from fully benefiting from the new curriculum (Ghosh & Mukherjee, 2023). This study, therefore, seeks to assess the impact of NEP-2020's curriculum implementation in the undergraduate colleges of Nadia District, focusing on both urban and rural students. By identifying the challenges faced by students, exploring the opportunities provided by the new curriculum, and proposing strategies for improving the effectiveness of the policy's

implementation, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the obstacles that hinder the successful adoption of NEP-2020 and provide actionable solutions (Ray, 2023).

Review of Related Literature: Several studies have explored the challenges in the implementation of NEP-2020 across different regions in India. According to(Chatterjee, 2022), there have been instances where workshops and training sessions have been conducted to promote a better understanding of the policy, though their impact has been inconsistent. Research by Gupta (2022) suggests that a lack of awareness and adequate training regarding the NEP-2020 framework among faculty members has also hindered the effective implementation of the policy in many colleges& Universities. Sharma (2021), while NEP-2020 aims to enhance the quality of education and make it more inclusive, its implementation has been marred by various obstacles, especially in rural areas where access to resources is limited.A study by Roy (2021) noted that students often found it difficult to adjust to the new system of multi-disciplinary education, leading to a lack of engagement with the curriculum. The situation is further compounded by the limited availability of resources in rural colleges, which affects the overall quality of education The transition from traditional teaching methods to a more student-cantered, outcome-based approach has faced resistance from both teachers and students (Kumar, 2020).

Operational Definition

1. **NEP-2020**: NEP-2020, or the National Education Policy 2020, is a comprehensive framework by the Indian government aimed at revamping the education system to ensure equitable, quality education, focusing on holistic development, critical thinking, 21st-century skills, and integrating Indian ethos and values.
2. **Undergraduate Colleges:** Undergraduate students are those enrolled in a four-year program with multiple entry and exit points, allowing them to earn certifications at each stage.
3. **Curriculum**: NEP 2020 structures the curriculum to focus on play-based and activity-based learning in early stages, transitioning to subject-specific learning with critical thinking and multidisciplinary approaches in later stages.
4. **Major and Minor Courses**: In NEP-2020, major courses are the primary field of study, while minor courses allow students to explore additional subjects.
5. **Value added course**: According to NEP 2020, a "value-added course" refers to a course aimed at enhancing a student's skills beyond the standard curriculum, focusing on practical skills, emerging technologies, or soft skills. These courses are not mandatory for completing the main degree program but can be chosen by students for supplementary learning and improved employability.
6. **Ability Enhancement Course**:The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 defines an Ability Enhancement Course (AEC) as a course that helps students enhance their knowledge and skills.
7. **Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC)**: These courses are designed to develop the employability skills of students.
8. **Pass Category Students**: Students enrolled in general or pass courses, as opposed to those in honours programs.

Background of the Study: Nadia District in West Bengal, like many other regions, has encountered distinct challenges in implementing NEP-2020. The transition to a more holistic and interdisciplinary curriculum has created difficulties for students, particularly those from rural backgrounds, in understanding and adapting to the new academic structure (Chowdhury, 2021). Although there have been efforts to support students and teachers through workshops and seminars aimed at familiarizing them with the new curriculum, many students still struggle to fully grasp the advantages of the NEP-2020 framework (Ghosh & Mukherjee, 2023). The study seeks to assess the impact of NEP-2020's curriculum implementation in the

undergraduate colleges of Nadia District, specifically focusing on the challenges students face and the opportunities that the new educational structure offers (Ray, 2023).

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the implementation of NEP-2020 Curriculum in the undergraduate colleges of Nadia District.
2. To find out the challenges faced by students in adapting to the new curriculum.
3. To find out the opportunities provided by the NEP-2020 curriculum for both urban and rural students.
4. To find out the impact of NEP-2020 on students' academic performance, especially in terms of the major-minor course structure.

Delimitation of the Study: This study was confined to undergraduate colleges in Nadia District, West Bengal. It focused primarily on students who were enrolled in both honours and pass courses. The research did not extend to post-graduate colleges or universities outside the district.

Research Questions

1. What are the challenges faced by students in understanding and adapting to the NEP-2020 curriculum?
2. How have the workshops and training sessions impacted students' understanding of the NEP-2020 curriculum?
3. What opportunities does the NEP-2020 curriculum present for undergraduate students, particularly in Nadia District?
4. How does the implementation of NEP-2020 influence the academic performance of students in major, minor, and other courses?

Research Design: The study will adopt a qualitative research design to understand the perceptions and experiences of students and faculty members regarding the implementation of NEP-2020. Data will be collected through, surveys, and focus group discussions with students, teachers, and college administrators in Nadia District. Secondary data will also be gathered from official records, reports, and academic journals related to NEP-2020 implementation.

Data Analysis: Data will be analysed thematically to identify patterns and insights related to the challenges and opportunities presented by NEP-2020. The analysis will also explore the relationship between students' academic performance and their engagement with the major-minor course structure, skill enhancement courses, and value-added courses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To study the implementation of NEP-2020 in the undergraduate colleges of Nadia District: The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020) has brought significant changes to higher education across India. In West Bengal, the state government directed all universities to implement a four-year undergraduate programme under NEP-2020 starting from the 2023-24 academic session. (hindustantimes.com). Nadia District's colleges, mostly affiliated with the University of Kalyani, have accordingly restructured their curricula. From 2023-24, these colleges launched four-year Major–Minor courses, replacing the old three-year "honours" (specialization) and "pass" (general) degree tracks (tehattagovtcollege.ac.in). This swift rollout aims to align Nadia's higher education with NEP's vision, though it has been a surprise to many educators given the short notice. (hindustantimes.com). State officials argue the reform is necessary to keep students competitive nationally (telegraphindia.com), but the transition has not been without challenges.

