

REPORT

of the

NIEPA-SPONSORED NATIONAL SEMINAR

on the theme

“NEP 2020: A Blueprint to GER Expansion and Skill Development”

17th March, 2026

Organized by

Khalsa College for Women, Amritsar

Sponsored by

National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi

1. Executive Summary / Abstract of the Seminar

Khalsa College for Women, Amritsar organised a National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) sponsored National Seminar on the theme “NEP 2020: A Blueprint to GER Expansion and Skill Development” on 17th March, 2026. The seminar was convened with the objective of critically examining the provisions of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 relating to the expansion of the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), the integration of vocational education and skill development, and the promotion of equitable, inclusive and future-ready higher education in India.

The seminar was structured around an Inaugural Session, a Plenary Session comprising a keynote and an inaugural address by eminent scholars, a Technical Session featuring specialised presentations by subject experts, and a Valedictory Session with an interactive dialogue. The event was presided over by S. Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina Ji, Honorary Secretary, Khalsa College Governing Council and Pro-Chancellor, Khalsa University, Amritsar, in the benign presence of S. Dharminder Singh Rataul, Under Secretary, Khalsa College Charitable Society, and Dr. Surinder Kaur, Principal/Dean, Academic Affairs, Khalsa College for Women, Amritsar.

Eminent resource persons, namely Dr. Anil Monga (Panjab University, Chandigarh), Prof. G.D. Sharma (former Director, CEC-UGC, New Delhi), Dr. Sonam Bansal (Gurugram University), Dr. Amandeep Verma (Central University of Haryana), Dr. Nitin Arora (Panjab University, Chandigarh) and Dr. Mahal Singh (Vice-Chancellor, Khalsa University, Amritsar) enriched the deliberations with their scholarly insights, spanning policy analysis, digital and academic ecosystems, economics of education, and skill-based pedagogy.

The seminar generated rich academic discourse on the challenges of implementing NEP 2020 including faculty and funding shortages, curriculum redesign, internship arrangement, and regional disparities in GER, while also identifying concrete opportunities such as digital learning platforms, multidisciplinary and flexible academic structures, and industry-academia collaboration. The deliberations culminated in a set of actionable recommendations aimed at policymakers, institutions and faculty for the effective implementation of NEP 2020, particularly in the areas of GER expansion, skill development and inclusive access to higher education.

2. Objectives

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a landmark reform aimed at transforming India's education system to meet the demands of the 21st century. With its focus on enhancing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), promoting vocational education and skill development, ensuring inclusive and equitable access, and fostering innovation and critical thinking, NEP 2020 presents a comprehensive blueprint for education reform in India. Against this backdrop, the seminar was designed to provide an in-depth understanding of NEP 2020 and its implications for modernising India's education system in response to the evolving demands of the economy, society and global competitiveness. The specific objectives of the seminar were as follows:

- To analyse the policy provisions of NEP 2020 related to GER expansion across all levels of education — examining NEP 2020 targets, frameworks such as multidisciplinary education, flexible entry–exit systems and open learning, and administrative strategies for improving enrolment and retention, including innovative approaches for reaching rural and marginalised communities.
- To examine the integration of vocational education and skill development — exploring practical tools for integrating vocational education, internships, experiential learning and skill-based curricula into institutional planning, aligned with NEP 2020 and national skill development goals, along with the role of industry-academia collaboration.
- To examine existing challenges and gaps in access, equity and inclusion, especially for marginalised and rural learners, and to enable evidence-based, research-oriented discussion supporting targeted interventions consistent with NIEPA's research and policy advisory role.
- To evaluate the role of institutions, governance structures and policy mechanisms in facilitating employability and lifelong learning pathways, and to assess how schools, higher education institutions and administrative systems can strengthen industry linkages and support the creation of a future-ready workforce.
- To formulate actionable recommendations for policymakers and institutions for the effective implementation of NEP 2020, resulting in policy briefs, strategic guidelines and feasible

institutional practices that can support NIEPA's mandate of research, capacity-building and technical assistance to States and educational institutions.

