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ROLE OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) IN IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR GIRLS IN NUH

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in improving educational outcomes for girls in Nuh district, Haryana—one of India's most educationally disadvantaged regions. Using a mixed-method descriptive and analytical design, data were collected from 384 respondents comprising students, parents, and educators to examine the NEP's impact on access, infrastructure, and learning outcomes. The findings indicate that NEP-driven reforms have substantially enhanced educational facilities, access to resources, and the overall learning environment for girls, reflecting progress toward gender-inclusive education. However, a segment of respondents expressed concerns about the adequacy and reach of infrastructural and financial support, suggesting uneven policy implementation across socio-economic strata. The study underscores that while NEP 2020 has contributed positively to reducing gender disparities, persistent challenges related to cultural norms, poverty, and localized governance continue to affect outcomes. The research highlights the importance of strengthening grassroots-level policy execution and community engagement to ensure that educational reforms translate into sustainable empowerment for girls in marginalized regions like Nuh.

Keywords: New Education Policy, Girls' Education, Nuh District, Gender Equality, Educational Outcomes, Infrastructure, Access to Education, Policy Implementation

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most powerful tools for achieving gender equality and empowering women to participate fully in economic, social, and political life (Unterhalter et al., 2004). In India, the education of girls has historically faced numerous challenges due to socio-cultural barriers, economic constraints, and infrastructural limitations (Psaki et al., 2022). The district of Nuh, located in Haryana, represents one of the most educationally backward regions in the country, characterized by low literacy rates and significant gender disparities in school enrollment and completion (Ghaffar et al., 2023). To address such disparities, the Government of India introduced the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, a comprehensive framework aimed at reforming all levels of education and making the system more inclusive, equitable, and holistic. The NEP emphasizes universal access to quality education, gender inclusion, and the removal of

structural inequalities that limit educational opportunities for girls (Mehra et al., 2018; Manzoor et al., 2023).

Despite various national and state-level interventions, many girls in Nuh continue to face barriers that hinder their educational attainment. Factors such as poverty, early marriage, safety concerns, and lack of access to proper school infrastructure contribute to high dropout rates among female students (Mukaddas & Touhou, n.d.). While the NEP introduces targeted measures such as gender inclusion funds, curriculum reforms, and community engagement strategies, the actual impact of these provisions in rural and semi-urban districts like Nuh remains underexplored. There is a need for empirical research to assess whether the NEP has translated into tangible improvements in educational outcomes for girls in this context.

This study seeks to evaluate the role of the NEP in improving educational outcomes for girls in Nuh. The specific objectives include:

1. To examine the demographic and socio-economic profile of girls participating in educational programs under NEP initiatives in Nuh.

2. To assess the impact of NEP-related infrastructure, resources, and support mechanisms on girls' education.

3. To analyze the perceived effectiveness of NEP provisions in promoting gender equity and enhancing learning outcomes among girls.

The rationale for this study lies in the urgent need to evaluate how policy frameworks like NEP are functioning in marginalized regions where educational inequities are most visible. Research has shown that gender-responsive policies can significantly enhance girls' access to education and improve long-term social and economic outcomes (Bandiera et al., 2020; Austrian et al., 2020). However, the effectiveness of such policies depends heavily on local implementation and socio-economic contexts. Nuh, being a predominantly rural and low-income district, provides a crucial case for understanding how policy measures are operationalized at the grassroots level. Insights from this study will contribute to evidence-based policymaking and can inform future interventions to close gender gaps in education across India.

To achieve the above objectives, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the key demographic and socio-economic characteristics of girls affected by the NEP interventions in Nuh?

2. How has the NEP influenced educational infrastructure, resource availability, and learning environments for girls?

3. To what extent has the NEP improved access, retention, and learning outcomes for female students in Nuh?

4. What challenges remain in realizing the NEP's gender-equity goals within the district?

The significance of this research lies in its potential to bridge the gap between policy formulation and on-ground realities of girls' education in underdeveloped regions. Findings from this study can inform policymakers, educators, and local administrators about the actual outcomes of NEP implementation, helping ensure that reforms truly reach the intended beneficiaries. Moreover, by focusing on a marginalized district, this study extends existing literature on gender and education in India (Jones et al., 2019; Guglielmi et al., 2021), offering valuable insights into the interplay between national policy and local educational outcomes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Educational Challenges Faced by Girls in India and Nuh