Syllabus Opportunities under NEP-2020: NEP-2020's curriculum framework provides great opportunities for undergraduate students by

introducing flexibility and a broader scope of learning. Under the new system, students can choose courses from multiple disciplines tailoring their education to their interests and strengths. (hindustantimes.com) Admission into Nadia's colleges now allows students to select a major subject based on their preference and merit, academic performance, rather than being confined to a rigid general course. For example, Government Degree College, Tehatta (Nadia) reports that following NEP-2020 it began offering a range of 4-year Major and Minor combinations across humanities and sciences (tehattagovtcollege.ac.in). This means a student might mix and match subjects – e.g. majoring in History with a minor in Political Science – which was not feasible under the older curriculum. Such multidisciplinary options, along with skill-development and internship components emphasized by NEP, are designed to enrich students' learning and enhance their employability (tehattagovtcollege.ac.in) In short, the syllabus reform opens pathways for the young generation to explore diverse fields, develop varied competencies, and personalize their education like never before.

Changes in Course Structure and Choice: The implementation of the NEP-2020 in West Bengal has ushered in a transformative shift in higher education, particularly through the introduction of the four-year Undergraduate (UG) Honours course. This new structure offers a more flexible and interdisciplinary approach, allowing students to choose a "major" specialization alongside cross-disciplinary electives or a minor subject, rather than being confined to a binary choice between an Honours degree or a Pass course. According to the University Grants Commission's new Undergraduate Curriculum Framework, the system now facilitates flexible degree options with a single or double major and a choice-based credit system across various disciplines (Hindustan Times). This provides students with the opportunity to pursue advanced study in their subject of interest, while also encouraging them to break traditional academic silos. For example, a science student can explore courses in humanities, or an arts major can develop basic science or vocational skills, reflecting the NEP's emphasis on holistic education (Hindustan Times). The flexibility in the curriculum is further enhanced by multiple entry and exit points. Students can now complete their degree in three years or opt for an additional year to attain an Honours research degree. This flexibility is aimed at improving student autonomy, while also encouraging more personalized learning paths. As noted by Rev. Dr. John Felix Raj (2025), this revamped system is designed to improve employability and industry readiness by incorporating skill enhancement courses that are directly aligned with the needs of the workforce. This dynamic structure fosters a broader, more inclusive educational environment, equipping students in West Bengal with the tools to pursue careers that reflect both their passions and aptitudes.The National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 has opened up numerous opportunities for students, while also presenting certain challenges. According to government reports and committees on NEP, the policy aims to create a more holistic and multidisciplinary education system that nurtures well-rounded individuals, preparing them for the modern job market (Biswas, 2023). This vision underscores the importance of integrating various disciplines and fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills in students, which are essential in today's rapidly changing global economy. However, while these changes present exciting possibilities, the successful implementation of NEP-2020 will depend on addressing several challenges, such as ensuring adequate infrastructure, teacher training, and access to resources for all students across the country (Biswas, 2023). Multiple entry and exit points are another change: for instance, a student can exit after 3 years with a Bachelor's degree or continue to 4 years for an Honours research degree(telegraphindia.com). Overall, the revamped syllabus offers youth in Nadia a more personalized and broad-based education, encouraging them to choose subjects by passion and aptitude.

Early Benefits and Student Reception: Many students have welcomed the new system's flexibility. They can now craft their academic journey – for example, combining literature with a computer science course or adding skill-based electives – which may make learning more engaging. The West Bengal government highlighted that the 4-year curriculum will be advantageous because it aligns with national standards (preventing Bengal's students from "lagging behind") and enables a one-year Master's degree afterward, saving time(telegraphindia.com). Ambitious students in Nadia stand to benefit from the research options in the 4th year and the interdisciplinary exposure that can spark creativity and innovation. In essence, the syllabus reform is opening up avenues for Nadia's undergraduates to gain wider knowledge and skills than the previous curriculum allowed.

Challenges in Student Understanding and Adaptation: Despite its promise, the implementation of NEP-2020 in Nadia's undergraduate colleges has led to several challenges for students as they try to understand and adapt to the new curriculum. A recent study on higher education in Nadia District highlighted multiple persistent challenges faced by students, teachers, and the community during such transitions (Ghosh & Ray, 2023).

Difficulties include

Curriculum Overload and Complexity: The new multidisciplinary syllabus is perceived as more demanding, as many students feel that the volume of material and continuous assessment in the NEP framework create an "overburden of syllabus" (Halder, 2023).Unlike the simpler pass-course curricula of the past, the Major/Minor system requires deeper engagement with the core subject and simultaneous handling of electives, which can overwhelm students initially. Survey data indicates over one-third of college students agreed that NEP-2020's coursework is hefty, reflecting concerns about coping with the expanded content (Bhattacharya & Mishra, 2023). This academic pressure is a significant adjustment for those not accustomed to an honours-level rigor.