Expected Outcomes

- A comprehensive understanding among participants of NEP 2020's key recommendations relating to GER expansion, skill integration, inclusive education and lifelong learning.
- Acquisition of practical strategies and planning tools by educational planners, administrators and faculty for integrating vocational education, experiential learning and flexible academic structures.
- Analytical insights into challenges of access, equity and retention among marginalised groups, leading to data-informed approaches for improving GER and skill outcomes.
- Collaborative development of actionable recommendations to enhance employability through stronger industry linkages, improved curriculum design and skill-oriented pedagogies.
- A consolidated action framework summarising key strategies, best practices and implementation pathways for NIEPA, State authorities and educational institutions.

3. Inaugural Session

The Inaugural Session commenced with a Shabad Gayan, followed by a floral welcome and Shama Roshan, setting a solemn and dignified tone for the proceedings. Dr. Puneet Kaur, Assistant Professor Psychology, and Seminar Co-Coordinator, formally introduced the theme and sub-themes of the seminar, outlining the rationale behind selecting "NEP 2020: A Blueprint to GER Expansion and Skill Development" as the focal point of deliberation. She elaborated on the key sub-themes to be explored across the sessions, including GER expansion, vocational and skill integration, equitable access, and institutional readiness for NEP implementation. Dr. Puneet Kaur also apprised the gathering of the College's sustained achievements in academic excellence, highlighting its proactive initiatives in curriculum reform, faculty development, and student-centric pedagogical practices over the years. She underscored the institution's consistent efforts to align its academic ecosystem with national policy priorities, positioning Khalsa College for Women as a forward-looking institution in the region's higher education landscape. Her introductory remarks set a well-contextualised backdrop for the addresses and discussions that followed.

Following these opening remarks, Dr. Surinder Kaur, Principal/Dean, Academic Affairs, Khalsa University, Amritsar, delivered the welcome address, extending a warm welcome to all dignitaries, resource persons, faculty members and students. She highlighted NEP 2020's transformative role in India's education system and underscored the institution's commitment to academic excellence and the holistic growth of students, in alignment with the vision of NEP 2020. She thanked the management and resource persons for their participation and introduced the theme of the seminar, emphasising the need for quality education and enhanced graduate employability. She reiterated that education is the primary driver of national growth, empowering individuals with skills necessary for both living and critical thinking, and highlighted the strides already taken by the College in implementing NEP 2020, particularly its integration of skill development, technology and practical knowledge into holistic, flexible and multidisciplinary learning.

The session was presided over by S. Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina Ji, Honorary Secretary, Khalsa College Governing Council, Amritsar, and Pro-Chancellor, Khalsa University, Amritsar. In his presidential remarks, he noted that the College management had foreseen the need for skill development as early as 2004, in view of global changes, leading to a pragmatic institutional shift

towards professional courses. He observed that this policy of enhancing graduate skills had culminated in the College becoming a harbinger of employability in the region. He encouraged faculty members to take initiatives for the successful implementation of NEP 2020, aimed at boosting graduates' skills and making them more employable and self-reliant, and thanked the resource persons for enhancing the intellectual vibrancy of the occasion.

Dr. Jaswinder Singh, Head, Department of Social Sciences, Khalsa College for women, Amritsar proposed the vote of thanks for the Inaugural Session. He highlighted that Khalsa College for Women had redesigned its curricula in line with NEP 2020 as early as 2024 under the leadership of Principal Dr. Surinder Kaur, well ahead of many peer institutions, demonstrating the College's proactive and forward-looking approach to academic reform. He elaborated that the College had undertaken a series of concerted institutional efforts towards the effective implementation of NEP 2020, including restructuring of academic programmes to incorporate multidisciplinary and flexible course options, introduction of skill-based and vocational courses, strengthening of internship and community engagement components, and capacity-building initiatives for faculty to align teaching practices with the policy's vision. He further noted the College's sustained efforts over the preceding three years in organising seminars, workshops and faculty orientation programmes to build a deeper understanding of NEP 2020 among both faculty and students, reflecting the institution's holistic and continuous commitment to translating policy into practice. He thanked the speakers and participants for their valuable presence and insightful contributions, and invited them for the tea break.