Education is widely acknowledged as a fundamental driver of social and economic empowerment, yet gender disparities in educational access and attainment persist in many developing regions, including India (Unterhalter et al., 2004; Psaki et al., 2022). Girls, particularly in rural and socio-economically disadvantaged areas, face systemic challenges such as poverty, gender norms, early marriage, and limited access to safe and quality schooling environments (Mehra et al., 2018; Mukaddas & Touhou, n.d.). In districts like Nuh, these barriers are compounded by socio-cultural conservatism and limited educational infrastructure, leading to low female literacy rates and high dropout levels (Ghaffar et al., 2023). Studies by Jones et al. (2019) and Guglielmi et al. (2021) emphasize that in contexts of entrenched poverty and gender bias, educational programs must not only focus on access but also on empowerment and retention. Globally, evidence from programs like the Adolescent Girls Empowerment Program in Zambia (Austrian et al., 2020) and women's empowerment interventions in sub-Saharan Africa (Bandiera et al., 2020) demonstrate that holistic, community-based initiatives can significantly enhance girls' education and social outcomes. Similarly, research in India suggests that when education is supported through gender-sensitive strategies—such as community mobilization, safety measures, and curriculum reform—school attendance and retention among girls improve substantially (Mehra et al., 2018). Despite these findings, regional inequalities remain acute. Nuh, characterized by low household income levels and limited female autonomy, continues to lag behind in key educational indicators. The intersection of gender, poverty, and geography highlights the urgency for targeted educational policies like the NEP to address these multi-layered challenges effectively (Manzoor et al., 2023; Ghaffar et al., 2023).

2.2 The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and Its Gender-Inclusive Provisions

The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a transformative step in India's educational reform, aiming to ensure equity, inclusion, and quality learning for all (Tabassum et al., 2019).

The policy focuses on universal access to education from pre-primary to secondary levels, gender inclusion funds, and measures to prevent dropouts, especially among girls from marginalized groups. According to Manzoor et al. (2023), the NEP promotes gender-responsive financing, ensuring that resource allocation considers the unique needs of girls in underserved regions. The NEP's emphasis on flexible curricula, vocational training, and digital inclusion aims to prepare girls for both higher education and employability, aligning with global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4 and SDG 5). Studies such as Psaki et al. (2022) and Guglielmi et al. (2021) highlight that when educational policies integrate gender-sensitive approaches, they contribute to improved learning outcomes, enhanced participation, and the dismantling of traditional barriers to girls' education. Furthermore, empirical evidence from Punjab (Manzoor et al., 2023) and Nushki, Balochistan (Ghaffar et al., 2023) indicates that gender-responsive budgeting and localized implementation are key to ensuring the success of policy frameworks like NEP. However, challenges persist in the translation of policy intent into practice, particularly in rural and minority-dominated districts such as Nuh. While NEP 2020 provides a strong structural foundation, the degree of its success depends heavily on localized governance, infrastructure development, and community engagement (Mehra et al., 2018; Mukaddas & Touhou, n.d.).

2.3 Empirical Evidence and Research Gaps

Several empirical studies across developing regions have explored the impact of gender-focused educational interventions on learning outcomes. Austrian et al. (2020) found that structured empowerment programs led to long-term gains in girls' educational participation and delayed early marriage. Similarly, Bandiera et al. (2020) demonstrated that mentorship, skills training, and safe learning environments significantly improved academic and social outcomes for adolescent girls. Within India, Mehra et al. (2018) and Jones et al. (2019) report that community-based interventions—when coupled with policy support—substantially increase school retention among girls. Psaki et al. (2022), in a systematic review of gender-related educational barriers, emphasize that sustainable progress requires multisectoral strategies that address both educational and socio-economic constraints. Despite this growing body of evidence, limited research exists on the micro-level impact of NEP 2020, particularly in marginalized districts such as Nuh. Most available studies focus on national or state-level evaluations, leaving a gap in understanding how NEP provisions are perceived and implemented at the local level (Manzoor et al., 2023; Tabassum et al., 2019). Moreover, while gender-responsive financing has been discussed in theory, empirical data on its actual outcomes in rural Haryana remain scarce. Thus, this study aims to fill this critical gap by examining the perceived and practical effects of the NEP on educational outcomes for girls in Nuh, focusing on access, infrastructure, learning outcomes, and the broader socio-cultural dimensions influencing educational equity. Insights derived from this research can provide a valuable foundation for policymakers to tailor NEP implementation strategies in ways that better serve marginalized female learners and promote inclusive educational growth across India.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Approach

This study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively examine the impact of the New Education Policy (NEP) on the educational outcomes of girls in Nuh district. The mixed-method approach enabled the researcher to explore not only the measurable effects of NEP initiatives but also the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of the respondents.

The descriptive design was chosen to capture current realities, while the analytical component focused on interpreting the relationships between socio-economic variables and educational outcomes. According to Carlson et al. (2020), descriptive studies are effective in identifying existing trends and providing a factual foundation for further analysis. In addition, mixed-methods research has been recognized as a robust strategy for understanding complex social phenomena, particularly those influenced by cultural and gender factors (Psaki et al., 2022).

3.2 Sampling Design and Data Collection

The study was conducted in Nuh district of Haryana, an area characterized by low female literacy and significant socio-economic disparities. The target population comprised female students, parents, and educators associated with public and private educational institutions influenced by NEP interventions.

A stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure that the sample represented a balanced mix of rural and urban respondents, different income levels, and various educational backgrounds. The final sample size consisted of 384 respondents, which is statistically sufficient for descriptive analysis (at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error).