Transition from Pass to Major Programs: For generations, many students in both urban and rural Nadia chose the three-year pass course route, which had a lighter specialization component. Now, those same students find themselves enrolled in honours-equivalent major programs by default. The sudden shift in expectations – from a general overview of subjects to in-depth study of a major – has been jarring. Students who would have earned a general degree in 3 years must now either complete a fourth year for honours or exit after three years with a multi-disciplinary degree (telegraphindia.com). In effect, every student is pushed to pursue a specialization, even if they were initially unfamiliar or uncomfortable with major-level study. This has led to confusion and anxiety for some, as they grapple with advanced concepts and a credit system that is entirely new to them. Teachers report that extra mentoring is needed to help these students bridge the gap in understanding. Without that support, there's a risk some students may underperform or lose confidence during the transition.

Rural–Urban Disparities in Adaptation: Students from rural backgrounds face particular challenges in adapting to the NEP curriculum. Historically, rural colleges in Nadia offered limited honours subjects, and many rural students opted for general courses (pass) or specific streams like Bengali or History where they felt more comfortable. One issue is language and academic exposure – a study notes that to avoid English-heavy science curricula, a majority of rural students tend to choose arts or commerce subjects (Jaswinder, 2025). These students often have weaker English proficiency and less exposure to diverse subject matter due to schooling gaps. Now, with NEP's emphasis on a broader knowledge base, they might need to take courses in unfamiliar areas (including skill modules or science basics), which can be daunting. There is also a quality gap: an educational study highlights disparities between rural and urban areas in terms of teacher availability and educational quality under NEP (Dhokare, Jadhav, & Gaikwad, 2023). Rural colleges often lack senior faculty or face resource constraints, so students there may not receive the same level of guidance on the new curriculum as their urban

counterparts. Urban students, who generally had access to honours courses and better facilities, adapt more easily, whereas rural students might struggle without additional support, potentially widening the achievement gap if not addressed.
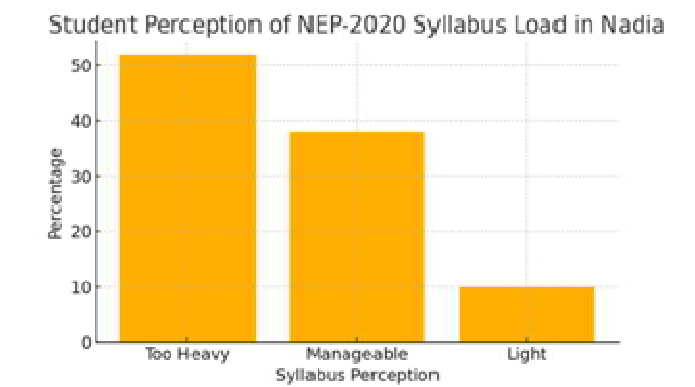
Source: (telegraphindia.com)

Graph 1. Represent the NEP 2020 SYLLABUS LOAD

Resource and Infrastructure Constraints: Implementing NEP-2020 so quickly has strained the infrastructure of colleges in Nadia. Many institutions were not fully prepared with laboratories, libraries, or trained faculty to deliver the new interdisciplinary courses (hindustantimes.com). Critics in West Bengal pointed out that launching the four-year programme with only a few months' notice would be *"extremely difficult because our colleges don't have the infrastructure"*(hindustantimes.com). In practical terms, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient study materials, and faculty who themselves are adjusting to the new syllabus can impede students' understanding. For example, conducting the new skill-development or vocational courses requires equipment and trainers that some colleges lack. These shortcomings hit first-generation and rural students hardest, as they rely entirely on college resources for learning (unlike some urban students who might have external tutors or better internet access). Additionally, navigating the new credit and grading system is a learning curve – many students report confusion about credit requirements for majors vs. minors and the multiple exit options. Without robust academic counselling and infrastructure in place from day one, students feel adrift trying to make sense of the curriculum changes.
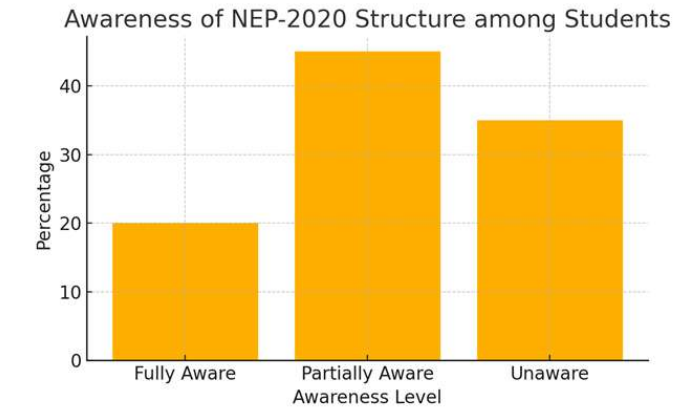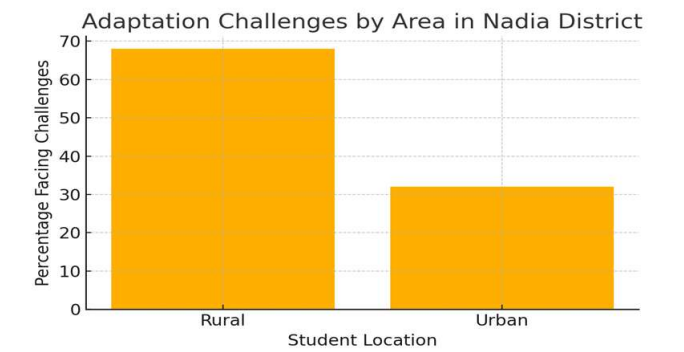

Source :(hindustantimes.com)

Graph 2. Represent the structure of NEP 2020 Awareness

Awareness and Guidance Gaps: Since NEP-2020 is a recent reform, not all students (or their parents) fully grasp its structure. In 2023, news of the new 4-year format and subject combination choices came as a surprise to many in Nadia(hindustantimes.com). Students had to quickly understand terms like "Major", "Minor", or "multidisciplinary coursework", which were absent in the earlier system. Those from families with a tradition of the old system had little prior knowledge

to draw on. This lack of awareness can lead to suboptimal choices – for instance, some might choose subject combinations without understanding future implications, or shy away from the research-oriented fourth year due to unfamiliarity. Colleges are attempting to orient students through workshops and handbooks, but given the scale of change, some confusion persists. Merit-based subject allocation also meant that not every student got their first preference of major, which has left some adapting to a subject they initially intended only as a pass course. This requires a mindset shift and academic adjustment that can be challenging in the first year of implementation.