4. Plenary Session

Keynote Address: Dr. Anil Monga, Professor, Centre for Police Administration and Coordinator NEP, Panjab University, Chandigarh

Dr. Anil Monga delivered the keynote address on the theme "Issues and Challenges of Implementation of NEP 2020." He explained in depth the provisions of NEP 2020, tracing its philosophical underpinnings and its potential to help build an equitable and just society rooted in access, quality, affordability and accountability. Drawing comparisons with previous education policies, he observed that while earlier policies focused primarily on access and equity, NEP 2020 marks a paradigm shift by emphasising flexibility through multiple entry and exit options, credit accumulation and transfer, and a multidisciplinary approach leading to holistic, all-round development of learners. He elaborated that this flexibility is designed to accommodate diverse learner trajectories, allowing students to pause, resume or change academic direction without being penalised for it, thereby reducing dropout rates and encouraging lifelong learning. He noted that under NEP 2020 the rigid boundaries between various faculties and disciplines — such as the arts, sciences, commerce and vocational streams — are becoming increasingly blurred, which will help bridge the long-standing gap between theory and practice and thereby enhance the overall employability and adaptability of graduates in a rapidly evolving job market."

"Dr. Monga further deliberated at length on the concrete steps taken by Panjab University, Chandigarh in implementing NEP 2020, offering the University's experience as a practical case study for the audience. He described the scale of the challenge involved in streamlining curricula across its 200 affiliated colleges, each with varying levels of infrastructure, faculty strength and readiness for reform. He identified the design of course curricula as per the National Higher Education Qualification Framework and the National Credit Framework as a foremost challenge, requiring extensive coordination among academic bodies, subject experts and administrative units to ensure uniformity while retaining flexibility. He also spoke in detail about the logistical difficulty of arranging meaningful internships for all students, including the complexities of deciding on appropriate duration, timing and industry partnerships suited to different disciplines. He noted that students unable to secure internship placements are instead engaged in structured community engagement work, which they are required to document through a formal report and defend through a viva-voce examination at the department level, ensuring that the learning

outcomes of experiential education are not compromised. He also cautioned, with considerable emphasis, that persistent shortages of faculty and funding in public universities could emerge as major bottlenecks in realising the full transformative potential of NEP 2020, and urged that these resource gaps be addressed on priority. Notwithstanding these challenges, he described the implementation of NEP 2020 as a historic and rare opportunity for teachers to redesign curricula, reimagine pedagogy, and rise to the occasion as active architects of India's educational future, rather than passive implementers of policy handed down from above.

Inaugural Address: Prof. G.D. Sharma, Former Director, Consortium for Educational Communication, University Grants Commission, New Delhi

Prof. G.D. Sharma graced the occasion with the inaugural address, in which he traced the development of education over the centuries, observing that human beings, as a species, possess a defining characteristic of generating and disseminating knowledge. He described how the shift from human and animal sources of energy to mechanical sources of energy marked a drastic transformation in production methods, leading to an increasingly complex knowledge system and the progressive differentiation of subjects into specialised streams of study. He reflected on how education, once used by colonial powers as a tool of subjugation rather than liberation, evolved over time — with the emergence of vibrant political thought and nationalist consciousness — into a demand for a socially relevant education system aimed at the mental emancipation of the individual and the collective upliftment of society."

"Situating this historical trajectory within the context of the seminar's theme, Prof. Sharma observed that NEP 2020 represents the natural next step in this evolution, seeking to make Indian education not only more inclusive and expansive in terms of enrolment but also more responsive to the skill requirements of a knowledge-driven economy. He noted that NEP 2020 is in tune with the academic structures of Ivy League institutions of higher learning, particularly in its emphasis on flexibility, interdisciplinarity and outcome-based learning, and observed that in the Indian context it has already been adopted by select reputed private institutions such as BITS Pilani, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, and Ashoka University, which have demonstrated the feasibility of such reforms. He noted that the Government of India's adoption of NEP 2020 across public institutions aims to enable all educational bodies — not merely a privileged few — to reap similar dividends, thereby widening the Gross Enrolment Ratio while simultaneously improving the

quality and industry-relevance of education, and ushering in a new era of demographic dividend for the nation."