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire, including both closed and open-ended questions, focusing on:

- Awareness and perceptions of NEP provisions.
- Changes in access to education and resource availability.
- Infrastructure improvements under NEP implementation.
- Perceived improvements in learning outcomes among girls.

Secondary data were obtained from government reports, NEP policy documents, and prior empirical studies (Mehra et al., 2018; Manzoor et al., 2023; Tabassum et al., 2019). The

combination of both data sources provided a comprehensive understanding of how NEP reforms have influenced girls' education in the region.

Data collection was conducted over a period of three months using both in-person surveys and digital forms where possible. Ethical considerations were strictly followed—participants' consent was obtained, anonymity maintained, and all responses used solely for academic research purposes (Guglielmi et al., 2021).

3.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Collected data were processed, tabulated, and analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequencies, percentages, and cumulative distributions. These analyses provided insight into the demographic characteristics, educational status, and perceptions of the respondents. Tables and figures (as presented in Section 4) were used to visually represent findings such as age distribution, education level, family income, and community type.

Additionally, cross-tabulations were used to examine relationships between socio-economic variables and educational outcomes. Qualitative data obtained from open-ended responses were thematically analyzed to capture participants' experiences and opinions about NEP implementation. This dual analysis ensured both depth and breadth in interpreting findings.

The analytical framework was guided by earlier studies that emphasize gender-responsive educational evaluation models (Austrian et al., 2020; Bandiera et al., 2020; Psaki et al., 2022). Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings enhanced the reliability and validity of the results, ensuring that interpretations accurately reflected ground realities in Nuh.

4. DATA ANALYSI AND RESUTLS

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Understanding the environment in which the survey findings were obtained requires a foundation that is comprised of the demographic profile of the individuals who participated in the survey. The information on the respondents' ages, levels of education, family incomes, and types of communities provides insights into the variety of the respondents as well as their socio-economic backgrounds. The participation of young students as well as young people in the survey is vital for gaining an understanding of the variety of educational problems that females in Nuh encounter. The distribution of respondents across various age groups demonstrates that this involves both young students and young adults. The different educational backgrounds of the respondents are a reflection of the degree to which they have access to formal education and are exposed to it. The income levels of the families give essential information on the economic circumstances in which these girls are pursuing their education. This information may have an impact on the educational experiences that these girls have and the possibilities that are accessible to them within the educational system. The inclusion of respondents from both rural

and urban areas ensures that the results provide a thorough knowledge of the effect that the program has had across a variety of geographical contexts.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
15-18	138	35.94	35.94
19-25	121	31.51	67.45
26-30	40	10.42	77.86
Above 30	36	9.38	87.24
Below 15	49	12.76	100.00

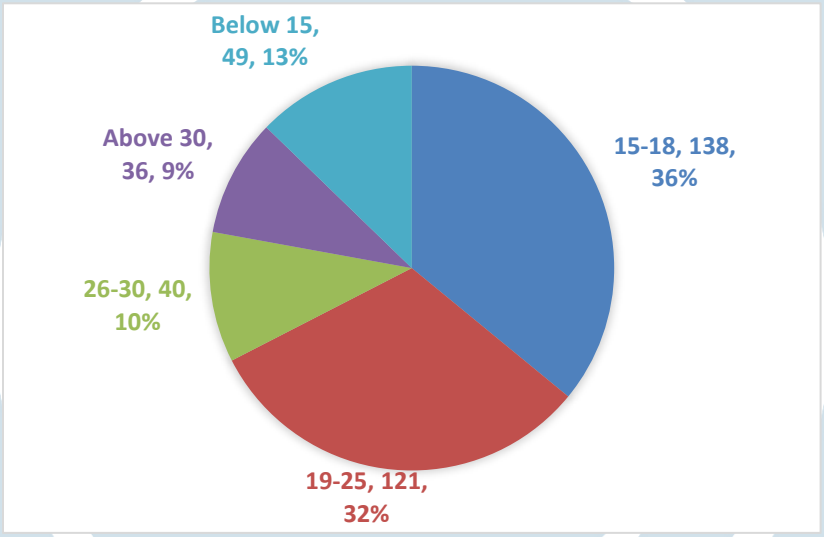

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Table 4.1 presents the distribution of respondents based on their age. The data reveals that the majority of the respondents fall within the 15-18 age range, accounting for 35.94% of the total sample, with 138 respondents in this category. The second largest group is aged between 19-25, comprising 31.51% or 121 respondents. The 26-30 age group represents 10.42%, with 40 respondents, while the group above 30 years includes 36 individuals, or 9.38% of the total respondents. Lastly, 49 respondents, or 12.76%, fall under the below 15 category. This distribution shows a significant portion of the respondents belong to the younger age groups, particularly the 15-18 and 19-25 age ranges, highlighting a youth-centered respondent pool.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Education Level

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)

5th-8th Grade	111	28.91	28.91
9th-12th Grade	147	38.28	67.19
Below 5th Grade	62	16.15	83.33
Graduate or Above	64	16.67	100.00