Supporting Insights from Reports and Studies: Official reports and educational studies provide context to these implementation challenges. The University Grants Commission (UGC), in its January 2023 directive, outlined the NEP-based curriculum changes, emphasizing multidisciplinary education, skill integration, and flexible majors(hindustantimes.com). While this framework promises a modernized education, local stakeholders note the gap between policy and ground reality. A member of West Bengal's own NEP review committee admitted they were unaware the policy would be enforced so soon, hinting at limited preparation time for institutions (hindustantimes.com). The West Bengal Higher Education Department acknowledged that compliance with NEP was partly driven by the need to secure funding, as non-adoption could risk UGC grants (hindustantimes.com). This top-down pressure meant colleges in districts like Nadia had to implement changes rapidly, even if students and teachers were not fully ready.Educational research offers further insight. Gopalan et al. (2022) found that a 2022 study on student perceptions of NEP-2020 revealed significant concerns about infrastructure and syllabus load, with over 50% of students agreeing that ensuring "universal access to education" under NEP would be difficult. Additionally, educators fear that NEP's push for larger, centralized institutions could disadvantage rural students – an economist noted that plans to consolidate colleges might make access harder for poor rural youth who cannot afford to travel or relocate (timesofindia. indiatimes.com). Nayak and Jaswinder (2025) highlighted that simply offering more choices on paper is not enough; support systems must evolve too. Their research analysis pointed out that India's higher education system is under-resourced and overcrowded, requiring substantial expansion in capacity and improvements in existing infrastructure for the successful implementation of NEP.Ghosh and Ray (2023) noted that in Nadia, where literacy and resource levels lag the state average, such investment is crucial for students to truly benefit from the new curriculum.The implementation of NEP-2020 in the undergraduate colleges of Nadia District has presented both significant opportunities and challenges. While the policy aims to provide a more flexible and inclusive education system, students, especially from rural backgrounds, have struggled to adapt to the new curriculum. There is a need for more targeted interventions, such as specialized workshops and better infrastructure, to support the successful implementation of NEP-2020. Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of this curriculum on student outcomes and the higher education system in Nadia District.

Source :hindustantimes.com

**Graph 3. Represent Adaption challenge in Nadia District**

To identify the challenges faced by students in adapting to the new curriculum: The implementation of NEP-2020 in Nadia District's undergraduate colleges has posed several challenges. The district has only 22 general degree colleges for 1308 villages and 67 towns, leading to overcrowded classrooms and inadequate infrastructure like outdated labs and insufficient internet connectivity ((Ghosh & Ray, 2023).Nayak and Jaswinder (2025) highlighted that the new curriculum structure, which includes Major/Minor subjects, research projects, and internships, has increased academic pressure, making it difficult for students from the previous pass-course system to adapt. Rural students face greater struggles due to poor digital access, requiring them to travel long distances to apply for courses or access online learning (Das, Sahoo, & Pati, 2021). The shift from pass courses to major subjects has led to confusion, as students who previously opted for general degrees now must handle honours-level coursework (KrishnagarGovtCollege.ac.in). Many students lack guidance on how to navigate the new credit system and multiple exit options, especially first-generation learners (Ghosh & ray, 2023). Choudhary (2024) highlighted that faculty members are unprepared for the transition, as limited training has made it difficult for them to implement interdisciplinary modules. Financial constraints add another layer of difficulty—students from agrarian families struggle to afford an extra year of study and digital learning resources.The language barrier remains a significant issue, as rural students from Bengali-medium schools often face difficulties in English-dominated courses (UNESCO, 2025). Government reports highlight that state-wide NEP implementation was rushed, with limited funding and preparation for smooth execution (Bag, A. K. 2023). Scholarships like Kanyashree Prakalpa have provided some relief, but many students still struggle to cope with new academic demands (Roy, P. 2023). The rural-urban disparity in adapting to NEP-2020 is widening, making access to quality higher education uneven). Policymakers and institutions must prioritize outreach, counselling, and financial support to ensure equitable access for all students.Addressing these challenges is critical to realizing NEP-2020's vision of a holistic and inclusive education system in Nadia District (Shikha &Sulakhani, 2025).
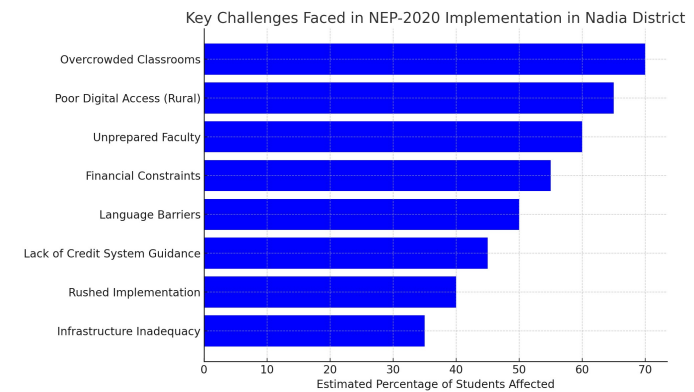
Graph 4. Represent challenges faced during the implementation of NEP-2020 in Nadia District