Prof. Sharma further urged faculty to proactively adapt to the ongoing technological revolution, particularly the rise of artificial intelligence, and to focus on cultivating skills that complement rather than compete with machine intelligence — a shift he described as central to the skill development goals of NEP 2020. He stressed that educators must stay continuously updated on emerging technologies such as AI while simultaneously cultivating strong ethical values in their students, so as to deliver value that goes beyond what machines can offer, thereby ensuring that GER expansion under NEP 2020 is matched by a corresponding improvement in the quality, employability and ethical grounding of India's graduates.

5. Technical Session

Ms. Mansi, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Khalsa College for Women, Amritsar, welcomed the speakers and participants to the Technical Session, in which two eminent scholars shared their perspectives on the seminar theme.

Dr. Sonam Bansal, Associate Professor and Chairperson, Department of Education, Gurugram University, Gurugram

Dr. Sonam Bansal presented on the theme “Digital and Academic Ecosystems in Higher Education: Powering NEP 2020,” subtitled “Transforming India's Educational Landscape through Technology-Enabled Innovation and Holistic Learning.” She discussed in depth various learning methodologies — pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy — and how they are converging to shape a new academic ecosystem amid the digital revolution. She opined that digital platforms will be instrumental in enhancing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) as envisaged under NEP 2020, helping India work towards its ambitious target of 50% GER by 2035. She provided an overview of key platforms constituting the Digital Academic Ecosystem, including PM-USHA, Anuvadini, e-KUMBH, ULLAS and the National Mentoring Mission, and also referred to the PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme, under which students can avail education loans of up to ₹8 lakh without a guarantor, with Canara Bank acting as the nodal bank.

Dr. Amandeep Verma, Professor, Department of Economics, Central University of Haryana, Mahendergarh

Dr. Amandeep Verma shared his perspective on the theme “NEP 2020: A Blueprint to GER Expansion and Skill Development.” He elaborated on how education acts as a catalyst for growth and the backbone of the economy, noting that India's GER had shown only marginal growth of around 5% over the past decades. He drew comparisons of India's GER with that of countries such as South Korea, China and the United States, and observed that within India, Tamil Nadu currently ranks highest in GER at around 49%, followed by Himachal Pradesh. He stressed that NEP 2020 will help instil a multidisciplinary approach in the education system, along with flexibility through multiple entry and exit options for students.

Dr. Verma also highlighted that skill development, though essential, remains underdeveloped in India, with only around 5% of the workforce possessing requisite industry skills. He noted that the

mandatory Skill Enhancement Courses under NEP 2020 are expected to invigorate the skill development component, potentially enabling India to compete with countries such as Germany. He further observed that GER expansion will drive human capital formation and expand research and innovation, thereby enhancing employability and productivity. However, he flagged concerns regarding funding scarcity, regional disparities, infrastructural gaps and the digital divide as factors that could undermine the effectiveness of NEP 2020, and urged the Government to raise education spending to at least 6% of GDP, strengthen public universities through faculty recruitment, and allocate additional development funds.

The seminar witnessed enthusiastic participation, with a total of about hundred participants, comprising faculty members, research scholars and students from various academic institutions, attending the deliberations. In addition to the invited resource persons, the Technical Session also provided a platform for young researchers to present their scholarly work aligned with the sub-themes of the seminar. Five researchers presented their papers, offering fresh perspectives on issues such as GER expansion, skill integration, digital learning ecosystems, and equity in access to higher education under NEP 2020. Their presentations reflected rigorous engagement with the policy framework and contributed valuable empirical and analytical insights to the broader discourse of the seminar. Owing to the constraints of time, the remaining papers received from participants could not be presented orally during the session; however, these contributions were duly acknowledged and deemed to have been presented for the purposes of the seminar proceedings. The organisers expressed appreciation for the overwhelming response and the quality of scholarly contributions received, noting that the depth and diversity of the submitted papers reflected the growing academic interest in the themes addressed by NEP 2020. Ms. Mansi acknowledged the closing remarks, thanked the participants, and invited everyone for the lunch break.