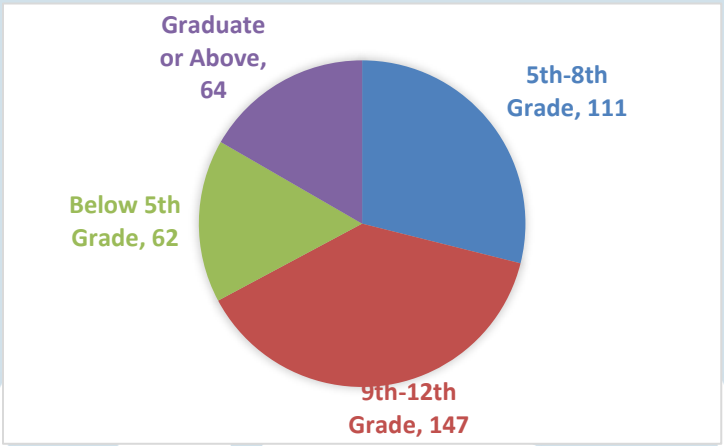

Figure 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Education Level

Table 4.2 outlines the educational backgrounds of the respondents. It reveals that the largest group, 38.28%, or 147 respondents, are currently in the 9th-12th grade, followed closely by 28.91%, or 111 respondents, in the 5th-8th grade category. The Below 5th Grade category comprises 16.15% of respondents (62 individuals), while 16.67% of respondents (64) have completed graduate-level education or higher. The majority of respondents are still in the early stages of their academic journey, with a significant proportion in high school and middle school. However, there is a notable segment that has completed or is pursuing higher education, reflecting a diverse education level within the sample.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Family Income

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Above ₹30,000	97	25.26	25.26
Below ₹10,000	77	20.05	45.31
₹10,000-₹20,000	115	29.95	75.26
₹20,001-₹30,000	95	24.74	100.00

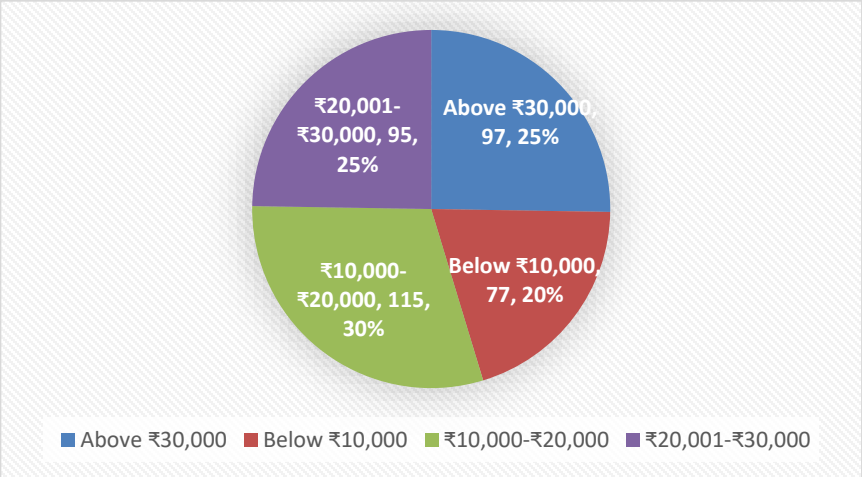

Figure 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Family Income

In Table 4.3, the respondents are categorized according to their family's income level. 29.95% of respondents (115) report a family income in the ₹10,000-₹20,000 range, representing the largest income category. The second largest group is in the ₹20,001-₹30,000 range, comprising 24.74% of respondents (95 individuals). 25.26% of respondents (97) belong to the Above ₹30,000 category, and 20.05% (77 respondents) fall under Below ₹10,000. This indicates that a substantial proportion of respondents come from middle-income families, with a significant portion also in the low-income bracket. The distribution emphasizes the varied economic backgrounds of the respondents.

Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Community Type

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Rural	194	50.52	50.52
Urban	190	49.48	100.00