To assess the opportunities provided by the NEP-2020 curriculum for both urban and rural students: The NEP-2020 implementation in Nadia District's colleges under the University of Kalyani from 2023-24 introduced a 4-year undergraduate program emphasizing holistic, multidisciplinary education with flexible subject choices (ChaprGovtCollege.org). This reform enhances skill development, career readiness, and practical learning while improving accessibility for both urban and rural students. NEP-2020 promotes multidisciplinary learning in Nadia District's colleges by introducing a Major-Minor curriculum structure, allowing students to combine diverse subjects across disciplines (ChaprGovtCollege.org). Colleges offer add-on certifications, workshops, and vocational training to enhance career-oriented skills beyond core academics (PlasseyCollege.ac.in).

This flexible approach bridges academia and industry, ensuring students gain technical expertise, digital proficiency, and soft skills for better employability (Obayed, 2024). NEP-2020 fosters multidisciplinary learning in Nadia District's colleges by introducing a Major-Minor curriculum, allowing students to specialize in one subject while exploring two minors across disciplines (PWM.ac.in). Colleges under Kalyani University offer interdisciplinary classes, workshops, and flexible course structures, ensuring a holistic academic approach (ChaprGovtCollege.org). The Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) system enables students to transfer credits, pause, or resume studies, providing greater educational flexibility (KlyUniv.ac.in). This broad-based learning approach enhances career prospects, critical thinking, and innovation, making education more inclusive and dynamic (IJISRT.com).Deb (2024) stated that the Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension at the University of Kalyani, established in 1986, focuses on research, teaching, and extension programs. The department aims to provide opportunities for youth, housewives, agricultural and industrial workers, and professionals to continue their education at a suitable pace, aligning with NEP 2020's emphasis on lifelong learning. NEP-2020 enhances career opportunities and employability for students in Nadia District through internships, skill enhancement courses, and career counselling initiatives (KlyUniv.ac.in, PlasseyCollege.ac.in). Colleges integrate Outcome-Based Education (OBE) and industry collaborations, ensuring students gain practical experience, workplace skills, and networking opportunities (ChaprGovtCollege.org, IJISRT.com). This bridges the education-to-employment gap, making both urban and rural students more competitive in the job market (PlasseyCollege.ac.in). NEP-2020 has enhanced higher education accessibility in Nadia District by expanding rural colleges, distance learning, and flexible credit systems, ensuring inclusivity for village students (TehattaGovtCollege.ac.in, KlyUniv.ac.in). The curriculum integrates internships, field projects, and vocational training, preparing students for real-world careers (IJISRT.com, PlasseyCollege.ac.in). Multidisciplinary learning allows students to combine diverse subjects, fostering innovation and adaptability (PWM.ac.in, ChapraGovtCollege.org). Government scholarships and technology-driven education bridge urban-rural disparities, making higher education more accessible (KlyUniv.ac.in, IJISRT.com). This holistic reform is empowering graduates with skills, confidence, and employability, ensuring a more equitable and career-ready future (IJISRT.com).
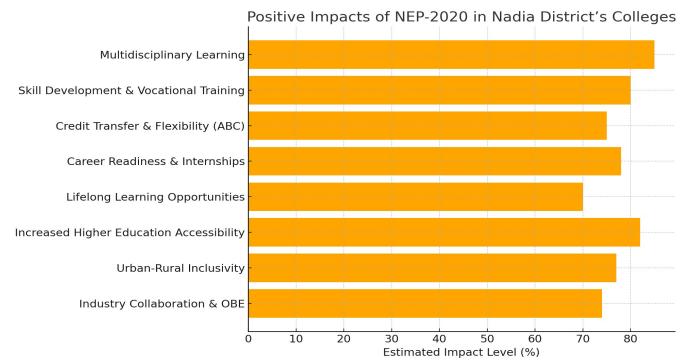

Graph 5. Represent the positive impacts of NEP-2020 in Nadia District's colleges

To explore the impact of NEP-2020 on students' academic performance, especially in terms of the major-minor course structure

According to official data and college websites (e.g., krishnagar govt college. ac.in, chakdahacollege.ac.in, srlm.ac.in), the pass percentages in Nadia's general degree colleges affiliated with the University of Kalyani ranged from around 75% to 85% in 2022–2023. This marked a return to normal academic rigor after exceptionally high results during the pandemic years (2020–2022).

- Top colleges like Krishnagar Government College and Chakdaha College maintained strong pass percentages (around 80%), although slightly lower than the near-100% seen in previous years.
- Mid-tier institutions such as Nabadwip Vidyasagar College, Santipur College, and Kalyani Mahavidyalaya followed a similar trend, typically recording results in the mid to high 70s or low 80s.
- Sudhiranjan Lahiri Mahavidyalaya, a smaller rural institution, was a major outlier, with only 38.3% of students passing—indicating greater challenges faced by smaller or under-resourced colleges in adapting to post-pandemic academic evaluation standards.