6. Summary of Discussion

The deliberations across the Inaugural, Plenary and Technical Sessions converged on a shared understanding that NEP 2020 marks a decisive shift from earlier education policies, which were largely focused on access and equity, towards a framework emphasising flexibility, multidisciplinary, holistic development and multiple entry-exit pathways. Speakers consistently underscored that the blurring of disciplinary boundaries under NEP 2020 is expected to bridge the long-standing gap between theory and practice, thereby enhancing graduate employability.

A recurring theme across sessions was the dual nature of the opportunities and challenges presented by NEP 2020. On one hand, participants noted the transformative potential of digital platforms — such as PM-USHA, Anuvadini, e-KUMBH, ULLAS and the National Mentoring Mission — in expanding the Gross Enrolment Ratio and democratising access to quality education. On the other hand, speakers repeatedly flagged structural constraints, including shortages of faculty and funding in public universities, the administrative complexity of redesigning curricula as per the National Higher Education Qualification Framework and National Credit Framework, and the logistical challenge of arranging meaningful internships for all students.

The discussion also placed considerable emphasis on the skill deficit facing India's workforce, with only about 5% currently possessing requisite industry skills, and on the role of mandatory Skill Enhancement Courses in addressing this gap. Speakers highlighted the importance of industry-academia collaboration, internships and community engagement as alternate pathways for experiential learning. Concerns around regional disparities in GER, infrastructural deficits and the digital divide were raised as factors that could constrain equitable implementation of the policy, particularly for rural and marginalised learners. There was broad consensus on the need for increased public investment in education, with speakers recommending that education spending be raised to at least 6% of GDP. Participants also engaged with the implications of the ongoing technological and AI-driven transformation for the teaching profession, agreeing that educators must go beyond information delivery, stay abreast of technological developments, and cultivate strong ethical values to deliver value that complements rather than competes with machine intelligence. The full manuscript of the proceedings, capturing the detailed remarks of each speaker session-wise, is appended as Annexure I to this report.

7. Valedictory Session

Dr. Puneet Kaur, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Seminar Co-Coordinator, welcomed the participants to the Valedictory Session. Dr. Surinder Kaur, Principal/Dean, Academic Affairs, welcomed the valedictory speakers, Dr. Nitin Arora and Dr. Mahal Singh, and presented them with a token of thanks at the outset of the session.

Valedictory Address: Dr. Nitin Arora, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Panjab University, Chandigarh

Dr. Nitin Arora delivered the valedictory address on the theme "Economics Education in the Era of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Skill-Based Learning, Data Literacy and Industry Alignment in Economics." He held an interactive session with students and faculty, clearing doubts regarding the choice and duration of courses, and offering practical guidance on how learners could navigate the flexibility offered under NEP 2020 to align their academic choices with career aspirations. He observed that in order to reap the benefits of its demographic dividend, India needs to further enthuse skill-based learning, and that NEP 2020 represents a concrete step in the direction of skill enhancement alongside greater international compliance of the Indian education system. Grounding his address in the practical application of NEP 2020 to the discipline of Economics, he illustrated how data literacy, quantitative reasoning and analytical tools could be embedded into economics curricula through hands-on modules, case-study-based learning, and exposure to real-world datasets, thereby preparing students for data-driven roles in industry, policy research and public administration. He further discussed how industry alignment could be practically achieved through structured internships with financial institutions, research organisations and government bodies, enabling students to apply classroom learning to live economic problems and build employable, job-ready skill sets. He emphasised that NEP 2020 will be beneficial only if students have clear long-term career planning and vision, making it imperative for teachers to provide sustained mentorship and counselling to students amid the ambiguity posed by changes in curriculum design, so that the flexibility offered by the policy translates into informed academic and career choices rather than confusion or drift.