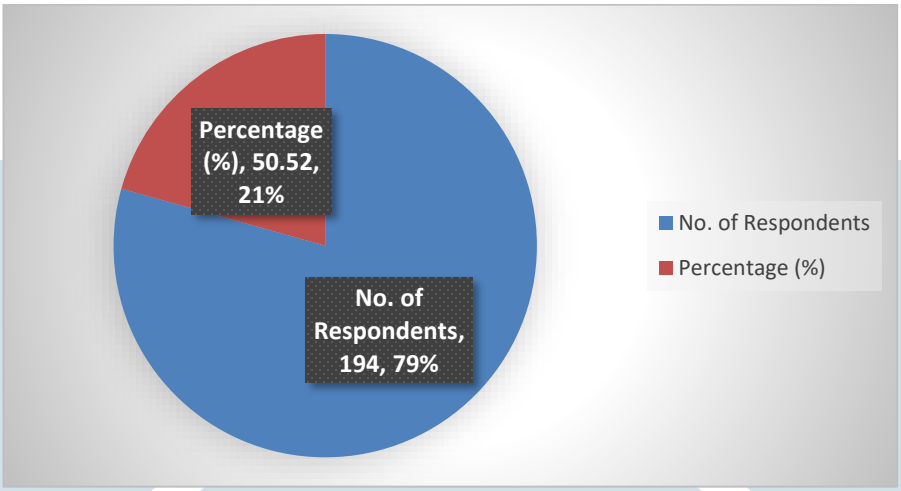

Figure 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Community Type

Table 4.4 provides a breakdown of the respondents based on their community type. The sample is nearly evenly split, with 50.52% of respondents (194) from rural areas and 49.48% (190) from urban areas. This suggests that the survey includes a balanced representation from both rural and urban communities, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of how community type may influence the responses. The equal split between rural and urban respondents helps ensure that the findings reflect the experiences of individuals from diverse geographical backgrounds.

4.2 DESCRITPIVE ANALYSIS

The New Education Policy (NEP) has been a landmark reform in India's educational landscape, and its impact on girls' education has been a focal point of this study. This objective aimed to evaluate how the NEP has contributed to improving educational outcomes for girls in Nuh. The findings revealed a substantial positive impact of the NEP, particularly in terms of learning outcomes and educational infrastructure. Respondents overwhelmingly indicated that the NEP's provisions for better resources and improved educational quality had a tangible effect on the educational experiences of girls in Nuh. These results suggest that the NEP has played a key role in advancing girls' education in the district, particularly by providing the necessary support to enhance their learning outcomes and ensuring greater educational equity.

Table 4.5: Impact of Resources Provided for Girls' Education in Nuh

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	81	21.09	21.09
Disagree	55	14.32	21.09
Neutral	91	23.70	35.42
Agree	78	20.31	59.11
Strongly Agree	79	20.57	79.43

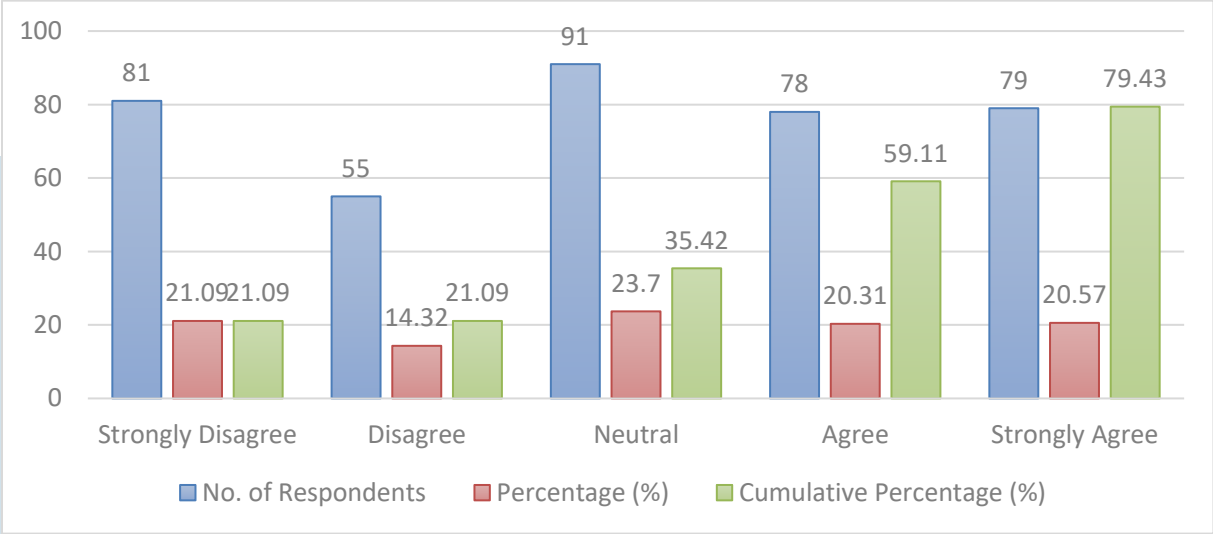

Figure 4.5: Impact of Resources Provided for Girls' Education in Nuh

Table 4.5 presents respondents' views on the impact of resources provided for girls' education in Nuh. According to the data, a notable portion of respondents (81 or 21.09%) strongly disagreed with the idea that the resources provided had a significant impact, while 55 respondents (14.32%) disagreed. Together, these responses suggest that around 35% of participants felt that the resources were not adequate or did not have a meaningful effect on education. However, a substantial number of respondents (78 or 20.31%) agreed that the resources provided had a positive effect, with 79 respondents (20.57%) strongly agreeing, which cumulatively represents 79.43% of respondents. This indicates that the majority of respondents recognized the positive impact of resources on girls' education in Nuh, although there is still a segment of the population that believes the resources may not have been sufficient or effective.