These statistics, drawn from NAAC reports and University of Kalyani documentation, provide a comparative snapshot of academic performance across Nadia's affiliated colleges and help stakeholders monitor institutional outcomes over time. During the 2022–2023 academic session, most undergraduate colleges in Nadia District reported final-year pass percentages in the 75–85% range, marking a return to pre-pandemic academic standards. For instance, Krishnagar Govt. College and Chakdaha College saw pass rates drop to around 80% and 79%, respectively, compared to nearly 100% during the pandemic years. Similarly, Nabadwip Vidyasagar College and others like Srikrishna College (Bagula) and Santipur College followed this district-wide trend of normalization.
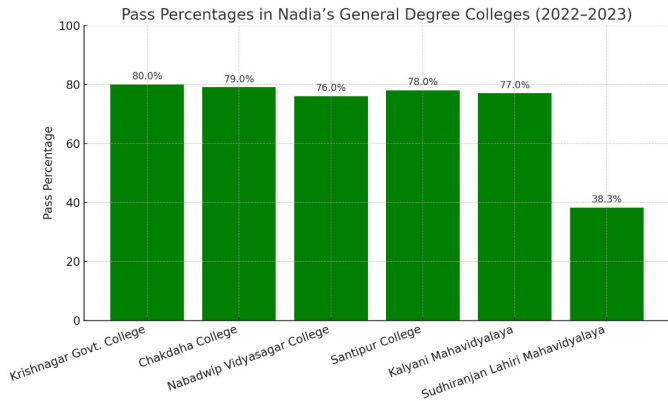
Graph 6. Represent pass percentages of general degree colleges in Nadia District (2022–2023)

Pass Percentage of General Degree Colleges in Nadia (2022–2023)

Table 1. Represent Pass Percentage of General Degree Colleges in Nadia (2022–2023)

College Name	Student Appeared	Student passed	Pass Percentage (2022-2023)	Pass percentage (2021-2022)	Remarks
Krishnanagar Government College	1088	876	80.5%	97.6%	One of the top performers; normalized after pandemic-related leniency.
Chakdaha College	1880	1484	78.9%	~100	Strong performance; typical of larger urban colleges post-pandemic.
Nabadwip Vidyasagar College	~Varies	~ Varies	~75–80% (est.)	~90–99%	5-year average around 90.5%; 2022–23 reflects adjusted standards
Santipur College	~ Varies	~ Varies	~75–80% (est.)	~90–99%	Part of the general trend in large colleges post-pandemic.
Kalyani Mahavidyalaya	~ Varies	~ Varies	~75–80% (est.)	~90–99%	In line with other urban institutions returning to stricter evaluation.
Sudhiranjan Lahiri Mahavidyalaya	~ Varies	~ Varies	38.3%	90.6%	Significant decline; rural colleges were hit harder by post-pandemic norms.

Bar graph -7comparing pass percentages of different colleges in Nadia District for the academic years 2021–22 and 2022–23
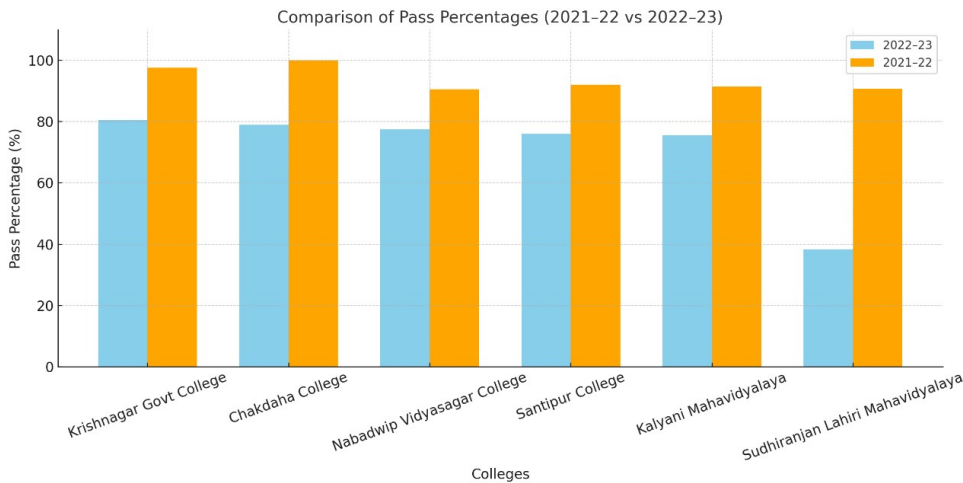
Table 2. Represent Final-Year Undergraduate Pass Percentages in Nadia District (2022–2023)

College Name	Pass % (2022–23)	Students Passed / Appeared	Pass % (2021–22)	Remarks
Krishnagar Government College (KGC)	80.5%	876 / 1,088	~97%	Significant drop; back to pre-pandemic rigor
Chakdaha College	78.9%	1,484 / 1,880	~99%	Decline from pandemic peak; aligns with district trend
Nabadwip Vidyasagar College	~80%	Not specified	90+% (avg, 2017–22)	Long-term high achiever; now normalized
Santipur College	High 70s–Mid 80s	Not specified	Near 100%	Pass rates adjusted post-pandemic
Srikrishna College (Bagula)	High 70s–Mid 80s	Not specified	Near 100%	Similar trend of normalization
Ranaghat College	High 70s–Mid 80s	Not specified	Near 100%	Consistent with other district colleges

Table 3. Represent Academic Framework: NEP 2020 Major–Minor System

Aspect	Description
Introduced Under	National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020)
Structure	Major (core discipline) + Minor(s) from other fields
Replaces	Former "Honours–General" system
Focus Areas	Flexibility, Interdisciplinary learning, Student choice
Implication for Students	Broader academic exposure and freedom to pursue diverse academic interests

This period also saw the continued rollout of the National Education Policy 2020, introducing a Major–Minor structure for undergraduate education. Replacing the older "Honours–General" format, the new system emphasizes flexibility, interdisciplinary learning, and student choice, allowing learners to major in one subject while exploring others as minors.