Presidential Remarks: Dr. Mahal Singh, Vice-Chancellor, Khalsa University, Amritsar

Dr. Mahal Singh, in his presidential remarks, emphasised that students must be encouraged to ask questions fearlessly and without hesitation, and that it is incumbent upon teachers to create a conducive environment for inquiry and intellectual engagement that fosters scientific temperament. He observed that a culture of questioning is foundational to genuine learning, and that institutions must actively nurture curiosity rather than merely transmit information, as it is this spirit of inquiry that ultimately drives innovation and critical thinking among the youth. He expressed concern that with the emergence of AI and data-driven sources of knowledge, the role of the teacher must undergo a fundamental change — going beyond information already available on digital platforms to broaden students' knowledge horizons.

He remarked that in an age where facts and information are readily accessible at the click of a button, the true value of a teacher lies not in the transmission of content but in cultivating judgement, discernment, ethical reasoning and the ability to contextualise knowledge meaningfully. He cautioned that an over-reliance on AI-generated content, without adequate critical engagement, could risk producing graduates who are informationally rich but analytically shallow, and stressed that teachers must therefore consciously design pedagogical approaches that encourage independent thought, application-based learning and problem-solving.

He noted that NEP 2020's multidisciplinary approach will infuse a socially and culturally relevant ethos into the education system, making it more viable and helping to break down discipline-specific silos. He further added that this blurring of disciplinary boundaries would enable students to draw connections across fields such as economics, technology, humanities and the sciences, equipping them with the versatility and adaptability required to navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

Dr. Puneet Kaur proposed the vote of thanks at the conclusion of the Valedictory Session, thanking all the participants, resource persons and dignitaries for their thought-provoking insights on NEP 2020. Before formally concluding the proceedings, she briefly synthesised the key policy recommendations that had emerged over the course of the day's deliberations, drawing together the threads of discussion from the Inaugural, Plenary, Technical and Valedictory Sessions. She

highlighted the recurring emphasis placed by speakers on the need for increased public investment in education, strengthening of faculty capacity, and structured mechanisms for internship and skill development, as critical levers for the effective implementation of NEP 2020. She also reiterated the collective call for greater industry-academia collaboration, expansion of digital learning platforms to improve GER, and targeted interventions to bridge regional and socio-economic disparities in access to higher education. Dr. Puneet Kaur noted that these recommendations would be duly compiled and shared with the College management and relevant stakeholders, so as to inform future institutional planning and contribute meaningfully to the broader discourse on NEP 2020 implementation. She expressed hope that the insights generated through the seminar would translate into concrete action at the institutional, State and national levels. She once again thanked all the participants, resource persons and dignitaries for their valuable contributions and thought-provoking insights on NEP 2020, bringing the seminar to a successful and intellectually enriching close.

8. Schedule of Seminar

Annexure II

Seminar Schedule

Khalsa College for Women, Amritsar

NIEPA Sponsored National Seminar

“NEP 2020: A Blueprint to GER Expansion and Skill Development”

17th March, 2026

Time	Programme
10:00 – 10:05 AM	Shabad Gayan
10:05 – 10:10 AM	Floral Welcome
10:10 – 10:15 AM	Shama Roshan
10:15 – 10:20 AM	Welcome Address by Principal: Dr. Surinder Kaur
10:20 – 11:20 AM	Keynote Address by Dr. Anil Monga
11:20 – 12:10 PM	Inaugural Address by Dr. G.D. Sharma
12:10 – 12:30 PM	Presidential Remarks by Hon. Secretary S. Rajinder Mohan Singh Ji Chhina
12:30 – 12:40 PM	Vote of Thanks
12:40 - 1:00 AM	Tea Break
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Technical Session
3:00 – 3:30 PM	Lunch
3:30 – 5:00 PM	Valedictory Session

9. Recommendations

Based on the deliberations of the seminar, the following recommendations emerged for policymakers, institutions and faculty towards the effective implementation of NEP 2020:

- Institutions should proactively redesign curricula in alignment with the National Higher Education Qualification Framework and the National Credit Framework, with adequate lead time and faculty capacity-building to manage the transition.
- Structured mechanisms should be developed for arranging internships for all students, including clear guidelines on duration and timing, and community engagement work should be formalised as a credible alternative for students unable to secure internship placements.
- Digital Academic Ecosystem platforms — such as PM-USHA, Anuvadini, e-KUMBH, ULLAS and the National Mentoring Mission — should be actively leveraged by institutions to expand access and improve the Gross Enrolment Ratio, particularly among rural and marginalised learners.
- Mandatory Skill Enhancement Courses should be strengthened through greater industry-academia collaboration, so as to address the current skill deficit in the workforce and enhance graduate employability.
- The Government should consider raising public expenditure on education to at least 6% of GDP, as recommended in the seminar, and should prioritise faculty recruitment and infrastructural development in public universities to address existing shortages.
- Targeted interventions are needed to address regional disparities in GER, infrastructural deficits, and the digital divide, so that the benefits of NEP 2020 reach rural, socio-economically disadvantaged and differently-abled learners equitably.
- Faculty development programmes should be instituted to help teachers adapt to the AI-driven transformation of education, enabling them to deliver value beyond machine-provided information while upholding strong ethical values.
- Institutions should institutionalise regular seminars, workshops and interactive sessions — of the kind conducted by Khalsa College for Women — to continuously build faculty and student understanding of NEP 2020 and support its sustained, informed implementation.

- NIEPA and State-level education authorities should consolidate such institutional experiences into policy briefs and strategic guidelines that can support capacity-building and technical assistance across the higher education sector.
- Career counselling and mentorship cells should be strengthened within institutions to guide students through the flexibility offered by NEP 2020, ensuring that multiple entry-exit options and credit accumulation translate into informed academic choices rather than uncertainty or drift.
- Institutions should establish dedicated Data Analytics and Digital Literacy cells to help students develop quantitative and data-handling skills across disciplines, in line with the growing demand for data-driven competencies in the job market.
- Robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be developed at the institutional and State levels to periodically assess the progress of NEP 2020 implementation, identify bottlenecks early, and enable evidence-based course correction.
- Public-private partnerships should be encouraged to mobilise additional resources, infrastructure and expertise for skill development initiatives, particularly in resource-constrained public institutions.
- Special attention should be given to gender-responsive planning under NEP 2020, ensuring that GER expansion and skill development initiatives are designed to address the specific barriers faced by women learners, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas.
- Cross-institutional collaboration and knowledge-sharing platforms should be promoted, enabling colleges and universities to exchange best practices, share resources, and jointly address common implementation challenges.
- Sustained advocacy and sensitisation programmes should be undertaken for parents, students and local communities to build wider awareness and acceptance of the structural changes introduced under NEP 2020.

Taken together, these recommendations underscore that the success of NEP 2020 will depend not merely on policy articulation at the national level, but on sustained, coordinated and context-sensitive action across institutions, faculty, State authorities and the Government. The seminar reaffirmed the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in translating the vision of NEP 2020 into tangible outcomes for India's higher education system.

Annexure I

Manuscript of Proceedings

Khalsa College for Women organised a National Seminar on the theme “NEP 2020: A Blueprint to GER Expansion and Skill Development,” sponsored by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA). The seminar was presided over by S. Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina Ji, Honorary Secretary, Khalsa College Governing Council, Amritsar and Pro-Chancellor, Khalsa University, Amritsar, in the benign presence of S. Dharminder Singh Rataul, Under Secretary, Khalsa College Charitable Society, Amritsar, and Dr. Surinder Kaur, Principal/Dean, Academic Affairs, Khalsa University, Amritsar. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Anil Monga, Professor, Centre for Police Administration and Coordinator NEP, Panjab University, Chandigarh, and the inaugural address was delivered by Prof. G.D. Sharma, Former Director, Consortium for Educational Communication, University Grants Commission, New Delhi.