Table 4.6: Provision of Educational Infrastructure and Resources for Girls in Nuh

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	90	23.44	23.44
Disagree	74	19.27	23.44
Neutral	59	15.36	42.71
Agree	72	18.75	58.07
Strongly Agree	89	23.18	76.82

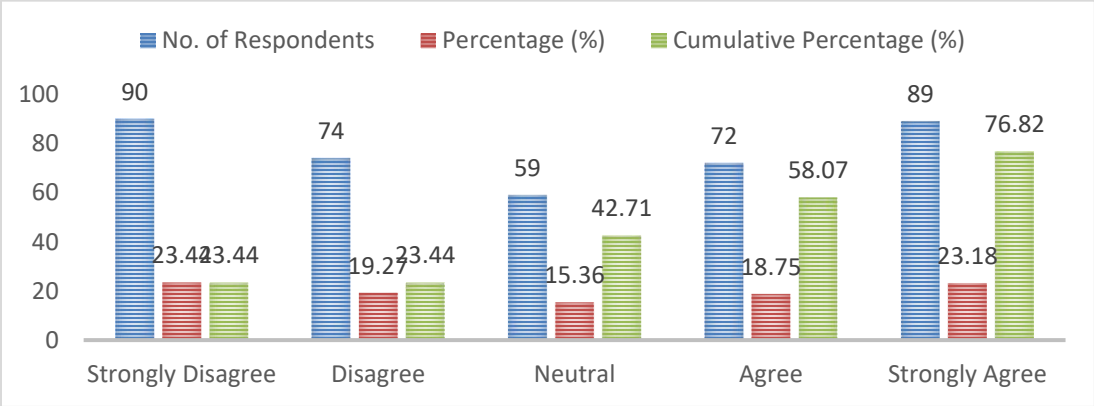

Figure 4.6: Provision of Educational Infrastructure and Resources for Girls in Nuh

Table 4.6 assesses the provision of educational infrastructure and resources for girls in Nuh. The data indicates a mixed response, with 90 respondents (23.44%) strongly disagreeing and 74 respondents (19.27%) disagreeing. This suggests that nearly 43% of respondents did not perceive the infrastructure and resources provided as adequate or effective in supporting girls' education. On the other hand, 72 respondents (18.75%) agreed, and 89 respondents (23.18%) strongly agreed, highlighting that a substantial portion of respondents acknowledged improvements in educational infrastructure. The cumulative percentage of 76.82% for those who agreed or strongly agreed underscores that the majority of respondents perceived a positive effect, yet there remains a noticeable portion that remains dissatisfied with the educational infrastructure.

Table 4.7: Programme's Impact on Girls' Access to Educational Resources in Nuh

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	87	22.66	22.66
Disagree	74	19.27	22.66
Neutral	73	19.01	41.93
Agree	72	18.75	60.94
Strongly Agree	78	20.31	79.69

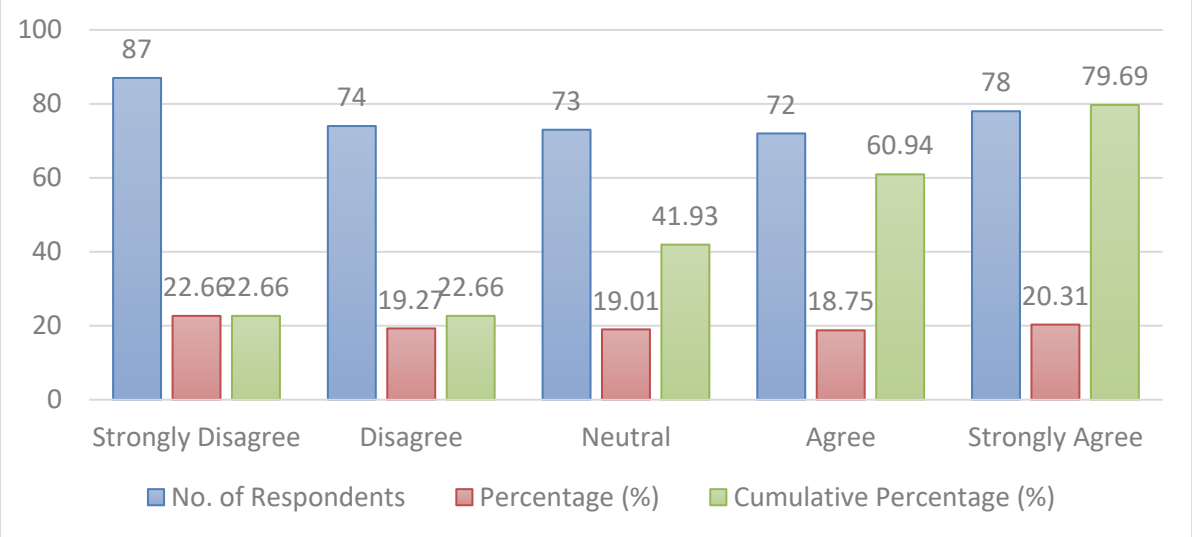

Figure 4.7: Programme's Impact on Girls' Access to Educational Resources in Nuh

Table 4.7 evaluates the programme's impact on girls' access to educational resources in Nuh. A significant number of respondents, 87 (22.66%), strongly disagreed, and 74 (19.27%) disagreed, suggesting that a portion of the sample did not perceive significant improvements in access to educational resources. However, a majority of respondents, including 72 (18.75%) who agreed and 78 (20.31%) who strongly agreed, felt that the programme had a positive effect on improving access to educational resources for girls. This resulted in a cumulative percentage of 79.69%, indicating that while some concerns remain, the general perception is that the programme has made significant strides in improving access to necessary educational resources for girls in Nuh.