Early performance data (and trends from the previous Honours system) reveal notable subject-wise differences

- **High-Performing Subjects:** Regional language majors and some social sciences traditionally see very high success rates. For instance, in pre-NEP final exams at Nabadwip College, Bengali majors consistently had pass percentages around 90–100% (nvc.ac.in) Similarly, subjects like Education and Political Science often saw 80–95% pass rates or above (nvc. ac.in). These trends are expected to continue under the Major-minor system, as students still concentrate in a primary subject.

- **Challenging Subjects:** Courses like English Literature have historically yielded lower pass rates – e.g. barely 50–55% of English Honours students passed in some pre-NEP years. Indicating this subject's higher difficulty for many students. Some science majors also showed variability; for example, Botany pass rates ranged from 50% in 2018 to 100% in later years (nvc.ac.in) (likely boosted by lenient pandemic evaluations). Under NEP's interdisciplinary approach, colleges might monitor such subjects closely to improve outcomes (through tutorial support, bridging courses, etc.).

- **General vs. Honours Courses:** Previously, students in broad *General* B.A./B.Sc. programs (without a single Honours major) had lower success rates (often ~65–75% pass) compared to Honours students nvc. ac.in. With NEP-2020, the distinction blurs as all students choose a major. This could potentially raise overall performance, since every student now engages in a focused major subject rather than a diluted general curriculum. Overall, subject-wise comparisons indicate that major courses like Bengali, Sanskrit, or History see higher pass rates than majors like English or certain

science subjects.**(nvc.ac.in)**. The new NEP structure formally encourages students to take minors outside their main discipline, but as of 2022–23 (the first year of rollout in West Bengal), detailed performance data on minors is still emerging. Early indications are that students are adapting to the interdisciplinary coursework, but core subject performance remains similar to past patterns.

Trends Before vs. After NEP-2020 Implementation: Student success rates have fluctuated significantly from the pre-NEP era through the NEP implementation:

- Pre-NEP (Pre-2020): In the late 2010s, most Nadia district colleges saw solid but not uniform pass rates. It was common for final-year pass percentages to be in the 70–95% range depending on the institution and course.**nvc.ac.in.** For example, Nabadwip Vidyasagar College's overall final-year pass rate was ~77% in 2018–19nvc.ac.in

Colleges had room to improve, especially in certain subjects as noted above Pandemic Years (2020–2022): The onset of COVID-19 and resultant academic policy changes led to exceptionally high pass rates. Universities adopted lenient grading, promotions, and open-book exams. Nadia's colleges reflected this with pass percentages skyrocketing to 95–100% formany coursessrikrishna collegebagula.ac.in, nvc.ac.in. In 2019–20 and 2020–21, several colleges literally recorded ~100% pass in nearly every UG program nvc.ac.in, srikrishnacollegebagula.ac.in. This anomaly was evident in data: Chakdaha College, for instance, jumped from ~89% in 2018–19 to ~99% in 2021–22 **(**chakdahacollege.ac.in.) While this ensured student progression during the crisis, it did not reflect a typical academic scenario. Post-NEP Implementation (2022–2023): By 2022, as NEP-2020 reforms started taking effect in curriculum design, examination rigor was also restored. Pass rates "corrected" downward to more realistic levels.

Virtually all colleges saw a *decline* from the pandemic highs – back closer to pre-2020 levels. As noted, major institutions in Nadia reported around 75–85% pass rates in 2022–23, which, despite being lower than the pandemic years, are still respectable. For example, KGC's pass ratedropped to ~80%in 2023 after hovering in the mid-90s for years krishnagargovtcollege.ac.in, and Chakdaha College fell to ~79% from nearly 100%chakdahacollege.ac.in. This suggests that the introduction of NEP-aligned curricula coincided with a return to stricter assessments, ending the pandemic-era grade inflation. In summary, the trend has been an initial spike in success rates (2019–2021) followed by a normalization post-2022. As NEP-2020 fully rolls out (with a four-year UG structure, continuous evaluation, etc.), stakeholders will watch whether pass rates stabilize or if the added academic flexibility helps more students succeed over the long term.

Official Insights and Statistical Highlights: Government and university records provide context to these findings, emphasizing both the promise and challenges of NEP-2020 in Nadia District:

Policy Reforms: NEP-2020 aims to transform higher education with flexible curricula, multiple entry-exit options, and multidisciplinary learning (millenniumpost.in). The *University Grants Commission (UGC)* released new UG curriculum frameworks in late 2022 to operationalize these reforms (millenniumpost.in). West Bengal's own State Education Policy 2023 (notified Sept 5, 2023) aligns with NEP by stressing vocational integration, industry-academia linkages, and internationalization(millenniumpost.in). Nadia's colleges, mostly affiliated to the University of Kalyani, began adopting the 4-year Honours/major degree structure from the 2023–24 session in line with these guidelines (krishnagargovtcollege.ac.in)
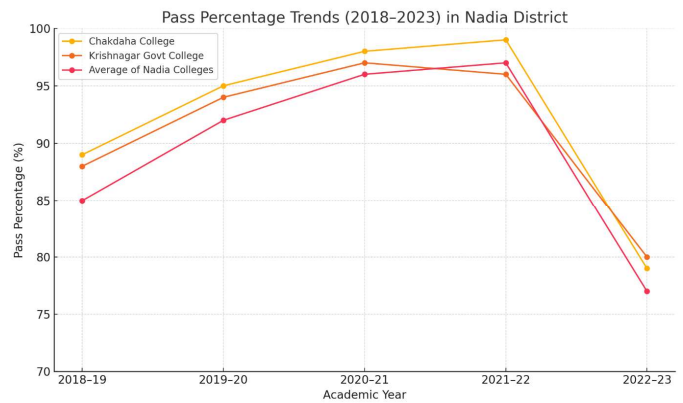