The proceedings opened with Dr. Puneet Kaur, Assistant Professor of Psychology, and Seminar Co-Coordinator, introducing the theme and sub-themes of the seminar and briefing the gathering on Khalsa College for Women's sustained achievements in academic excellence and curricular reform. Dr. Jaswinder Singh, Head, Department of Social Sciences, in proposing the vote of thanks for the Inaugural Session, further detailed the College's concerted institutional efforts towards implementing NEP 2020, including restructuring of academic programmes, introduction of skill-based and vocational courses, and sustained faculty capacity-building over the preceding three years. In the Plenary Session, Dr. Anil Monga's keynote address examined, with reference to Panjab University's own implementation experience across 200 affiliated colleges, the practical challenges of curriculum redesign under the National Higher Education Qualification Framework and National Credit Framework, and the arrangement of internships and community engagement work for students. Prof. G.D. Sharma's inaugural address traced the historical evolution of education and situated NEP 2020 as the next logical step in aligning Indian higher education with global academic standards while enhancing GER and workforce readiness.

The inaugural session was followed by a technical session in which two eminent scholars — Dr. Sonam Bansal, Associate Professor and Chairperson, Department of Education, Gurugram

University, and Dr. Amandeep Verma, Professor, Department of Economics, Central University of Haryana, Mahendergarh — shared their perspectives on the theme. The Technical Session drew a total of fifty participants, with five researchers presenting papers examining the practical, ground-level application of NEP 2020 in curriculum restructuring, skill enhancement and institutional planning; the remaining submitted papers, though not orally presented owing to time constraints, were duly acknowledged as presented for the purposes of the seminar record. The valedictory session was presided over by Dr. Mahal Singh, Vice-Chancellor, Khalsa University, Amritsar, and the valedictory address was delivered by Dr. Nitin Arora, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Panjab University, Chandigarh, who elaborated on the practical application of NEP 2020 to economics education through data literacy and industry-aligned learning, and also held an interactive session clearing the doubts of faculty and students regarding NEP 2020. Dr. Puneet Kaur, in proposing the concluding vote of thanks, synthesised the key policy recommendations emerging from the day's deliberations before formally bringing the seminar to a close.

Key Policy Takeaways

- NEP 2020 marks a shift from earlier policies focused on access and equity towards flexibility, multidisciplinary education, holistic development and multiple entry/exit options, blurring disciplinary boundaries and bridging theory-practice gaps to boost employability.
- NEP 2020 integrates skill development, technology and practical knowledge, making education more socially and culturally relevant while aligning with industry needs such as skill-based learning and data literacy.
- NEP 2020 promotes skill-based education through mandatory Skill Enhancement Courses, addressing the fact that only about 5% of India's workforce currently has requisite industry skills, with the aim of enhancing employability and competitiveness with nations such as Germany.
- NEP 2020 aligns Indian higher education with global standards, mirroring structures already adopted by Ivy League institutions and by select Indian private institutions such as BITS Pilani, TISS and Ashoka University.

- India can work towards the target of 50% GER by 2035 through digital platforms such as PM-USHA, Anuvadini, e-KUMBH, ULLAS, the National Mentoring Mission, and schemes such as PM Vidyaxmi, which offers education loans up to ₹8 lakh without a guarantor via Canara Bank.
- NEP 2020 offers a historic opportunity for educators to redesign curricula in line with market needs, while requiring teachers to deliver value beyond AI/machine-provided information and to instil strong ethical values.
- Implementation challenges include curriculum redesign as per the National Higher Education Qualification Framework and National Credit Framework, and the logistical difficulty of arranging internships for all students, with community engagement work serving as an alternative.
- Resource constraints — including inadequate funding, faculty shortages, infrastructural deficits, regional disparities and the digital divide — may undermine successful implementation of the policy.
- Sustained government financial support of at least 6% of GDP for education is necessary to fully realise the potential of NEP 2020 and position education as the primary driver of national growth.
- Institutions such as Khalsa College for Women demonstrate that proactive, early adoption of NEP 2020 — through curriculum redesign, skill-based courses and sustained faculty orientation — can position individual colleges as models for broader systemic implementation.
- Ground-level academic research, including papers presented by young researchers at seminars such as this one, plays a valuable role in surfacing the practical, institution-specific challenges and innovations involved in translating NEP 2020 from policy into classroom practice.