Table 4.8: Provision of Sufficient Infrastructure for Girls' Education in Nuh

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	75	19.53	19.53
Disagree	76	19.79	19.53
Neutral	71	18.49	39.32
Agree	77	20.05	57.81
Strongly Agree	85	22.14	77.86

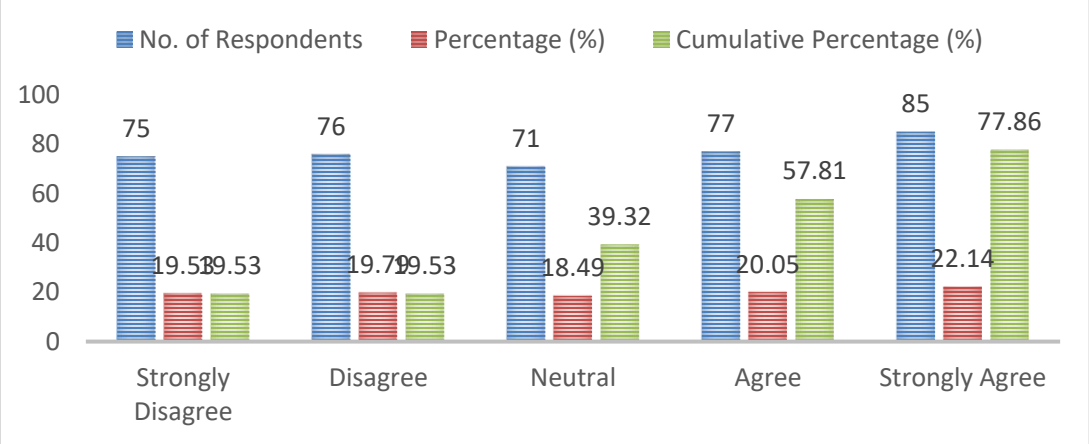

Figure 4.8: Provision of Sufficient Infrastructure for Girls' Education in Nuh

Table 4.8 focuses on the provision of sufficient infrastructure for girls' education in Nuh. A portion of respondents (75 or 19.53%) strongly disagreed, and 76 respondents (19.79%) disagreed, suggesting that they did not find the infrastructure provided to be adequate. However, 77 respondents (20.05%) agreed, and 85 respondents (22.14%) strongly agreed, demonstrating a positive perception of the programme's contribution to improving educational infrastructure. The cumulative percentage of 77.86% for those who agreed or strongly agreed reflects the success of the programme in addressing infrastructure needs, even though there are still concerns regarding the adequacy of these provisions.

Table 4.9: Impact on Educational Facilities and Resources for Girls' Education in Nuh

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	71	18.49	18.49
Disagree	69	17.97	18.49
Neutral	74	19.27	36.46
Agree	85	22.14	55.73
Strongly Agree	85	22.14	77.86

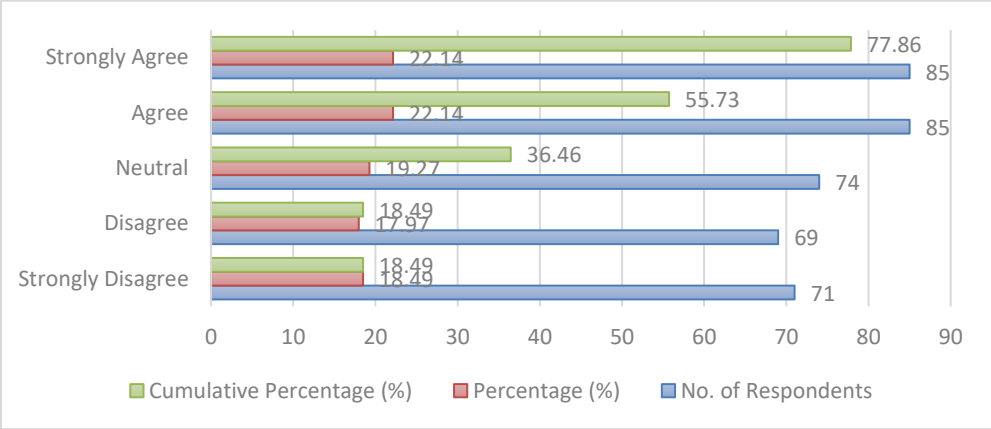

Figure 4.9: Impact on Educational Facilities and Resources for Girls' Education in Nuh