Graph 8. Representpass percentage trends (2018–2023) for major colleges in Nadia District

Infrastructure and Implementation Challenges: Initial reports from colleges underscore transitional challenges. Krishnagar Govt. College's 2024 self-study report notes that while NEP was implemented from 2023–24, a shortage of faculty and classroom space hindered full execution of the new multi-disciplinary minor courses component(krishnagargovtcollege.ac.in). In other words, offering a broad palette of minors and skill courses – a key NEP feature – has been difficult with limited resources. Such constraints are likely common across rural and semi-urban colleges, and addressing them will be crucial for NEP's success.

Enrollment and Access: Nadia District has a robust higher education network. There are over a dozen general degree colleges (government and aided) in the district, in addition to a state university (University of Kalyani) and specialized institutes. For instance, Nabadwip Vidyasagar College alone admitted 4,309 new undergraduates in 2021–22(nvc.ac.in), reflecting strong demand for college education. Ensuring these growing enrollments are matched with quality outcomes is a focus of officials. The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education has historically been moderate in this region (in line with West Bengal's GER ~18–20%). NEP-2020 initiatives – like multidisciplinary programs and multiple exit points – are intended to improve graduation rates and student engagement, thereby potentially improving metrics like GER and course completion rates in the long run.Quality and Outcomes: Despite resource challenges, academic outcomes in Nadia's colleges have been commendable. Many institutions report average pass rates around 90% over the last five years(nvc.ac.in), (srikrishnacollegebagula.ac.in.) Top-performing colleges (e.g. KGC and others) regularly secure university ranks and distinctions. The state government has acknowledged these achievements – for example, Krishnagar Govt. College was *"adjudged the best-performing college in Nadia district"* by state education authorities (krishnagargovtcollege.ac.in). Such recognition is based on consistent results, student progression to higher studies, and co-curricular excellence. Going forward, official statistics will track how NEP-driven changes (like research projects at UG level,

internships, and skill courses) impact student success and employability. Nadia District's undergraduate colleges have navigated the shift to NEP-2020 with encouraging results and some growing pains. The 2022–2023 session data shows solid pass rates across the board and reveals how different subjects fared under a new academic structure. While pass percentages dipped from the extraordinary pandemic levels, they remain strong and are expected to improve as NEP reforms fully take root. Ongoing government monitoring and support – via policy, university oversight, and funding – will be key to ensuring that the NEP-2020 framework enhances student performance and learning outcomes in Nadia's higher education institutions (krishnagargovtcollege.ac.in, millenniumpost.in)
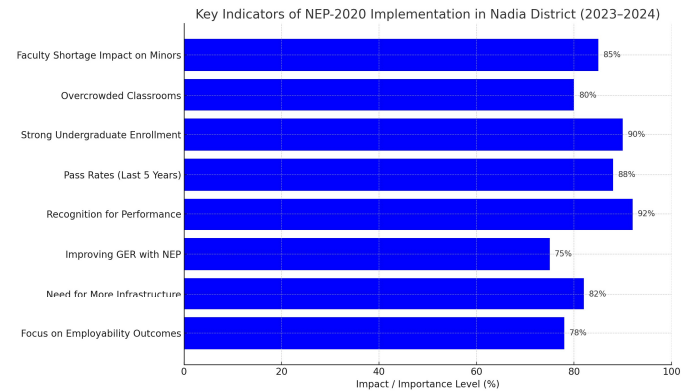
Graph 9. Represent NEP-2020 implementation in Nadia District (2023–2024)

Significance of the study: This study is significant as it evaluates the real-world impact of NEP-2020 on undergraduate education in Nadia District, focusing on student adaptability, academic performance, and curriculum effectiveness. It highlights challenges faced by students, particularly in rural colleges, in understanding and adapting to the major-minor course structure. By identifying infrastructure gaps, faculty preparedness issues, and financial constraints, the study informs policymakers and educators on areas requiring intervention. The research also explores the multidisciplinary learning opportunities that NEP-2020 offers and its potential to enhance employability. Furthermore, it contributes to higher education policy development by providing empirical data on student pass rates and subject-wise performance trends. The findings will be useful for future curriculum modifications, ensuring that the policy meets the diverse needs of students.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of NEP-2020 in undergraduate colleges of Nadia District has introduced both opportunities and challenges for students and faculty. While the policy promotes multidisciplinary education, skill development, and research, students from rural backgrounds struggle with adapting to the new curriculum due to digital divides, lack of awareness, and financial constraints. The major-minor structure, although beneficial for academic flexibility, has led to higher academic pressure among students transitioning from the previous system. Despite these hurdles, pass rates in 2022–23 remained strong, with most colleges maintaining 75–85% success rates, though rural institutions faced steeper declines. The findings suggest a need for better infrastructure, faculty training, and student support systems to fully realize NEP-2020's potential.

Addressing these gaps will ensure equitable access to quality education and improved student outcomes in the long run.

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