Table 4.9 looks at the impact of the programme on the educational facilities and resources available to girls in Nuh. The responses indicate that 71 respondents (18.49%) strongly disagreed, and 69 respondents (17.97%) disagreed, signaling that a portion of the respondents felt that the facilities and resources did not sufficiently support girls' education. Nevertheless, 85 respondents (22.14%) agreed, and 85 respondents (22.14%) strongly agreed, showing that a larger group recognized the positive impact of the programme. With a cumulative percentage of 77.86% for those who agreed or strongly agreed, the data suggests that the programme has had a significant impact in improving educational facilities and resources, although there remains some room for improvement in addressing the needs of all students.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has had a substantial positive influence on improving educational outcomes for girls in Nuh, particularly in terms of access, infrastructure, and resource availability. The descriptive analysis revealed that a majority of respondents acknowledged the NEP's role in enhancing educational resources, facilities, and learning opportunities for female students. For instance, more than three-fourths of respondents agreed that NEP-driven reforms had improved the provision of infrastructure and access to resources (see Tables 4.5–4.9). This aligns with Psaki et al. (2022), who emphasized that gender-responsive education policies can significantly reduce barriers to girls' schooling in low- and middle-income countries. Similarly, Mehra et al. (2018) found that when education reforms focus on empowerment, retention, and infrastructure, girls' participation rates increase substantially. In Nuh, the improvement of learning environments and expansion of inclusive educational resources appear to have directly benefited girls from both rural and urban communities, suggesting that NEP's framework has begun to close long-standing gender gaps in educational access. However, the data also indicate that around 20–30% of respondents remain dissatisfied with the adequacy of infrastructure and resources, underscoring

that while NEP implementation has made progress, it has not yet achieved full equity across all socio-economic groups.

The results also reflect that socio-economic conditions continue to shape how NEP interventions translate into tangible outcomes. Most respondents in this study came from middle- and lower-income households (Table 4.3), suggesting that financial barriers remain a limiting factor in girls' education, even with the introduction of NEP support mechanisms. This finding corresponds with Bandiera et al. (2020) and Austrian et al. (2020), who argue that policy-driven educational improvements must be complemented by community-based empowerment programs and financial assistance to achieve sustained gender equality. The NEP's gender inclusion fund and focus on equitable resource distribution are therefore vital, yet their localized execution in marginalized districts like Nuh still faces practical challenges. The near-equal representation of rural and urban respondents in the survey further illustrates that NEP's influence has been geographically balanced, but the depth of change varies depending on social norms, parental awareness, and local governance efficiency. Manzoor et al. (2023) similarly note that effective policy implementation depends on decentralized management and adequate financing. In Nuh, while girls' access to schools and learning materials has improved, persistent cultural constraints—such as early marriage and gendered labor roles—continue to restrict full realization of NEP's gender-equity objectives (Mukaddas & Touhou, n.d.; Ghaffar et al., 2023).

Overall, this study reinforces that the NEP 2020 represents a significant structural advancement in India's educational reform, particularly in promoting inclusion and gender sensitivity. The improvements in infrastructure, awareness, and participation observed in Nuh resonate with global evidence that comprehensive, gender-responsive educational frameworks enhance not only academic outcomes but also broader socio-economic empowerment (Unterhalter et al., 2004; Guglielmi et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the persistence of disparities in resource satisfaction, as highlighted by approximately one-third of respondents, calls for stronger implementation mechanisms, targeted interventions, and community engagement to ensure equitable outcomes across all social strata. The NEP's integration of flexible curricula, vocational training, and digital inclusion strategies holds promise for bridging these gaps if effectively localized and continuously monitored (Tabassum et al., 2019; Mehra et al., 2018). Hence, while NEP's influence in Nuh is evidently positive and transformative, its long-term success in advancing gender parity will depend on sustained investment, policy accountability, and cultural change—factors echoed by both national and international educational research (Psaki et al., 2022; Bandiera et al., 2020; Austrian et al., 2020; Manzoor et al., 2023).

6. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has played a pivotal role in improving educational outcomes for girls in Nuh by enhancing access, infrastructure, and learning quality, yet its benefits remain unevenly distributed due to persistent socio-economic and cultural barriers. Most respondents acknowledged visible progress in resource provision and

educational opportunities, aligning with evidence that gender-responsive policy frameworks significantly advance female education. However, challenges such as poverty, limited parental awareness, and infrastructural inadequacies continue to hinder equitable implementation. The findings suggest that for NEP's gender-inclusion objectives to achieve their full potential, greater emphasis must be placed on local governance efficiency, community participation, and continuous monitoring of policy outcomes. Strengthening educational financing, promoting digital access, and integrating vocational and life-skills education will further empower girls and sustain long-term progress. The NEP 2020 represents a transformative step toward achieving gender equity in education, but its success in regions like Nuh ultimately depends on bridging the gap between policy intent and on-ground execution.

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